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Presidents: Mr. Arbesser-Rastburg, Mr. Rampak

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON
OF THE GOVERNING BODY
AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (*cont.*)

Original German: The PRESIDENT (Mr. ARBESSER-RASTBURG) — We shall now continue the discussion on the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

Original Hebrew: Mr. VAKNIN (*Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Israel*) — The economic recession which followed last September's incidents, the global crisis, particularly in the high-tech industry and renewed terrorist activity by the Palestinians, have hit the Israeli economy hard in all areas — from tourism, construction and agriculture through to the high-tech and software sectors. They have dampened economic buoyancy, increased unemployment, reduced investment and caused a fall in state revenue. This has been compounded by rapid changes in Israel's employment market over the past ten years, the absorption of more than a million new immigrants, the incorporation of thousands of foreign workers, the decline of organizations representing of workers and employers and the growth in new methods of work. All this has given a boost to the informal economy which is why we share the concerns expressed by the Office in its report *Decent work and the informal economy* submitted to this Conference.

We commend the ILO for its initiative in this regard and plan to take a very active part in the discussion following the report so that we can learn from others and share our own experience.

Since September 2000 the State of Israel has been subject to a terrorist offensive, the aim of which is to undermine the very foundation of our society and our economy. I am not going to develop and expound upon this matter because my Government believes that the specialized agencies of the international community should not spend time discussing political matters. I would just like to say that despite difficulties related to the security of the State of Israel, our policy is to make a distinction between the civil population and terrorist groups. We have done our utmost not to hinder economic activity in the territories despite the danger this involves for us. We have not stopped free trade in goods or prevented humanitarian aid reaching the population.

Moreover, Israeli policy has been to give preference to the employment of our Palestinian neighbours rather than immigrant workers, even though this exposes us to further dangers. By way of example, we can mention the murder of an Israeli employer by one of his Palestinian employees just a few weeks ago.

Nevertheless, the Government has decided to partially reopen the Israeli economy to Palestinian workers and to allow several thousand to re-enter the country.

My Government would reassert the fact that peace with our Palestinian neighbours has to be based on decent work and social justice as laid down in the preamble to the ILO Constitution. We would therefore hope to expand in size and in number the EREZ industrial zone. Economic activity has continued in this zone, despite the fact that Palestinian terrorist groups have tried to disrupt it by targeting workers. The economic activity of EREZ is a very relevant example of what was said by the Director-General in the introduction to his Report: in both camps there are many who still believe in peace and dialogue. We reach out to our Palestinian neighbours in a spirit of peace and economic cooperation. We desire genuine peace and are willing, as in the past, to offer technical cooperation in the areas of vocational training, health and safety and social policies. However, we reiterate once again that our absolute prerequisite for any form of cooperation is a complete and unambiguous cessation of all terrorist activity.

I would like once again to thank the Office for the splendid and very professional work that has been done in preparing this Conference. We also commend the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and in this connection I would like to mention two initiatives taken by my Government. The first aims to introduce a social "certification" which all enterprises supplying government institutions will have to apply for. The certification is only granted once a supplier proves that he strictly respects the Labour Code, including minimum wage requirements and the newly promulgated legislation on the disabled.

The second initiative involves investigating the use of stock options as part payment for salaries in some sections of the industry. The example of ENRON in the United States has shown that this form of payment has inherent risks for workers. It should be pointed out that the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), already deals with the payment of wages in kind.

Original German: Mr. RIESTER (*Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany*) — As is the case every two years, the Director-General's Report provides an account of the ILO's activities during that time span. My remarks on the Report will address how the ILO and its activities in 2000 and 2001 are perceived from the outside. The term "child labour" immediately springs to mind. It is the subject of the

Global Report which the Conference will discuss tomorrow. So I will simply say this: The struggle to combat child labour is a hallmark of the ILO, as it were not only the creation of an international body of rules and monitoring compliance with them, but also practical assistance for the countries affected within the framework of the IPEC. It will not surprise anyone that I, coming from the trade union movement, see the ILO as a defender of freedom of association and collective bargaining. The 50th anniversary of the formation of the Committee on Freedom of Association was celebrated recently here in Geneva. The achievements of this body deserve recognition and more attention than they have generally received. I say this as a representative of a country that has been in the object of the committee's critical appreciation.

I cannot mention freedom of association without expressing my concern about the situation in two countries that the supervisory bodies of the ILO have been dealing with for some time now: Colombia and Belarus. I would like to appeal to the authorities in both countries — and I realize the difficulties the authorities face in Colombia, at any rate — to do all they can, together with the ILO, to ensure that a free trade union movement can once again develop there safely and without intimidation.

Just a few years ago, the ILO began to address a task to which the international community quite rightly attaches increasing importance, namely, helping in the reconstruction of areas of crisis, especially countries that have been beset by armed conflict. This, to me, is an implementation of the ILO's constitutional mandate to establish and secure universal peace through social justice. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, East Timor and, very soon, Afghanistan, are proof of the ILO's determination to help to ensure that social issues are taken into consideration from the very start of reconstruction. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan pointed out just how important this is in his speech before the German Parliament on 28 February. Referring to Afghanistan, He said: "What is the point of disarming and demobilizing young men if there are no proper schools or civilian jobs for them?" Another impressive example of the supportive work done by the ILO in areas afflicted by crisis are the various activities that help workers in the occupied Arab territories, which are described in the appendix to the Report of the Director-General.

When looking at the ILO's impact around the world in 2000 and 2001, one need also keep in mind its enhanced status within the international family. The ILO made important contributions to most of the special general assemblies of the United Nations in those two years, which is reflected in the final documents. The ILO's relationships with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have long ceased to be non-binding exchanges of pleasantries at the highest level because, even in Washington, people have recognized that social injustice is poor soil for economic stability. And I have the impression there is also a hint of movement in the relationship between the ILO and the World Trade Organization.

As for the question of the extent to which social issues should play a role in international trade relations, there is still a stand-off between the advocates and the doubters. In November 2001, it was decided to set up a World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, which was convened in

March 2002. One of its members is from Germany. Perhaps this Commission will provide an opportunity for an unprejudiced discussion of this issue in a climate of mutual trust. I certainly hope so. The ILO is a driving force in the struggle against exploitative child labour, a guarantor of freedom of association, as key partner in helping regions stricken by war and crisis to get back on their feet, and a voice that is being taken more and more seriously within the community of international organizations. That is not a bad record.

Mr. DIMOVSKI (*Minister for Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia*) — It is an honour for me to speak at this 90th Session of the International Labour Conference, and in doing so to have the opportunity to share our views regarding the importance of implementing activities within the ILO. At the same time, I would like to compliment the Director-General on his excellent Report on *ILO programme implementation 2000-01*.

Again, I firmly believe that this debate will have important implications for the future work of the ILO as well as for the national policies of the member States. Analysis of the work done in the past will contribute enormously to more effective formulation and implementation of future programmes. That is to say, effective realization of the four ILO objectives is one of the decisive elements which will determine the Organization's impact on the quality of life and human dignity at a global level.

Allow me to begin by referring to the major role that the ILO plays in promoting social partnership. It is important to emphasize here the role of tolerant social dialogue as a precondition for the successful realization of the main goals of this Organization and for the consequent achievement of social harmony. Therefore, the ILO should continue supporting stronger workers' and employers' organizations and promoting the recognition of social dialogue as a valuable way to build consensus on broader economic and social challenges.

Social dialogue in Slovenia has its roots in the late 1980s when the legal basis for the adoption of collective agreements was created. As a result of constructive dialogue in the 1994 Economic and Social Council, a tripartite body was established. In Slovenia, social dialogue is present in the form of bipartite and tripartite negotiations, either institutionalized or otherwise. The social partners and other players discuss collective agreements, wage policy, employment policy and also take part in the drafting of labour legislation.

Even so, the tradition of social dialogue in Slovenia is relatively young and a lot still needs to be done. One of the priorities of the Slovenian Government is to adopt the Collective Bargaining Act that will regulate the freedom to conclude collective agreements.

In addition to the already ratified Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), realization of these goals will enable Slovenia to ratify the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), which will represent an important step forward in the pursuit of higher social standards.

Aware of the importance of cooperation and recognizing the mutual benefit in promoting ILO standards,

in February this year Slovenia and the ILO signed a programme of cooperation which foresees the following areas of joint collaboration. First, fundamental principles and rights at work; second, social protection; third, social dialogue; and fourth, employment policy. I believe that such a coherent approach will enable the programme aims to be accomplished successfully. In this respect, I also strongly support the incorporation of job creation in addition to tripartite partnership, fundamental rights, decent work conditions and gender concerns into the employment strategies of the ILO as the foundation of effective policies.

Within this framework I would like to mention that Slovenia has also succeeded in applying such an integrated approach by preparing and implementing employment action plans for the years 2000-01 and 2002-03. Both programmes follow common European policy guidelines as well as taking into account domestic conditions and local circumstances. The aims of the employment plans are to enhance the employability of the population, to promote free entrepreneurship, to encourage companies and individuals to be flexible and to create equality in employment opportunities. According to a labour force survey, the unemployment rate has fluctuated between 7 and 9 per cent, falling in 2001 to 6.3 per cent.

All the abovementioned activities require the concerted efforts of all ministries responsible for particular domains, local communities and all social partners at the national and regional levels. Here I would especially like to point out the importance of being a deputy Member of the Governing Body for the period 2002-05. I would like to use this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all member States for their valuable support. We are confident that, through active participation in the Governing Body, Slovenia will make a significant contribution towards the ILO's goals, including decent work, promotion of social dialogue and abolition of child labour.

Original Turkish: Mr. OKUYAN (Minister of Labour and Social Security, Turkey) — At the outset I would like to congratulate the President and the Vice-Presidents on their election to their respective posts, and extend my thanks to the Director-General for his Report, *ILO programme implementation 2000-01*, which, in its lucid format, gives us a clear picture of what has been achieved in respect of the four strategic objectives of the ILO.

I welcome the new strategic budgeting concept used in the organization of this Report as well as in the preparation of the Programme and Budget 2000-01, which takes outputs as the basis for assessing the level of achievement, rather than activities.

The Report contains an evaluation part under the heading "Strategies, results and lessons learned" relating to each target. I find these commentaries very useful as they shed light on the programme and budget of the subsequent terms.

I understand from the Report that the average rate of achievement for all of the targets set in the programme is 80 per cent. This is already a level that cannot be overlooked and I believe that thanks to the substantial reorganization process that the ILO has been going through since Mr. Somavia took office as Director-General three years ago, it will get higher in years to come.

Now I would like to touch upon some points relating to certain sections of the Report.

The recent indications of an increase in racism and xenophobia in the world compel us to be much more ambitious when setting the targets for 2004-05. Last year, the Director-General stressed in his Report on decent work the importance of contacts made by the ILO with international organizations focused on economic growth, such as the IMF and the World Bank, with a view to developing common policies that would put equal emphasis on economic growth and social issues. I believe that strengthening dialogue in this sense with such organizations would be very useful. Therefore, it would be appropriate to place some concrete targets in the 2004-05 programme to achieve this end.

I am pleased to see in the Report that the projects on the elimination of child labour, implemented in cooperation with three workers' organizations in Turkey, were highlighted. I hasten to add that in addition to the workers' organizations, employers' organizations have also been making a considerable contribution to our fight against child labour.

In fact, the past three years, during which the ILO has been going through a process of change, correspond to a period in Turkey when dialogue between our Government and the workers' and employers' organizations, which had already been in place for a long time, albeit not at the desired level, was established on a more solid ground and yielded more concrete results. The Economic and Social Council, which had functioned before on a mandate issued by the Prime Ministry, was re-established in this period with the proper legal status. More effective participation of representatives of workers' and employers' organizations in the management of employment organization and of the two social insurance institutions, one for wage earners and the other for the self-employed, was made possible.

During this same period a Committee of University Professors, comprising nine members, was established with the mandate of reviewing our labour legislation with a view to proposing the amendments necessary to secure compliance with the ILO Conventions ratified by us, and with the European Union texts. Three of these members are appointed by the Government, three by the employers' organizations and three by the workers' organizations. The Committee in question has concluded its work on individual labour law. Now it is time to move the bill through Parliament. The next mandate of this Committee is to determine the discrepancies in our collective labour law and solutions to them. Existing goodwill and a positive approach on the side of all of the partners is the basis for our confidence in the success of this Committee's work. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to workers' and employers' organizations in my country for their valuable contribution.

The ILO Ankara Information Resource Centre was inaugurated in September last year with the participation of high-level representatives from headquarters. I would like to extend, once again, my thanks to those who contributed to the establishment of this centre, which will further enhance our relations with the ILO.

Original Arabic: Mr. AL SHO'ALA (Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Bahrain) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! It gives me pleasure to join in congratulating the President on the

confidence accorded him by all the members of the Conference and on his election to preside over this 90th Session. I wish both him and the Conference the best results under his leadership. I am very pleased on this occasion to convey to the Conference greetings from His Majesty the King of Bahrain Sheikh Hamad Bin Issa Aal Khalifa and His Royal Highness, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Aal Khalifa, the Crown Prince and the Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force, and their wishes for the success of this session.

First of all, I should like to inform you that in the past few months the Kingdom of Bahrain has come to a turning point in its history reflected by a series of modernization measures aimed at completing the building of democratic institutions and at firmly establishing the principles of human rights and granting the social partners additional trade union rights and freedom of association.

One year after, the people of Bahrain voted in a popular referendum for the National Labour Charter, with a sweeping majority of 98.4 per cent. His Majesty enacted the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain. This established the legal bases for a constitutional monarchy based on the principle of separation of powers and the establishment of a constitutional court, to monitor the constitutionality of the laws, in addition to freely elected municipal councils and a parliament. Last May the Municipal Councils were elected, and next October the people of Bahrain will be electing the members of the National Assembly (Parliament), thereby completing the national democratic institutions of Bahrain.

I should like to affirm the fact that the principles of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain are in perfect harmony with the aspirations of the ILO, and conform with the core Conventions.

One of the main principles in confirmation by the Constitution of the right to work of each citizen and the right to choose one's work in accordance with public order and morals, and of the duty of the State to provide job opportunities for all citizens, in addition to prohibition of forced labour, and ensuring freedom of association and trade unions.

The Report of the Director-General is replete with the achievements of the past two years; it is remarkable in terms of content and clearly reflects the valuable and persistent efforts of the ILO and the regional offices throughout the world.

I am particularly pleased to praise technical cooperation between the ILO and Bahrain; we would like to express thanks to the Director-General and to the officials at the Regional Office in Beirut, as well as the experts and consultants who have cooperated with us. One of the most significant events of this cooperation was the visit by a multidisciplinary consultative team last January. They became acquainted with our needs in different areas in the context of decent work, and these efforts generated a number of proposals aimed at improving recruitment and social protection programmes and social dialogue.

I am fully convinced that the application of the proposals of the consultative team will enable us to implement various programmes in order to integrate the national labour force into the labour market.

I should like to thank to the Director-General for having selected the Kingdom of Bahrain among the countries where the experimental decent work programmes are going to be implemented, thus demonstrating the importance the ILO attaches to our

region and the progress it has recently achieved in the domain of modernization. We are convinced that the principle of decent work and the provision of opportunities for decent work are essential, and that is why we have drawn up a national strategy to enable the integration of workers in the labour market and the participation of employers' representatives, workers and other parties concerned. I should like to mention some of the comments by the ILO experts, who consider that this strategy is truly pragmatic and forward-looking. We benefited from the suggestions of these experts and introduced various changes that were needed in the strategy. This is a strategy based on the shared responsibility of all the social partners, and it seeks the optimum use of the labour force in order to achieve a balance between supply and demand in the labour market.

In conclusion, I should like to express our gratitude for the initiative of the Director-General to prepare a special report on the situation of the Arab workers in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, and we hope that the Organization will decide to establish a fund to help Palestinian workers cope with unemployment and the disastrous consequences of the economic blockade.

Ms. FILATOV (*Minister of Labour, Finland*) — I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the President and the Vice-President on their election.

I welcome the new structure of the Director-General's Report on programme implementation. From it we can see that the ILO is on the right path. It gives us — as well as the public at large — a clear picture of the core activities.

I also wish to commend the Director-General for his unrelenting and fruitful efforts to enhance the visibility of the Organization, and thus strengthen the impacts the ILO can make. The ILO, being a respected expert in its own field, has made great efforts to secure recognition of its values in the international community. The success of the Global Employment Forum was a clear expression of the newly revived willingness to analyse the issues of the world of work.

The timely proposal to set up the eminent World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization, to search for consensus building and new thinking around the difficult issues of the impacts of globalization, is another laudable initiative.

Surely, we all are looking forward with confidence to the report of the World Commission in due course. It is vital that we deliberate together in partnership and reinforce mutual confidence, in order to find appropriate ways to respond to the challenges of this rapidly changing world.

The UN Millennium Assembly stressed partnerships between all actors in society. In partnership it is possible to attenuate the harmful effects of globalization. There seems to be a growing feeling that forces and events that shape our lives are beyond control. We cannot turn a blind eye to this.

Democracy is the cornerstone of civil society. Security in everyday life is an indispensable ingredient of well-being and the drive of the individual, the family and also society. Nationally, we have long democratic traditions of cooperation in the shaping of working life.

The ways in which work is managed and undertaken have changed quite drastically. This change has been gradual. So, at the same time, and even at the

same place, we can discern old and the new phenomena side by side — the traditional labour market structures and new ways in which work is organized.

Can it be that this evolution is leading to a totally new environment, which calls into question the very foundations of the old structures of work? For example, the boundaries between employer and employee may have become hazy, together with the security built on these concepts.

Even if these changes are still modest in volume and significance, they seem to represent a growing trend. Globalization has opened up huge potential for increased productivity and wealth creation, but it also brings new risks to the business world. In Europe we can see that various forms of precarious employment are being resorted to. Weaker protection and smaller incomes are the most typical features of these precarious forms of work. A new informal sector is also emerging in developed countries.

Decent work is our starting point and the building block for all who, in the midst of turbulent global developments, search for the right priorities.

The ILO's mission today is of great significance. Policies inside national boundaries to achieve security and boost meaningful employment are no longer sufficient. Social justice and fair distribution of the wealth that is created in the global marketplace will not happen without international cooperation and political will. It is therefore encouraging to note that the ILO has succeeded in creating new momentum on this front. It is now up to us to keep up the momentum.

Ms. WIKLUND (*Government delegate, Sweden*) — This statement is being made on behalf of my Minister, who unfortunately was not able to be here today. I would like to begin, of course, by tendering my whole delegation's congratulations to the President and to his colleagues.

It is always a pleasure to return to the International Labour Conference and join in its work and discussions. My starting point today is that the ILO has an impressive history to build on, a history of turning ideals into concrete action. My second point of departure is optimism. The work of the Conference clearly signals that globally, too, democratic policies and international tripartite cooperation are a key to accomplishing changes.

As the world becomes more interdependent, both States and other global actors incur greater obligations. Countries which benefit from globalization are duty bound to assist weaker nations in avoiding marginalization from expanding opportunities and from global economic rule making.

The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization numbers among its tasks that of working to build a consensus on a model of globalization which reduces poverty and insecurity and increases opportunities for all. An aspect of that task is a sign of an integrated policy framework promoting both economic and social goals in the global economy. Better coordination is needed not merely to avoid duplication and overlapping, but also to address the inter-relatedness of issues and to build on the potential complementarities between the various international actors. Some of the controversies over the social impact of globalization could be resolved by providing hard empirical evidence on the issue. The Commission, therefore, will have to present a rigorous analysis in order to underpin its conclusions.

I hope that all international agencies will contribute to these efforts in order to make the results solid and credible. The Commission does not belong to a specific agency. It is, and should be, a "world" commission.

The core labour standards are human rights. Those rights are not a reward of development; they are critical for achieving it. Rights also make human beings better economic players. The political will to promote fundamental rights can be demonstrated under any economic circumstances and across all cultures.

This year's Global Report focuses on child labour, which in its worst forms is an intolerable violation of the rights of the child. The Report mirrors the attention given to the principle of eliminating child labour as a global course and a priority for human development. It is very disturbing to see that not even affluent countries are immune to the worst forms of child labour. There is no simple, quick fix for child labour. What is clear, however, is firstly that in order to eradicate abusive child labour, all actions should be based on the notion of promoting the best interests of the child, and secondly that universal involvement is called for. We need extended partnerships and global alliances, and the ILO needs to continue to pursue greater integration by other multilateral institutions of the fundamental rights and principles at work.

There is a huge gap between the haves and the have-nots. This simply is not sustainable, and ensuring the closure of the gap is a matter of self-interest for the privileged. This may sound idealistic, but it is pragmatic. In an interdependent world, we cannot afford to let people lose out in the pursuit of a decent life. Behind the veil of poverty statistics lies a grim reality for the individual woman, man and child. This reality demands a whole range of policy interventions.

The Global Employment Agenda offers a framework within which governments can shape their policies according to different national and local conditions, its basic premise being that employment is the way out of poverty. The Agenda is an invitation to the tripartite community and the whole global system to work together and to rethink our present approach. I hope that all of us have already accepted that invitation.

The approach of making full employment a key macroeconomic objective and a concept for the co-ordination of all policies merits full support. The focus on change and the attention given to the socially acceptable management of change demonstrates the realism behind the framework.

Flexibility for enterprises and security for workers, far from being mutually exclusive, are both needed. Many aspects of the global economy's workings remain poorly documented and little understood. Ongoing poverty research within the Office will help to improve our understanding of this and how it impacts on the ILO's strategic objectives. This will provide the basis for identifying policies, at both international and national levels, that will accelerate progress towards achieving our goals. I am confident that the present Conference will make a signal contribution to all these endeavours, and I wish it all the success that it deserves.

Original German: Mr. NORDMANN (Secretary of State, Directorate of Labour, Federal Department of the Economy, Switzerland) — In even years the purpose of the Report of the Director-General is to de-

scribe the implementation of the visions generated in the previous year. The extent to which great visions are actually implemented makes or breaks the trust of members in an organization.

To that end, Switzerland's report is also due this year. For the first time since 1919 Switzerland has been a voting member of the Governing Body for the past three years. Against this background it gives me particular pleasure to congratulate the Chairperson on his election as President of the International Labour Conference. We regard this as recognition of the commitment of the Chairperson and the commitment of our delegation.

Three years ago, Mrs. Dreyfuss, the then President of the Federal Council, promised as guest of honour from this very rostrum that Switzerland would be an active, reform-oriented and reliable member of the Governing Body. We have fulfilled that promise. By way of examples, I would mention the organization of the follow-up conference to the World Social Summit in Geneva two years ago, our work on standards reform, in introducing the strategic budget, in strengthening the role of the ILO in matters relating to the social dimension of globalization and also in expanding our commitment in the field of technical cooperation.

These successes are an incentive to us in the coming years actively to take on responsibility and to press for reform in the interests of the institution.

This work will be made easier for us by the Report of the Director-General. Progress is noted in many areas, such as the ILO World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization and the discussion which has begun on standards reform and the financial stability of the Organization.

However, we should not cry victory too soon, and we should not lower our commitment just because we have achieved a partial victory.

In this respect we consider the following areas to be of central importance if the vision of the ILO is to be achieved. First of all, reform of standards: new ideas need to be tested in order to focus and strengthen the ILO's standard-setting policy. Let us strengthen and streamline our procedures in the ILO by making them more transparent and efficient instead of worrying about what is going on at the WTO. Secondly, the strengthening of the ILO in the context of the social dimension of globalization: visions must now give way to actual solutions. In order to be able to work out new solutions, we once again request the appointment of a chief economist and also the building up of a stronger team of economists.

In order to achieve these goals, a more outward-looking approach is needed. The instruments and institutional mechanisms of this Organization have to be adapted to meet new challenges.

We suggest that three specific ideas be considered. First of all, the setting up of an ILO network of regional or global mediators for labour conflicts who offer their good offices at the request of the parties to a conflict. Secondly, a voluntary arbitration tribunal which would help to solve international labour conflicts on the basis of ILO standards and principles. Thirdly, in the field of labelling and codes of conduct, training courses and documents should be developed to encourage compliance with international labour standards by companies. This might help to win back lost ground and check the weakening of core standards.

(The speaker continues in French.)

I would also like to mention the Appendix to the Director-General's concerning on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories. Switzerland concurs fully with the accuracy of the analysis contained in this balanced report. Clearly, unless the closures are loosened or lifted there can be no economic and social progress on the Palestinian side, and the humanitarian situation will only worsen.

The report calls for reforms as a means of speeding up the process of democratization and giving greater transparency to the institutions of the Palestinian Authority. The ILO certainly has a complementary role to play through a technical cooperation programme in the areas of employment promotion, social protection and social dialogue. Switzerland will closely follow the discussions on the setting up of an Employment and Social Protection Fund and the initiatives taken in the field of microcredits.

(The speaker resumes in German.)

To sum up, the ILO can be congratulated. Thanks to new visions and an active PR policy, it has attracted the attention of the international media. Now these ideas have to be transformed into long-term actual changes. That means the ILO now has to deliver. We are quite sure that, by focusing its efforts on the necessary reforms, the ILO will be able to meet this challenge. We assure the Director-General that Switzerland will continue to provide active, reliable support for his aims and the Organization.

Original Spanish: Mr. ALONSO TELLECHEA (*Minister of Labour and Social Security, Uruguay*) — Rarely in the history of labour has mankind lived in a time that is as important and as vital at the present. Economic problems and technological change have thrust mankind in to a new era of technological revolution, an era of information technology, of communications and of globalization — the electronic era. Labour relations are an indispensable part of this reality, as pure economics are conditioned by the presence of human beings applying their intellectual or physical energy in exchange for a salary. The fact that it is human beings that do work is enough to justify analysis of the relationship between ethics and economics. The development of labour legislation is based on ethical principles, and not on economics. This is the meaning of the Declaration of Philadelphia, which states that labour is not a commodity. It is encouraging to know that there is a growing consensus that the main objective of any economic development has to be to improve the quality of life. To that end, it is essential that societies establish and in fact achieve such aims as economic growth, stability, financial balance and the development of trade improving their productivity and competitiveness. This is of course a basic condition for development. However, we know from experience that you can achieve considerable growth and stability without improving the living conditions of the population; and indeed in some cases while worsening them. There is no linear relationship between economic growth and social improvement.

Quite on the contrary, especially in Latin America we see cases in which the two processes are to odds. This means that growth does not automatically flow

to the whole of society. The so-called trickle-down effect does not directly apply in today's world. If we take a quick look at the situation in Latin America, we can see that unemployment in the 1990s and the beginning of the third millennium is in fact a result of the efforts our countries have undertaken to confront the challenges of the new global pattern of production and trade. In this process we have implemented a series of economic reforms in order to improve our capacity to compete in international markets while maintaining basic macroeconomic balances. These reforms, as well as the changes that the global economy is undergoing, have in fact created a new situation marked by globalization, economic liberalization and democratization, as well as by people's expectations that a healthier, more stable economy and a more effective State will translate into social progress.

Globalization has brought with it a greater integration of countries into the global economy. It has in many cases created new opportunities for job creation, but it has also had an impact on such determining factors as employment and salaries. The need to enhance competitiveness means that salary adjustments depend on growth and productivity. Moreover, changes in aggregate demand require greater capacity to adapt in organizing work and production processes.

Trade and finance reforms have in fact brought about an uneven elimination of barriers to international trade. Many import restrictions have been removed, and the level and extent of customs tariffs have been reduced. However, this has gone hand in hand with the opening up of capital markets. Rapid globalization of markets has not had the same impact in all countries. Especially in developed countries, there is still a protectionist system of subsidies and non-tariff barriers that demonstrates a lack of reciprocity with our policies of openness, and that sooner or later will have to be dismantled. The sooner this is done, the lower the costs will be for mankind as a whole. In this forum, as well as in every international forum that we take part in, the countries of MERCOSUR have raised their voices to demand a world-wide commitment to true globalization, without anybody being excluded, without borders that divide, but rather with borders that unite, with an ethical commitment to the sustainable development of all men and women on earth, and with social justice.

Original Japanese: Ms. KANO (Senior Vice-Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan) — I have read with great interest the Report of the Director-General, *ILO programme implementation 2000-01*. This is the first Report submitted since the new strategic budgeting process was introduced, and I value it very highly. This high-level Report is very comprehensible, because it is arranged according to the ILO's four strategic objectives. It is not merely an account of the past activities, but indicates how the ILO's activities will be carried out in the years to come.

This Report refers to regional activities. I should like to report to you what has taken place in Asia. The Thirteenth Asian Regional Meeting, held in August last year, was a great success. It highlighted the lack of decent work in the region, and we concluded that the issue of employment is an urgent task facing us. The Government of the Philippines has decided that it will be the first country in the region to implement the first National Action Programme for Decent Work. I

do hope that the Philippines will be emulated by other countries and regions.

I must admit, however, that comparatively few pages of the Director-General's Report are devoted to describing regional activities. In order to promote most effectively the decentralization policy proposed by the Director-General, I should have hoped that, in accordance with the four strategic objectives, the Report would describe the regional activities in greater detail.

In May this year, ASEAN +3 (the three being Japan, China and the Republic of Korea) was held in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and I had the pleasure of representing my country. We had a very high-level discussion on the issues, including the activities of the ILO. For the first time in history, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific was present on that occasion. At this meeting, several ministers of labour of our region expressed the view that the ILO should make a greater effort to promote employment and to solve the problem of poverty in the region. We have a large potential labour force, but since all of these workers are unskilled, skills development is an urgent issue.

As regards skills development in the region, the Asia and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP) was established in 1978, and I believe that it is now of the utmost importance that this programme be activated.

Also during the ASEAN +3 meeting, there was a lively exchange of views with regard to reviewing the supervisory machinery, which began at the Governing Body session. Many supported greater transparency and equity in the current supervisory machinery.

The Government of Japan strongly expects that, based upon these views, the Office will actively promote the review of the supervisory machinery.

As I said at the beginning, my country supports the ILO's strategic objectives with a view to achieving decent work, but that does not justify unlimited budgetary expenditure by the Organization. The ILO must, in every case, review its expenditure and endeavour to save as much as possible.

In addition to gaining support in the policy field, the ILO must enlist the financial support of member countries. It should face the fact that individual governments, despite a difficult financial situation, will be looking very carefully at expenses when making contributions to the ILO.

In the current rapidly globalizing world, the role of international organizations such as the ILO will continue to grow. If social justice is to become a reality, and if the ILO is to exert its full impact, confidence of Members in the ILO is essential. To this end, the Office needs to continue to provide all the necessary material, and the exchange of views is crucial to sustained support of the ILO by its Members. This, I would emphasize, is the source of the ILO's capability.

Mr. HJORT FREDERIKSEN (*Minister for Employment, Denmark*) — It has been a turbulent 12 months for the world since the International Labour Conference met last year in June but, in the world of work, there have also been positive elements and I should like to highlight two of these.

First of all, I want to congratulate the Director-General on the very successful Global Employment Forum in November 2001 and for the outcome, the

Global Employment Agenda. With 1.2 billion people in the world living below the poverty line, and half a billion working poor living on less than US\$1 a day, it is absolutely crucial and timely that the ILO has adopted a Global Employment Agenda. Only through employment can living standards be improved for millions of people, and we must ensure decent work for all. So, the key words are economic growth, employment and prosperity.

The new Global Employment Agenda is based on the recognition that employment conditions and labour market institutions differ around the world. The discussion in the Committee on the Informal Economy, a highly relevant topic, has confirmed that there is no “one-size-fits-all” model. Requirements and conditions are different in various parts of the world, among regions and among States but, guided by common ILO values, principles and objectives, we can learn from each other’s experiences.

One of the top priorities in my country, Denmark, is to create more jobs and prevent social exclusion. Although we have the highest participation rate and, at the same time, one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the European Union, our main goal is job creation — the only way we can ensure our welfare system. One of our greatest future challenges in this respect involves helping disadvantaged groups return to the labour market. We must not waste these human resources. We have to assist people in obtaining jobs so as to ensure dignity and decency in their lives.

In November 2002, the Danish Government will launch a plan of action with the following elements: better activation measures and job placement activities; more elderly persons in employment; better labour market integration of young persons; upgrading the skills and qualifications of the labour force; labour market integration; fewer administrative burdens and measures to make work pay.

The national priorities I have just mentioned will be continued as the “red thread” throughout the Danish presidency of the European Union starting on 1 July 2002. In the field of employment and social policy, the theme will be “Social inclusion through social dialogue and partnership”. The political ambition is to focus on the creation of an inclusive labour market through social dialogue and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. I think the International Labour Conference will appreciate my emphasis on social dialogue.

The second positive element is the creation of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. We welcome this initiative and look forward to the Commission’s report as an important contribution in the fight against poverty and unemployment. The World Commission should involve all relevant international organizations so as to have a firm international response. Globalization must be more inclusive in order to work for the benefit of everyone. We must help to ensure that the gains of globalization are evenly spread, which is easier said than done, but I hope that together Governments and social partners can do it.

I wish you all a successful Conference and thank you for your attention.

Original French: Mr. TROGRILIC (*Workers’ delegate, France*) — First of all, allow me to congratulate the President on his election. I have no doubt that under his leadership the work of this session will mark

an important milestone for the role and position of the ILO.

The Report presented by the Director-General contains many promises. In it we also find the dynamism we need today so that the progress made may continue to become a reality.

We support the approach which involves the adoption of strategic budgeting. Indeed, it is important to know what our targets are and to see through well-chosen indicators if our objectives have been achieved and what difficulties must be overcome. This type of approach strengthens the credibility of the ILO and contributes to making it more transparent as one of the major international regulatory bodies.

By placing at the heart of the debate the objective of decent work and income for all, the ILO is advocating an approach which has our unqualified support. Decent work and income are essential components in the upholding of fundamental rights. The major forum of November 2001 saw the approval of a draft Global Employment Agenda seeking the integration of macroeconomic, development and labour market policies. This is an excellent initiative.

Necessary as they may be, macroeconomic policies may not be reduced to financial policies. This is underlined by Joseph E. Stiglitz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, who has criticized the IMF missions, stating that they have stopped serving the interests of the world economy in order to serve those of global finance. It is therefore urgent that employment find its real place in a globalized economy. We have no quarrel with the latter, but we need regulation for the former to happen. It is absolutely essential that we have IMF and World Bank coordination with the ILO, the incorporation of social concerns in world trade standards, and joint work between the ILO and the WTO.

The ILO also describes the intermediate objectives which must receive our full support: developing knowledge, skills and employability; expanding reconstruction and labour-intensive investment; and developing small and micro-enterprises. This is very important because we need to shift progressively from the informal economy towards independent employment with real rights and guarantees, including the constant upholding of gender equality.

The ILO advocates a strengthening of tripartism and social dialogue. We can note some progress in this area but much remains to be done. The setting up of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is an important initiative with a view to increasing the powers of the ILO so that it can ensure the Conventions that lay the basis for its legitimacy are observed.

With respect to child labour, the ILO’s action through the instruments it has created has widely contributed to sensitizing public opinion worldwide on this matter. In making tomorrow a symbolic date to mark the importance of this matter, the ILO is contributing greatly to this effort.

All this encourages us to support ILO action to ensure a better balance between economic development and human development. The ILO confirms its role as a key player in this regard.

Finally, we are keenly aware of the appendix to the Report of the Director-General concerning the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories. We welcome the efforts of Palestinian and Israeli trade unionists to foster negotiations leading to lasting

peace. Only peace can guarantee economic development and the respect of the fundamental rights of workers. The initiative proposed for creating a special fund for employment and social protection in Palestine receives our full support.

Original Russian: Mr. LUBLIN (Government delegate, Russian Federation) — First of all, I would like to congratulate the President on his election to this high office and wish him success in conducting this session of the Conference.

It is with great satisfaction that I would like to note that the International Labour Organization continues to undertake considerable efforts to solve important strategic tasks in the sphere of labour and social welfare, with a full understanding of the real situation existing in the world. The Organization is now capable of reacting appropriately to new requirements in global development strategy.

An important ILO initiative is its international study of the social aspects of globalization. I think the majority of countries around the world are interested in this study, including countries with a transitional economy.

Using objective facts, it aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of this global phenomenon and the peculiarities of its influence on various countries and regions in order to understand the main contours and dynamics of this process and the way it impacts the aspects of a country's life.

We think an analysis of the social sphere should focus mainly on the problems arising from globalization's impact on transforming the labour market, on workers' competitiveness and on the extent to which national social welfare systems are consistent with international standards. We await this Report with great interest.

The concept of decent work put forward by the ILO has given a noticeable impetus toward achievement of an integrated approach to the general policy of development and has been of great help to governments in adapting to new social conditions.

The Report on decent work focuses specifically on the growth of the informal economy, emphasizing such aspects as the lack of social protection and the lack of benefits. Among the factors shaping the informal economy, it notes the importance of improving national labour legislation. We fully support the Report's tenets and would like to mention that the new Labour Code of the Russian Federation, which went into effect on 1 February this year, established a system of labour guarantees providing incentives for both workers and employers in signing labour contracts that regulate the whole gamut of a worker's rights. We have expanded rights and guarantees both in the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

In supporting the ILO's new strategic priorities, we fully share its intention to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which touches on this problem, not only supplements the ILO's key Conventions, but is a logical extension of them. Considerable success has been achieved in implementing the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. An important place in these efforts has been accorded the Global Report on child labour, which has been presented in a number of countries, including the Russian Federation. We fully acknowledge that child labour is a serious threat to sustainable

economic and social development. As the Global Report notes, it directly harms children both physically and psychologically, stunting their education and development. It is very important that the Report comprehensively defines the types of child labour that have to be eliminated. Of course, achieving this goal will require the efforts not only of national governments but of the entire international community as well. The Russian Federation has set itself the goal of gradually eliminating the worst forms of child labour. We intend to ratify the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), in the near future, and we hope to implement it in our legislation with satisfactory results.

Original Farsi: Mr. HOSSEINI (Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran) — I would like to start by congratulating the President on his election to chair the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference. I hope that this session manifests the endeavours made by the ILO constituents.

At the start of the twenty-first century, global employment still faces a major uphill battle. There has been a lack of effective, transparent non-discriminatory strategies at the international level for the salvation of more than one billion people in the world, who live below the poverty line and who are faced daily with insecurity and uncertainty.

Unbalanced and irresponsible globalization, international competition and also an unjust distribution of global trade have affected the labour forces of a large number of developing countries.

The International Labour Organization is expected to provide developing countries with further technical assistance in respect of issues related to "full employment and an active labour market".

Today the repercussions of unequal access to modern technology have made the structure of the national economy in many countries vulnerable, and we are now facing its increasingly negative consequences in the global labour market. Mending job security and settling the global labour market problem, even by strengthening the social security system, has become an uphill struggle.

The initiative taken by the ILO Director-General in setting up the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is valuable and is highly appreciated. The diversity of the member States' socio-economic structure makes developing a single formula for rational intervention in the labour market and for solving the problems of globalization very difficult and almost impossible. However, a well-targeted strengthening of the ILO's expertise and technical cooperation would make it possible to prepare the ground for field study and research.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, through the development of an effective tripartite mechanism and social dialogue, is attempting to curb the unemployment problem during Iran's third five-year development plan. It is also endeavouring to institutionalize workers' and employers' representative organizations' involvement within a plan of sustainable development.

Protecting the next generation requires a balanced and shared international commitment towards defending the rights of the child, which is the most noble human pursuit. We believe that by providing the proper mechanisms for implementation of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182),

the ILO is able to play an enhancing role to deal with this unjustified phenomenon. In this perspective, the Islamic Republic of Iran ratified [Convention No. 182](#).

Furthermore, to improve the social and intellectual development of the Iranian young generation, more than 2 million school and university students have been granted education free of charge, and education to the end of the high-school level has been made compulsory.

The 90th Session of the International Labour Conference is coinciding with the 54th anniversary of the occupation of Palestine, a violation of the United Nations Charter, and also of the core international labour standards. Hence, I should like to suggest to the session that a special committee should be set up in order to prepare a comprehensive report detailing the Zionist regime's violations, with regard to global obligations and the ILO Constitution, to be submitted to the ILO Governing Body at its next session. We hope that through this responsible initiative, effect will be given to the slogan of "social justice for all".

Original Spanish: Mr. SOLARI SAAVEDRA (*Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Chile*) — It is an honour for me to address you at the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference, to inform you of the progress made in Chile over the past year in the labour sphere and of our efforts to provide more decent work in our country. This progress is in line with the objectives of President Ricardo Lagos' Government: economic growth with social protection.

In 2001 my country promulgated a new labour reform which is in keeping with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted in 1998. Thanks to this great stride forward in modernizing our system of labour relations, our Labour Code was amended through the promulgation of a series of laws for the benefit and protection of the worker.

These amendments have also brought our legislation into conformity with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 ([No. 87](#)), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 ([No. 98](#)). In this way workers in the private sector and in state-owned enterprises, irrespective of their legal status, have the recognized right to establish, without previous authorization, trade union organizations of their own choosing, subject only to the law. As regards collective bargaining, the Labour Code provides that this shall take place in enterprises in the private sector and in those subsidized by the State or in which the State owns shares or is represented.

Another achievement of the present coalition Government was the ratification in 1999 of the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 ([No. 105](#)). Today we can say that in Chile we do not have forced labour. Along the same lines, the State of Chile is committed to the effective elimination of child labour in all its forms. In November 2001 we put in place a National Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour, especially in its worst forms. To this end, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) entered into an agreement to carry out a project aimed at assessing child labour and its worst forms.

Within this project, the national juvenile service will keep a register of the worst forms of child labour,

such as prostitution and the use of children in drug trafficking.

As regards the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, we are working very hard to end discriminatory practices. In the past 12 years, we have made a systematic effort to introduce regulations guaranteeing equal treatment at work. One legislation prohibits the requirement for women to undergo a pregnancy test in order to get a job or obtain promotion. As of 2001, new legislative provisions have been introduced to strengthen the prohibition on discrimination in employment on grounds of age, sex, religion, race, appearance and political opinions.

As regards social protection, the new unemployment insurance scheme will be fully operational as of 1 October 2002, which means that every new contract of employment signed after that date will have to make provision for the necessary contributions. The State will contribute a substantial amount to this system, which will go into a Solidarity Fund to guarantee workers five months' income if they lose their job.

Another task facing the Government is the creation of special employment programmes using public funds to combat unemployment. The Pro-Employment Programme will provide thousands of workers and enterprises with a job subsidy. Of these, 89 per cent are small and micro-enterprises which will receive a direct subsidy for each worker hired. We are going to pursue a very active employment generation policy and we have the spirit and will to extend these programmes if necessary.

The Ministry also gives priority to working women, especially those who are heads of households. The Labour Code amendments introducing new forms of employment will promote the employment of women, as well as home work and part-time contracts to help improve working women's quality of life; in addition, measures will be introduced to improve working conditions for women seasonal workers in agriculture, especially with regard to childcare.

Another decent work challenge is to make progress in the substantive reform of the labour court system with the aim of multiplying the existing number of labour courts by five, establishing specialized welfare claims courts, introducing expeditious oral hearings and ensuring access to justice free of charge to those with limited resources.

Yet another challenge is enhancing the employability and productivity of Chilean working men and women. This involves a steady increase in the number of workers receiving training covered by tax exemptions, doubling the number reached in the 1990s with the aim of training a million workers in 2004.

Informal work is another priority on our agenda. A register of agricultural contract workers has been established with the aim of solving this problem.

As regards social security, we are going to establish a multiple pension fund system in order to increase the profitability of the pension system and allow a greater degree of freedom for members.

As a Government, we have maintained an ongoing relationship with our worker and employer partners, and will continue to do so in order to implement our agenda of growth with social security and with respect to specific issues facing all of us: employment, training and productivity. In this way we will fulfil our commitment to promote decent work and social cohesion —

fundamental aspects of the new world we want for the future.

Mr. JESTIN (*Government delegate, Ireland*) — On behalf of the Irish delegation, I wish to congratulate the President and Vice-Presidents on their election at this session of the Conference. I would also like to congratulate the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General on their comprehensive reports.

Since the last Conference, the terrible events in New York on 11 September have, in many ways, united the world in a manner that perhaps the terrorists did not intend or expect. Countries are now united more than ever in ensuring that the world in which we live must be a peaceful, united one which recognizes all countries' respective needs, regardless of colour, creed or social differences.

It is all the more important, therefore, that international forums such as the ILO are given the political backing of all their member countries to ensure that all citizens are given the opportunity to work in decent jobs with standards underpinning such fundamental rights. This approach can only be achieved through partnership and consensus — which is the cornerstone of how the ILO has worked, and continues to work, so successfully in practice.

I wish to congratulate Director-General Somavia on his excellent Report, *ILO Programme Implementation 2000-01*. In this period there is much that can be regarded with a sense of accomplishment. The ILO's visibility and influence has been expanded in many of the most significant debates of our time.

Through tripartism and social dialogue in decision-making at all levels, the commitment to the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work is now stronger than ever and backed up by practical actions. Through the same means, the elimination of the worst forms of child labour has become an international priority. The four-year reporting cycle under the follow-up process ensures that progress is measured and that practical outcomes become visible. The progress achieved by the ILO in 2000-01 in relation to the targets set under each of its four strategic objectives is to be commended. The introduction of strategic budgeting will, we believe, bring further fine tuning to this process and will further focus the ILO's core activities in the years ahead.

I would like to refer briefly to recent developments in the Irish economy. The downturn in global economic fortunes has had an impact on job creation, employment and unemployment as 2001 progressed. However, I am pleased to say that the downturn is expected to be short lived, and the Irish Government expects that employment growth of 24,000 can be expected in 2002.

The Irish Government's objectives over the medium term will be to create more and higher-skilled jobs, to achieve full employment, to eliminate long-term unemployment and to secure balanced jobs and skills throughout the country. The Irish Government shares the view that the best way to tackle social exclusion is by the provision of jobs.

Since 1987, Ireland has had five national-level social partnership agreements, negotiated on a voluntary basis between the Government and the social partners — that is, the main employer, trade union and farming organizations and, in the case of the two

most recent agreements, the community and voluntary sectors as well.

Since their inception, these agreements have been a feature of the radical transformation in Ireland's economic and social fortunes. In particular, the agreements have formed part of a virtuous circle in the economy, encompassing pay, profitability, investment, employment and tax reform. They have also presented established business and potential investors with the prospect of stability and certainty over a multi-annual timeframe, thereby stimulating investment and job creation. They have yielded significant benefits in terms of industrial peace.

The current Partnership Agreement, the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF), expires at the end of 2002 and formal discussions between the new Irish Government and the social partners about the initiation of negotiations on a successor agreement are likely to begin in the autumn of this year. This is a key policy objective of the new Government in the months ahead.

A number of important government initiatives agreed under the PPF were delivered during 2001. The Carer's Leave Act came into effect from 2 July 2001 and the Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Act came into effect from 20 December 2001. I am pleased to be able to inform the Conference that, as a result of the passing of the latter Act, Ireland will be formally ratifying the Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175).

Delegates will recall that, at last year's Conference, Ireland was a keen advocate of the necessity for the follow-up on the Director-General's Report on forced labour. I am pleased to tell the Conference that in 2001, Ireland Aid entered into a partnership programme with the ILO. The objective of this programme is to create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income. Within this broad context, the programme focuses on the creation of quality jobs through women's entrepreneurship initiatives, enhanced employability of the disabled and employment-intensive investment in public infrastructure. Ireland Aid will contribute 3.2 million euros to the programme over the period 2001-03.

A key element in the Ireland Aid programme is, and will continue to be, partnership, and this programme represents a good example of a real "partnership" between the ILO and Ireland Aid. We are delighted to be part of this exciting programme and look forward to engaging in and developing our partnership with the ILO in coming years.

Following the special plenary session of the International Labour Conference on the Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, entitled *Stopping forced labour*, last year, Ireland Aid officials visited the ILO in Geneva to discuss this issue. A one-day programme is being arranged for Dublin in September to promote greater visibility for forced labour concerns. Meetings will be held between the appropriate government departments and NGOs to follow up the successful forced bonded labour campaign launched by Irish NGO Trocaire in 2001.

In conclusion, delegations will have noted that the key word that comes to the fore throughout our address is "partnership". It is Ireland's strong belief that only through partnership, involving a tripartite ap-

proach similar to that of the ILO, can the various targets set out in the Director-General's Report for 2000-2001 be achieved in the future. Partnership at national level has worked for Ireland. There is no reason to believe why it should not continue to do so in the future for the ILO also.

Original Arabic: Mr. KANSO (*Minister of Labour, Lebanon*) — First of all I should like to greet you in the name of Lebanon and I should like to pay tribute to the efforts made by the ILO to promote social stability through the formulation of conventions and norms and principles and by means of its technical assistance, in the interest of the three social partners. We are all aware of the strong link between social stability and social justice. There can be no stability without justice. If there is no justice in the distribution of national resources, any society will be destabilized and shaken. There can be no stability, there can be no peace, as long as the world is divided between rich countries which keep getting richer and poor countries which keep getting poorer, and as long as the world is divided between powerful tyrannical countries and weak oppressed countries.

Living as we are at a time dominated by the fight against terrorism, we are firmly opposed to terrorism but we believe that there are reasons why terrorism exists and any efforts we make to eradicate it will be in vain unless we eliminate the causes, including the absence of social justice and the absence of international justice. Therefore, the main task which the international community must perform through its organizations and various institutions is to establish a system of justice on the debris of the current international order which is devoid of impartiality and justice in the way in which it deals with major world issues, if it truly wishes to establish peace between peoples. The real terrorism threatening this world is forcible occupation of others' territories. The word should stand beside all peoples whose land is occupied, whose resources are pillaged, whose children and old people are killed, whose work opportunities are wiped out, whose fields are destroyed, as is the case in Palestine, the Golan Heights and the Lebanese Shebaa farms. We are surprised by the indifference which met the massacre of the Palestinian people and the continued occupation of the Golan Heights and the Shaba farms. We are also surprised at the strange silence regarding the continuing blockade imposed upon Iraq. Where is international justice if the occupier is not obliged to withdraw from occupied territories and if the blockade imposed upon the Iraqi people is not lifted? Where is justice? We stress this because we are determined to uphold the Constitution of the ILO which establishes a link between the concepts of social justice and lasting international peace. It is because we respect international law, particularly the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which all prohibit the violation of national, social and political rights of individuals, groups and peoples.

We appreciate the Report of the Director-General on decent work, the fight against child labour and the informal economy efforts to strengthen social protection. We appreciate the efforts made by the ILO mission in preparing the Report on the deteriorated situation in the Palestinian territories, and we commend the initiative of the Director-General

aimed at establishing a fund to support Palestinian workers, hoping that mechanisms will soon be set up to implement this project.

We are happy to be able to announce to this august assembly that we have just completed a draft labour code, with our two partners, in which international labour standards have been taken into consideration. We have also drawn up a draft law on old-age insurance. We have ratified all the international labour Conventions under the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

As the host country of the International Labour Office's Regional Office in Beirut, we look forward to seeing the Office playing a greater role so as to ensure that the social partners in Lebanon and other countries in this region can better benefit from the work of the Organization. We should also like to draw your attention to the fact that after the liberation of most of Southern Lebanon from Zionist occupation, the ILO sent a specialized mission, for which we are grateful, which drafted a comprehensive report on the needs in terms of social development and employment creation for the people in the liberated territories. We are grateful to the Organization for this but we also appeal to it to help us with the donors so that these plans can be translated into actual projects that would provide workers and employers with employment opportunities.

In conclusion, we say to the Conference that we are all responsible for establishing world peace on the basis of respect for the national rights and social justice for all peoples struggling for their freedom and independence. All of us are concerned and involved in the fight against terrorism, especially state terrorism practiced by States which forcibly occupy the territories of other countries.

Original German: The PRESIDENT (Mr. AR-BESSER RASTBURG) — The next speaker on my list is Mr. Sadeq, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Afghanistan. I have not yet asked him to take the floor because I first want to make a statement. I want to say that we are proud to see his country, Afghanistan, here for the first time for many years with a full delegation attending the International Labour Conference. I believe that this is a very special event which happens to coincide with the great events unfolding in his home country, in Kabul.

Original French: Mr. SADEQ (*Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Afghanistan*) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! On behalf of the delegation of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan and personally, I would like to congratulate the President and the Vice-Presidents for having been elected to conduct the work of the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference.

This year we will mark the 83rd anniversary of the establishment of the ILO and I would like to take this opportunity to express my congratulations to all the Members of this Organization. I hope that this celebration will give new vigour to the ILO in achieving its goals and I would like to assure you that the delegation of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan will do everything it can to ensure the success of this Conference.

We are a Muslim society and from the point of view of Islam everyone should work actively and live from the fruit of their work. Hence, daily employment is

not simply part of our customs but it is considered as a kind of prayer.

The 90th Session of the International Labour Conference is being held at a time when the political, economic and social development of many countries is taking place at an unbelievable pace. In such conditions the work of international institutions, and especially the ILO, has become more complicated and more difficult. This requires close cooperation between all member States of this Organization. We hope that the debates at this Conference and its decisions at these debates will lead to useful and effective decisions.

The agenda of this session has highlighted several priorities. The Report of the Director-General has established the direction in which the activities of this Organization will develop in the future, it will be able to address the needs and the proposals of member States.

A global assessment of the activities of the ILO in the past few years shows that this Organization has been very active and effective in such areas as the improvement of working conditions, the reduction of poverty, the development of better recruitment conditions, and hence it has contributed to establishing political stability and democracy in the world.

The technical issues included in the agenda are of crucial importance. Decent work, the informal economy, occupational accidents and diseases are critical, essential issues that deserve to be broadly debated from the point of view of international standards and criteria.

In light of the multifaceted combat against terrorism around the world, you will know that under the Bonn Agreement, our country, Afghanistan, has an Interim Administration. As soon as it was established, this Administration set for itself the goal of achieving social justice according to the precepts of Islam in all areas - economic, political and social - in order to improve the living conditions of our citizens, eliminate job insecurity and promote security.

The Interim Administration of Afghanistan has fully subscribed to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and would like to have very good relations with all countries of the world. Our foreign policy is based on the principle of peaceful coexistence, respect for the rights of others, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and unconditional support for the rights of nations. It is unquestionable that with the establishment of the Interim Administration and the return of peace and security to the country, it is crucial to think about reconstruction and the rebuilding of the country's economic and social institutions. This is the main concern of our Administration.

Today we are very happy to see the last phase of the Bonn Agreement being implemented, consisting of the convening of the Loya Jirga and the establishment of a transition Government.

Afghanistan is one of the oldest Members of this Organization. Our country has regularly supported the decisions and resolutions of the ILO that have been adopted according to its statutes. Our country has implemented these according to our means and now that the reconstruction of the country is on the agenda, we hope that our cooperation with the ILO will become increasingly close and fruitful.

During the 88th Session of the International Labour Conference several proposals were submitted

to special committees for adoption. Following their adoption we hope that they will be implemented. We think that the application of the principles and regulations included in the statutes of the Organization, as well as the implementation of decisions and resolutions require first and foremost the existence of peace and stability. Furthermore it is only with technical, financial and material assistance from industrialized countries that we will be able to re-establish economic stability and consolidate peace. Hence, we urgently ask the authorities of the ILO to take an active part in reconstruction projects in our country. We would like them to help us define and establish priorities, to help with necessary funds and to extend their technical and economic cooperation to a country that has suffered so much from the devastation of war and lack of development.

Following its establishment the Interim Administration was confronted with a very major problem, which has attained a nationwide dimension. How to bring thousands of young people who, throughout the war, only spent their time handling weapons, back to a normal social life and gainful employment? How to bring them into the labour market? If we achieve this it will certainly contribute towards establishing peace and security, and even political stability. We thought that one possibility would be to set up technical and vocational training courses under proper supervision. This is the reason why we have asked the ILO and donor States to assist us in this specific domain, by helping us to establish systems of vocational and technical training, as well as helping us with the necessary equipment and infrastructure.

Original French: Mr. YLIEFF (Commissioner of State, Belgium) — With a view to contributing as effectively as possible to the work of the Conference and mindful of Belgium's responsibilities within the Governing Body, I would like to address the following issues: decent work, the Global Employment Forum, the social dimension of globalization, the prevention of occupational accidents and, finally, child labour.

First of all, a few words on decent work. As time goes by, the relevance of this global goal of decent work seems to loom greater. The ILO has given this concept a global dimension and elevated it to rank among the principles that should govern globalization. The facets contained in this concept are clearly relevant everywhere in the world. A number of indications, as well as complaints submitted to the Office, show that we cannot afford to relax our joint vigilance when it comes to promoting good working conditions.

At European Union level, I am pleased to say that the Council, under the Belgian presidency in 2001, was able to agree to a first series of indicators to measure the quality of employment in Europe, at a point in time when States were confirming their pledge to pursue the coordination of their employment policies.

In this way we established goals in Europe for decent work and Belgium intends to ensure that these qualitative goals remain valid and are achieved despite the pressure brought to bear on labour markets and the way employment policies are managed. This is a phenomenon which Europe cannot escape and which could undo social progress already made, while the harmonization we are calling for must be in the direction of higher rather than lower standards.

Here, Belgium would like our central European partners to be more involved in this policy evaluation

work. We will be undertaking a joint project in the autumn.

Regarding the Global Employment Forum last November, Mrs. Onkelinx, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment, was honoured to open the proceedings. We felt that the Forum should provide a fresh boost for creativity and the mobilization of everyone towards a new initiative of growth and hope after the September attacks. Against this background the Governing Body needs to develop an action programme and must not allow doubts and hesitations to dash this hope.

In this connection, I feel we should act in three areas to give added value to the ILO initiative. First, we should see that the programme ties in properly with the goals of decent work and not give the impression that the latter is no longer a key objective. Second, we should create the strategic alliance whereby the ILO will be able to bring together and lead an international platform coordinated on employment issues. Third, we should agree on a method. At the Forum, Belgium suggested that we should draw on a number of elements of the European strategy for employment and we wonder why the Forum has not formulated any operational suggestions.

Turning to globalization now, I welcome the fact that the ILO is keeping the initiative with a view to striking a better balance between the various challenges vying for attention. The ILO should be able to enrich the debate and move it on, especially in view of the very disappointing conclusions of the Doha Ministerial Conference. We await with interest the report from the World Commission that was set up recently. Belgium hopes to see innovative proposals emerging from it which will enable us to break new ground, and which will be powerful and authoritative enough to establish a dialogue between the multinational institutions and lead towards a more measured and balanced response to globalization.

Since we were able to incorporate the environmental dimension in the trade negotiations, my Government reiterates that there can be no globalization without taking account of the social dimension.

As it was recalled a few days ago when celebrating 50 years of the Belgian National Council for Employment, consultation, in particular of a tripartite nature, is a major component of social cohesion and harmony. When the social partners, on good terms with the Government within a clear-cut legal framework which respects all the parties involved, demonstrate a responsible attitude even in exceptional circumstances, I believe that the tripartite approach by which we abide plays an irreplaceable role. However, people have the impression that the process of globalization is not under control. We must provide a fuller response to the questioning that comes at us from all sides, in particular from Porto Allegre.

More than ever we must reassert our faith in Conventions, and show that we have the will to conclude collective agreements to the benefit of the greatest number of our fellow citizens. By means of even-handed, honest and searching analysis, the World Commission should help us to make the Organization even more relevant and credible.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that we take a great interest in occupational hazards and, by reiterating that tomorrow I will be taking part in the debate on the Report on child labour.

Mr. OKUDA (*Employers' delegate, Japan*) — Let me begin by offering heartfelt congratulations to the President on his election. Let me also express my profound respect to the Director-General, Mr. Somavia. Under his leadership the ILO has made important progress in strategic programmes for ensuring decent work around the world.

I am here today as Chairman of the newly established Japan Business Federation (JBF) which came into being at the end of last month through the merger of Nikkeiren and Keidanren. Over the years, Nikkeiren concentrated on labour and social issues and Keidanren focused mainly on economic and industrial issues. Their merger reflects the changes that have swept Japan in recent years. In other words, economic and social issues have become inseparable.

Although, economic measures are indispensable in addressing such issues as unemployment and social welfare, we need to give careful consideration to social implications when framing economic policy. The Japan Business Federation is an organization which approaches issues from both a social and an economic perspective.

A similar approach is necessary in promoting decent work, as proposed by the ILO. Ensuring decent work will require a combination of social and economic measures. Everything begins with employment creation. Economic vitality is a precondition for work itself, for satisfactory jobs and for reliable compensation. A sound social framework is a precondition for fair distribution of the fruits of labour.

Decent work is a guiding principle. We need to establish the elements of decent work for each nation and region, and we need to take steps to consistently put those elements in place.

Japanese discussion of decent work has been taking place during a prolonged economic slump. Our primary concern has been to maintain employment. In wage negotiations this spring, workers and management focused on work-sharing as a possible emergency measure for protecting jobs. New methods of employment are also receiving attention in the longer term perspective as Japanese come to terms with changes in lifestyles. Financial compensation is only part of the debate. Workers and management are re-evaluating traditional working patterns. In these, and other ways we have entered a new phase in our approach to the subject of decent work.

I have consistently called for a market economy with a human face. I have also repeatedly promoted a wider range of work and lifestyles in Japanese society. Promoting diversity is especially important in Japan today. Since the Second World War, Japanese society has tended to enforce uniformity in personal and corporate activity. The future vitality of our nation will depend on fostering diversity among individuals and companies. The dynamism of diversity will be essential for reinvigorating Japanese society and the Japanese economy.

We need to offer a wide range of choice to honour and foster diversity in every phase of life. We need to ensure equal opportunity for people in every walk of life. In the field of labour we need to tailor work patterns, personnel systems and skills development programmes to individual needs. The workplace needs to be a place where people can fulfil their potential; only then will they have the chance to enjoy truly fulfilling lives.

I would add that empathy and mutual trust are prerequisites for nurturing the dynamism of diversity. People need to understand that everyone has different values and goals. We need to respect that difference while working and living with each other.

The same principle applies in the global arena. People of every nation and region face the challenges of globalization. Amid this common trend, we can unleash a powerful new energy and vitality by developing individuality and expressing our different viewpoints.

We need to channel this energy and vitality into wide-ranging efforts to address global challenges, safeguard human rights, overcome poverty and protect the environment, while at the same time respecting the various values and social patterns that we encounter in different nations.

I hope that the ILO will remain open to the dynamism of diversity. In addition to its fundamental role of identifying and propagating universal minimum standards, the ILO should also accommodate the needs of each nation and region with carefully targeted support.

Last year, representatives of employers' organizations in the Asia-Pacific region established the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Employers, (CAPE). Which aims to create a better and more appealing environment for business and to promote social and economic progress for people in the region. At the same time, we will work through CAPE to provide the ILO with input on the specific interests of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region, in order to help the ILO perform its valuable role even more fully and completely.

(Mr. Rampak takes the Chair.)

Original French: Mr. CORTEBEECK (Workers' delegate, Belgium) — I would like to take this opportunity to raise some points on the development of the International Labour Organization and to underscore some of the challenges for the future of the ILO against the background of the global economic and social developments that we are experiencing.

First of all, there are the recent developments described by the Director-General in his Report and which we have experienced in Belgium and throughout the world.

We can only rejoice in the new methodology and programming that the ILO has been able to develop thanks, in part, to the encouraging role of the Director-General. The ILO has been able to give itself a new, more positive, image in its approach to social development.

Even if in the past the ILO sometimes was not trusted by some, it is probably true that the conviction and the positive thought and action today are more appropriate to changing minds and especially to developing good practice in social protection.

That is why we support the honest and serious efforts to modernize the normative policies, but, at the same time, we reject the hidden agendas of some who see, in this discussion, the opportunity for opposition between normative work and technical assistance. We oppose those who confuse the freedom of enterprise with the freedom to adapt social standards only to the economic imperatives of growth and maximizing profits.

Standard-setting work is, and must remain, at the heart of our work in the ILO. Now more than ever the

world needs normative work. We also oppose those who believe that standards only serve developing countries. We are all developing countries in the area of social standards. In Belgium and in the European Union, the ILO international standards prove how relevant and topical they are over and over again. Recently, a reference to international labour standards made it possible in Belgium to conclude a tripartite agreement on some aspects of freedom of association, notably the right to strike.

One of the valuable tools we have in the ILO, and the Director-General does not hide this, is technical assistance. This technical assistance enables us to overcome real difficulties in the field with respect to creating a climate favourable to the complete application in law and practice of social standards. The ILO was able to develop exemplary coherence between normative action on the one hand and its technical assistance policy on the other. Joining international normative work, including the supervisory system, harmoniously with work in the field aimed at ensuring respect in law and in practice of the principles and rights contained in the Conventions is the challenge that remains, more than ever before, topical.

I would briefly like to take up another area of action that the ILO and its Director-General have explored and where the ILO has had the courage to act: that of the social dimension of globalization. The establishment of the high-level commission is only a first, but an important, step in a strategy that must enable us to make the ILO the benchmark in social protection of all the United Nations agencies, to make the ILO the central pivot of global, social governance.

This means a new dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions and with the World Trade Organization, among others. This implies new thought on the representativity of the ILO. For us, the discussion is not that of access, or that, of NGOs. The real discussion is elsewhere, on other benches, and notably on the Employers' benches. What is the representativity of their traditional organizations, when we note that decisive sectors of the world economy prefer to go to confer, in the past in Davos and recently in New York?

We want to issue a challenge to the traditional employers' organizations to modernize and to involve to a greater extent the sectors of the major enterprises in the discussions we are holding here and in real democracy.

We believe that the stakes are sizeable. Of course, we have to be in Davos and in New York, but it is time that the others also find their way to Geneva. The discussion of ideas at the World Economic Forum is a good thing. However, undertaking real commitments in the tripartite dialogue in Geneva is infinitely better for the development of our world.

I conclude by stating that there are so many challenges affecting the living and working conditions of people in our world; there are so many subjects which should be the focus of our work in the future.

Mr. TZIOLAS (Government delegate, Greece) — It is a great honour for me to attend the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference. I would like to express my congratulations to the President on his appointment to that office. I, and the Greek delegation as a whole are convinced that his skills will contribute effectively to the success of the deliberations at the Conference.

I would also like to stress that the Report of the Director-General is a document of great importance, since it provides a detailed analysis of the ILO's work during the last two years.

Moreover, I would like to express my thanks to the ILO's services for the drawing up of the Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and entitled "A future without child labour", where information from all over the world on all forms of child labour is contained and analysed.

The ILO is the sole international organization where employers' and workers' representatives have an equal voice with those of governments when shaping its policies.

The results of the fruitful collaboration of the social partners are obvious at both the national and international level. The ILO has performed important legislative work and, at the same time, it has undertaken significant action to combat inequalities in the labour market, improve the quality of work and fight poverty.

In this context, the ILO has adopted a large number of international Conventions and Recommendations, as well as the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which refers to the fundamental rights to collective bargaining and freedom of association, the abolition of forced labour, the abolition of child labour and the abolition of discrimination in employment, thus responding to the commitments made by the Heads of State and Government at the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995.

Our country, one of the original Members of the ILO, has ratified many of its international Conventions and Recommendations, as well as the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Enhancing our citizens' prosperity constitutes a major objective of the Greek Government. In order to achieve this objective, we pursue the implementation of policies combining the promotion of sustainable economic growth with measures to increase employment and social cohesion. Regarding issues of employment, Greece has fully adopted the objective of the European Employment Strategy to create more and better jobs. In this context, we pursue policies for upgrading manpower skills so that people can be integrated into or remain in the labour market on the best possible conditions; we support, by means of certain actions, vulnerable categories of the population threatened with exclusion from the labour market and, consequently, with social exclusion and we ensure the prerequisites for the social partners' active involvement in policy-making and in the implementation of employment policies.

In autumn 2000, the Greek Government reformed the legal framework governing the labour market, in an attempt to increase full-time and part-time employment, rationalize employer-employee relations and improve the competitiveness of the Greek economy. I would like to emphasize that we are making special efforts in order to ensure that the policies we implement and the decisions we make comply with agreements concluded with the active involvement of the social partners.

The basic elements of the institutional framework are as follows: the drastic restriction of obligatory overtime and higher remuneration for overtime; the fixing of annual working time in combination with its

reduction through the conclusion of collective agreements; the provision of incentives for the promotion of part-time work and the reintegration of the long-term unemployed, and the rationalization of limits on mass dismissals.

We have now established a national forum between the social partners for discussing all employment issues.

The ILO's fight against the exploitation of children is analysed in detail in the report entitled "A future without child labour". Greece has ratified all international labour Conventions on child labour, starting with [Convention No. 5](#), which was adopted at the First Session of the International Labour Conference.

My country will hold the Presidency of the European Union during the first half of 2003. I would like to inform you that employment and social protection issues will be made top priorities on the agenda of the Greek Presidency that will come at an historic moment when the European Union will be welcoming its new Member States, including the Republic of Cyprus. We believe that international labour standards combined with national laws can effectively contribute to the materialization of the ILO's goals.

To conclude, I would like to underline that the ILO's fundamental values and its target actions continue to be timely and essential now more than ever before, especially those regarding social justice at work, the safeguarding of satisfactory working conditions, the protection of vulnerable categories of the population (women, the elderly, children, migrants) trade unions and democratic freedoms.

Ms. BLINKEVICIUTE (*Minister of Social Security and Labour, Lithuania*) — I thank the Office, the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body for the well-prepared and informative documents on ILO programme implementation in the 2000-01 biennium. The Report of the Director-General covers the first biennium since the ILO highlighted its four strategic objectives and the Decent Work Agenda, and since it started strategic budgeting. It was therefore very interesting to read and analyse the first results achieved. It is important to realize from the reports that the ILO remains a flexible organization, quickly responding to the challenges of the changing world.

It is evident that the full implementation of strategic budgeting is a sustained process and requires even more time than the reported period. Nevertheless, the result of two years' work indicates impressive achievements in its implementation and this is obviously a step in the right direction. The year when the Organization started planning and budgeting its work in accordance with the four strategic objectives and the Decent Work Agenda was an important turning-point in the history of the ILO. Lithuania congratulates the ILO on its progress in strategic budgeting.

At the same time, we think that there is always room for improvement. We appreciate the "lessons learned" approach taken in the Report and believe that the process will continue to take into account the experience gained during the first part of the programme implementation. We understand that there are difficulties in measuring the results of some types of activities, but we should look for more defined targets and indicators for all activities in the regions. Impacts should be identified more clearly so that progress can be more clearly measured.

The ILO has an effective tool — tripartism. Social dialogue should be further supported and strengthened. If we intend to activate job creation and economic growth in the framework of social justice, this can not be achieved without active and effective social dialogue. The cooperation of the three social partners in building up a strong Organization to pursue the ILO's objectives is a major challenge.

The ILO should maintain the relevancy of the Organization in the light of all changes taking place around the world. The ILO missions to Myanmar, the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, the Global Employment Agenda, and other activities, all demonstrate the quick response of the Organization to the challenges of the changing world.

The Chairperson of the Governing Body has indicated in his Report the major areas to be focused on in technical cooperation activities: establishing mechanisms for setting priority, further improvement of the delivery rate, decentralization of activities and evaluation and impact assessment. We welcome this approach and would only like to add that sometimes there is a shortage of feedback from the recipients.

A new approach is also a very important for the sectoral activities programme, changes in which should maximize impact within the limits of available resources, and it should contain both meeting and non-meeting components.

The ILO stands for the social dimension of globalization. It could be called a “social pillar” along with all Bretton Woods institutions. All members of the Organization should contribute to its activities in their own ways, by promoting and defending fundamental and universal human rights. The ILO's standards and values must be taken into account in all member States, as has been duly reflected in the Report.

I am glad to mention that Lithuania is making sustained progress on this: we have ratified all seven fundamental Conventions, and we foresee the ratification of [Convention No. 182](#) this year. Earlier this month, the Lithuanian Parliament adopted the new Labour Code, which has been approximated with ILO Conventions and European law, and therefore will create more favourable conditions for decent work.

As you may know, yesterday Lithuania was elected as a titular member of the ILO Governing Body in the Government group. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the delegates who supported our candidature and who promised to work actively in order to contribute to the work of the Organization, seeking the implementation of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up.

I would like to conclude my brief intervention with the words of Mr. Somavia which were spoken in 1999, when he became the Director-General of the ILO: “The central purpose of the ILO today, is to promote opportunities of decent work for all ... We must seek to harmonize economic growth with social progress, efficiency with equity, freedom with order and change with stability.” I congratulate the Organization and the Director-General on the progress made towards these goals and on the results already achieved, and I wish them further success in future work.

Original French: Mr. DE LA HAYE (representative of the World Confederation of Teachers) — I would

like first of all to congratulate the President on his election to chair this august assembly. We would also like to commend the Director-General for the quality and pertinence of the Report he has submitted to this 90th Session of the International Labour Conference. Standards, fundamental principles and rights at work, employment and above all the quality of employment, social protection, and social dialogue are the very pillars of the democratic workings of any society.

Recent reports from the Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers are crystal clear. Working conditions and conditions of employment for teachers are deteriorating everywhere, and in many countries teachers are denied their trade union rights.

Yet, if the international community is really sincere about wanting lifetime quality education and training for all, if we really believe that in a knowledge-based society education is a key factor for social inclusion, if we feel sincerely that there can be no sustainable development peace or tolerance without education, if we really believe that technological progress must improve everyone's quality of life, if this is truly our firm conviction, then we must believe that investment in education must be our absolute priority for the coming decades. Unfortunately we know that with few exceptions most countries devote less than 6 per cent of their GNP to education.

Education is a labour-intensive and highly skilled sector. Indeed, as a rule, approximately 70 per cent of the budget, and sometimes more, is devoted to personnel costs. Education managers are trying to lower this amount, but education, even with the most powerful and sophisticated computers, remains a process of interpersonal relations between teachers and students. Modern pedagogical techniques which place the student at the focus and centre of the learning process merely reinforce that trend. For quality education, you must have teachers. To be able to provide education and training for all throughout their working and learning life, you simply must have teachers.

In this context, and against this background, the themes dealt with in the Report of the Director-General — standards, principles and fundamental rights at work, quality employment, social protection, social dialogue — are, of course, of crucial importance. The same goes for the conclusions and the resolution adopted at the Joint Meeting held by the Office in 2000.

The World Confederation of Teachers, representing nearly 7 million members, will be holding a congress in July bringing together some 300 trade union leaders, who will focus on the theme “Teacher, professional in education, actor of social inclusion”. This is a noble theme, and one with an inspiring message for all teachers. It is a theme which aims to give meaning to the teaching profession. It is a theme which clearly signals our opposition to any unilateral approach to education, as a mere instrument or economic tool which treats people as means of production whose productivity must be increased, with that being the sole and exclusive priority. For the World Confederation of Teachers, the prime and principal aim of education must be to achieve social inclusion. This, of course, must include the potential for individual development, civic education and professional integration, amongst other objectives.

How can teachers be genuine education professionals and agents for social inclusion if their funda-

mental rights are trampled underfoot, if their employment conditions are such that they have no option but to perform other types of work in order to make ends meet, if they are not recognized as social partners, if they have no access to social dialogue, if their social protection, where it exists, are challenged, and if such protection is insufficient, or barely sufficient, to ensure their survival?

The WCT congress will be considering a new approach to giving professional status to education professionals and will look at a new concept for trade union action in the education sector.

It is, however, difficult to strike out along new paths and move into uncharted territory when the most basic and fundamental rights are still not respected or sufficiently respected. We would simply request that the Director-General pay special attention to ensuring that the same basic rights are observed in the education sector, that the Office increases its support for all international trade union organizations, and that the provisions of the recommendation adopted 36 years ago, in 1966, are finally implemented by all States, so that teachers can have decent working conditions and can finally be agents of social inclusion.

Original French: Mrs. SASSO MAZZUFFERI (*Employers' delegate, Italy*) — Firstly, I congratulate the President on his well-deserved election. Some very important steps forward have been taken by our organization in the past few months, and I want to touch on a few of them.

The level and the conclusions of the Global Employment Forum and the challenge to find policies that would seek to promote the development of entrepreneurial spirit, and especially entrepreneurial culture, at the same time as the flexibility and adaptability of markets and human resource is a pragmatic approach that takes into account the real needs of countries.

The rapid response of the ILO to crisis situations that have unexpectedly arisen in important sectors such as civil aviation and tourism, is a demonstration of remarkable efficiency.

The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, in the words of its co-Chairperson, confirmed that “globalization can and should act as a powerful engine for growth, for international cooperation and for development”.

There is the positive resolution of a growing number of cases of violations of freedom of association in various regions of the world, and the success of that specific ILO committee has been mentioned at a round table that marked its 50th anniversary by, amongst others, two trade union leaders who were released from prison as a result of the recommendations of the committee.

The progress and the extent of the work of the ILO Turin Centre, in which employers are particularly interested.

Congratulations are due to the Director-General and his team on the results mentioned above. And I will stop there for lack of time.

In the framework of our agenda I would like to confirm our support for the resolution before the Conference, submitted by the Employers, concerning tripartism in the ILO, which emphasizes the usefulness of involving tripartite constituents of the Organization in their dealings with civil society in order to maximize the positive support.

With respect to the informal economy, and in particular work on the black market, I would like to share the concerns of Confindustria in terms of the seriousness and the extent of this phenomenon, especially in the southern parts of the country.

The Italian Government is currently involved in the implementation of a project that seeks to coax workers and businesses away from the informal sector, through a step-by-step approach that recognizes the necessary fiscal and regulatory flexibility, by encouraging positive effects, linked to increased transparency, on image and the market.

The Chairman of Confindustria has made this one of the priorities of the programme.

Our goal is not only an economic one and linked to avoiding the exploitation of workers and distortion of competition, it also aims to increase the legality and civilization of our country, responsive to, and in harmony with, the objective of the ILO on this issue.

A document of the International Organisation of Employers has analysed the positive and negative aspects of this phenomenon and has proposed measures that could be adapted to very diversified contexts, according to the socio-economic, judicial and cultural development of the countries concerned.

These measures include reducing the cost of moving towards the formal sector and proposing incentives and concessions in the short term; developing policies and procedures in the area of information, access to credit, insurance, improvement services for productivity, management training and contracts; adopting more flexible regulations that acknowledge new and non-traditional forms of work, even if they do not correspond to the rigid concepts of labour legislation; promoting, for the creation of jobs and the strengthening of social rights, an environment that encourages investment and new technologies in order to enhance the competitiveness of businesses, and consequently, the competitiveness of the country as a whole.

These suggestions are shared by the Confederation of Employers of our country.

Original Arabic: Mr. ALZAWAM (*Government delegate, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*) — Please allow me first of all to congratulate the President sincerely for having been elected President of the 90th Session of the Conference, and to congratulate the Employer and Worker Vice-Presidents. We wish them much success in achieving the noble goals and objectives of the ILO. We are confident that they will succeed in their task.

The 90th Session is taking place at a time when we are witnessing great economic and political changes throughout the world, which have a great impact on the activities of the ILO, and which demand that we deal with these changes in a way that is completely different from in the past if the ILO is to achieve the objectives for which it was created. That is why the ILO has such an important role in developing technical cooperation programmes. It is why the ILO must emphasize activities useful to its Members in a balanced and acceptable way, and one which will not allow any region to benefit at the expense of another region. It must focus on those regions in which there are developing countries which are member States of this Organization, by providing them with the technical and financial assistance required so that they may make use of future ILO activities.

The phenomenon of child labour, which has been included in the agenda of the Conference is particularly important and should be studied carefully. We have to achieve the best possible results and find the best solutions to this phenomenon which has worsened and has threatened the normal lives of millions of children, exposing them to physical and psychological pressure, with dire consequences for their development. We must all combat this phenomenon with every means possible to eliminate it. We must make use of all economic and policy measures to promote training programmes so as to prevent young children from being assigned early in life to dangerous jobs.

It is in this context that my country is making use of all possibilities to provide training programmes at all levels. Our country does not suffer from this phenomenon because the Libyan Labour Code, the Great Green Book on Human Rights and Law No. 5 of 1997 concerning childhood protection establish very severe sanctions. We call upon the Conference to adopt legal instruments categorically prohibiting child labour and to boycott all products produced in factories or enterprises employing children.

The programmes that are implemented by the Office and the labour standards that we are drawing up might be useless if workers are still subjected to slave wages and exploitation. We would like to present you with the experience of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the field of relations between labour and production. The political system that has been chosen by the people of our country provides the opportunity to all citizens who have reached the age of 18 to freely participate in the formulation of political and social goals for society and to follow up on their implementation. Workers thus take part in the drawing up and defence of their rights as a category in the society. They are members of popular assemblies and of their occupational production assemblies. The Jamahiriya has put an end to relations based on injustice, workers have become partners and are not merely wage earners.

The noble goals and objectives that have been adopted by our Organization cannot be achieved if we live in a world dominated by military alliances and forces capable of demolishing the hopes raised by technical cooperation between the member States of various regional and international bodies in particular the ILO.

On behalf of my country's delegation, I would also like to thank all those countries that have supported the Libyan people during the long years of unfair embargo that was imposed on it, and also to thank the regional and international organizations and bodies that have stood with our country.

It is useful for countries to deal with each other in a way that will guarantee rights for all and that will establish stability and peace in the world, without recourse to force or the threat of force, but rather by encouraging dialogue and understanding.

The Arab people in occupied Palestine, Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon are facing Israeli colonization, state terrorism and collective massacres. Their land is confiscated and their identity is denied. The Iraqi people are also suffering from an embargo, which is in violation of all international charters, especially the charter of this Organization. In this context we would like to thank the Director-General of the ILO for the great efforts that he has undertaken to provide assistance to the people in the occupied Arab territories. I would like to mention the ILO mission

that was sent to investigate and the special sitting devoted to this matter. We propose that a permanent committee should be established within the framework of this Organization to follow up on the tragic situation of Palestinian workers and the situation in the occupied Arab territories.

Original English: Mr. KAPUYA (*Minister of Labour, Youth Development and Sports, United Republic of Tanzania*) — On behalf of the delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania, I feel greatly honoured to be availed of this opportunity to address this session. The United Republic of Tanzania attaches great significance to this session, mainly because the issues to be addressed have special importance for our efforts towards poverty eradication initiatives, as well as for employment creation strategies for our people.

The United Republic of Tanzania, like other transitional economy countries, is facing a major challenge with its growing number of unemployed workers. The number of economically active workers is increasing faster than the number of available jobs and employment opportunities in the labour market. The overall unemployment rate stands at 12.9 per cent. The unemployment problem is more severe in urban areas than in rural ones. Eighty per cent of the working labour force is employed in the rural sector, i.e. agriculture and non-farm activities.

The results of our recently completed labour force and household budget surveys show that one in every three households had an informal sector activity, either as its main or secondary activity. Both males and females are engaged in informal sector activities. More and more people opt for the informal sector, mainly due to economic hardships facing them as they are unable to find jobs; hence they join this sector as a survival strategy. Others are engaged in informal activities to get additional income to top up their formal wage income which is still low. However, this sector has been facing a lot of constraints, including low labour productivity, reliance on old traditional technologies, particularly in rural areas, underutilization of resources, to mention a just few.

The problem of child labour was identified as crucial in some of the sectors in our economy, namely mining, commercial farms, domestic work, the informal sector, fishing and so on. To a large extent, the Government, in collaboration with the tripartite social partners, through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), has managed to design programmes and activities aimed at eradicating child labour and finding alternative measures for the children drawn out of the worst forms of child labour, e.g. enrolling them in primary education and vocational and skills training.

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania recognizes the importance of adopting economic reform policies and correcting past structural bottlenecks in order to achieve sound economic growth, which is a prerequisite for employment creation and poverty reduction. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, developed by the Government in consultation with stakeholders, aims at reducing income poverty, improving human capabilities and implicitly addresses the employment challenges in our country.

The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania also recognizes the importance of the role of the

private sector in the current economic development of the country, particularly in employment creation, social security and worker protection. The Government is collaborating with actors in this sector through the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation and the National Business Council, in order to discover their views and ideas on better ways and strategies to design and manage our different macro, mezzo and micro policies and plans of action, particularly those on employment promotion and the labour market.

Likewise, we collaborate with the existing NGOs and civil societies active in employment promotion and related activities to ensure that our policies and programmes have a positive impact at the community level.

Promoting equality of opportunity between women and men in the world of work is also a key priority in the country's development agenda.

In the course of implementing our planned policies and programmes, we are facing a number of challenges, both international and national; globalization being one of them. The current speed of globalization is the impact to our economy and people have created more threats than opportunities today.

I wish to take the opportunity, at this juncture, also to express our sincere appreciation to both the co-chairs of the newly established World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, His Excellency President Benjamin William Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania and Her Excellency President Tarja Halonen of Finland, and to all our other Commissioners for accepting to work collectively and give high priority to the Commission's work. Their acceptance and commitment make all of us more comfortable today. We feel that dialogue and the teamwork of the Commission will establish more tangible facts and perceptions on globalization. The commission will also offers the opportunity to build consensus for future action to expand the benefits of globalization among all actors in the global economy, for a better world for all of us.

My statement would be incomplete without touching on the Israel-Palestinian issue. The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is gravely concerned with the escalation of violence and the wanton killings of hundreds of innocent people, as well as the destruction of hard-earned properties in the Middle East, particularly in Palestine. Although the struggle is between Israel and the Palestinian people, most casualties are on the Palestinian side, due to the fact that Israel, through its army, is using with impunity the most modern war weapons against the Palestinian people.

The underlying causes of the crisis between Israel and the Palestinian people are, inter alia, the refusal by Israel to implement fully the Oslo Agreement and numerous United Nations resolutions on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to have an independent state of its own; as well as the continued expansionist land policy of Israel. Under these conditions, the rights of the Palestinian workers are violated, the Decent Work Agenda cannot be realized, and child labour will flourish. It is impossible to speak of strategic budgeting in such circumstances.

The United Republic of Tanzania firmly believes that the lasting solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, as well as to the Middle East crisis at large, is the establishment of a viable Palestinian State and Israel's withdrawal from all Arab lands she is occupying.

We call on both sides to comply fully with Security Council Resolution 1,397 of 12 March 2002 which calls for the immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction. We also appeal to both sides to return as soon as possible to the peace negotiations.

Furthermore, we call upon all peace-loving people the world over to continue to support the just cause of the Palestinian people and the peaceful resolution of the Palestinian problem. In this regard, we fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and others aimed at halting the violence and the resumption of the peace process.

Finally, it is my recommendation that this forum should come up with focused resolutions that will enhance dialogue between ourselves and other relevant international institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions, with the aim of reducing, if not completely solving, the problems facing the majority of people in the informal sector and the children who are still working in the worst forms of labour, and ultimately improving their lives.

Original Arabic: Mr. AL-THANI (Minister of Civil Affairs and Housing, Qatar) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! First of all I should like to congratulate the President on his election as President of this Conference and wish him every success in his stewardship. I wish him success in his task, and wish that our Conference will be successful and achieve its desired objectives.

The Director-General devoted his Report to ILO activities over the past two years. The Report focuses on decent work and on the four strategic objectives included therein, in a way that evaluates the progress achieved in each of these areas. This clear and precise approach undoubtedly enables us to objectively evaluate the work accomplished, the outcomes and the results achieved, and guides us towards any necessary corrections and the right direction. The Report also shows us to what extent the four objectives meet the needs of our peoples.

The Report by the Director-General reviewed the activities of the Organization in the various areas in which it was active over the past two years and we find in reading it that these activities meet the national requirements of member countries. We wish to stress here the need to strengthen this approach in the Organization's programmes and activities. The ILO should reinforce cooperation with the social partners and relevant bodies in the member States, in order to better promote the status and conditions of workers and to promote social and economic development.

Decent work has gained considerable attention at the level of the officials responsible for planning, labour and development. However, priorities evolve over time depending on specific circumstances and national objectives. We believe that the reference to the Director-General's Report on addressing decent work at county level is an important step towards the strategic objectives to which we all aspire.

Recent developments at both the international and national levels and their effect on the situation of labour and the workforce, prove the need to mobilize our material and human potential so as to deal in a positive manner with these developments, and to benefit therefrom to improve the social and economic situation in our countries.

Under the guidance of Sheikh Bin Khalifa Aal Thani, the country's beloved Amir, our leadership has embarked on a course of dialogue and participation, to the greatest extent possible. Our capital has become a renowned venue for dialogue that gives officials, intellectuals and specialists, as well as competent organizations, an opportunity to exchange views and experiences on many topics of importance such as democracy and civil society, alongside issues concerning the child, women, human resources, labour, economic change, and others.

At the same time, we have widened the scope of planning and implementation. A campaign was recently conducted for raising awareness about the rights of the child. Other activities involved women and development and the preparation of a national strategy for enhancing the status of women.

Turning to employment, we have put in place a national training plan which sets up training centres in many areas, in banking for instance. We also have job opportunity centres which reflect the market needs and should meet national aspirations. All these endeavours are aimed at creating a skilled labour force and at generating jobs which meet national requirements.

We look forward to increased cooperation with the ILO, particularly in the development of a national workforce, and increasing employment of opportunities for women. We support the recommendations contained in the Director-General's report on the situation of Arab workers in Palestine and the occupied territories, and efforts to implement those recommendations, stressing the need for the ILO to establish a fund to help Palestinian workers cope with unemployment and the negative effects of the economic blockade.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate many thanks and appreciation to the Director-General.

I wish you every success in the work of this Conference.

Original French: Mr. CIRICA (Government delegate, Romania) — First of all, on behalf of the Romanian delegation, I would like to sincerely commend the Director-General on the detailed Report that he has submitted to this year's session of the Conference. It gives a full picture of the progress that the Organization has made in implementing its programmes of the last biennium in the context of the evolution, modernization and reaffirmation of the Organization's ideals.

The four main strategic objectives that the Organization has set out in fact are a reflection of the ILO's unique role in human rights and social justice.

In this context, I would like to emphasize the Romanian Government's commitment to supporting the ILO's efforts to accomplish its four main strategic objectives and to promote decent work. Obviously, the clear objective of every government must be to set up mechanisms to reduce the decent work deficit.

Work is an essential factor for sustainable development. Working conditions, labour protection and occupational safety are important elements which are decisive in workers' lives because they influence the life of society and chart out the course for society as a whole.

On the basis of these considerations, the Government of Romania would like its social policy to ensure

that work, once again, becomes a social value, and thus to guarantee decent work.

Romania responded positively to the campaign launched by the ILO to eradicate child labour, by ratifying the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

Respect for the promotion of and insurance of the rights of the child, as defined in the international instruments ratified by Romania, are a national priority. With the support of ILO-IPEC, and in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2000, national action for the prevention and progressive eradication of child labour is being implemented. This programme has contributed to strengthening the ability of governmental and non-governmental agencies to prevent the spread of child labour and to raising awareness of this phenomenon among the public.

I am delighted to have an opportunity to welcome from this rostrum the initiative taken by the ILO to designate 12 June as World Day against Child Labour. Aware of its role in ensuring that the rights of the child are respected, the Government of Romania will in the coming days sign a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Office in the field of elimination of child labour.

In order to achieve the four strategic objectives, Romania has ratified all the core Conventions of the ILO and the revised European Social Charter, and has recently signed the European Code of Social Security. We have also initiated the ratification procedure of the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), which has already been forwarded to Parliament with a view to its adoption. The whole process gave rise to a broad legislative and institutional reform process with a view to creating an adequate framework for these international standards.

I would just like to highlight some of the most important aspects of this process.

The drafting of a new Labour Code took place with a broad-based consultation process, both with the social partners and with experts from the Office and the European Commission. The final agreement of this important standard-setting act, which has been approved by the social partners, was recently adopted by the Government and is being forwarded to Parliament. The new Labour Code enshrines the principles of international labour standards and recognizes the need for flexibility and incentive in labour relations.

Another important step in implementing the Romanian Government's programme was taken with the adoption early this year of a new employment law. One of the main objectives of this law is to increase the employment rate and reduce unemployment, with particular emphasis on active measures. To this end, we will make use of the assets of a competitive system to ensure that workers become an important structural component of the middle class, while maintaining a balance with a view to a higher employment level.

The current Government hopes through its policy to achieve a genuine competency which will enable sustainable development and guarantee access to employment, housing and health and education services. None of the progress I have just mentioned and none of the reforms would have been possible without the social pact signed by the Government and the social partners in 2001. Building on that, this year a new social agreement was concluded, although not all the nationally representative trade unions signed on to it.

In conclusion I would like to say that the Government of Romania believes that social dialogue is the best means of sustaining partnership to achieve objectives, be they social or wage-oriented or sectoral, and, to ensure the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Original Arabic: Mr. DAHLAN (*Employers' delegate, Saudi Arabia*) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Allow me first of all to congratulate the President most sincerely for being elected to chair this Conference. This clearly shows the high esteem in which he as a person and his country are held for excellent work in the field of employment.

Allow me to take this opportunity to speak of the very pioneering work carried out by the ILO through its Director-General and the ILO staff that have promoted the work of the Conference and reorganized its agenda.

The Director-General has devoted his Report on the work of the Organization over the last two years to the question of decent work. This is an issue which was totally unknown or never mentioned thirty years ago. However, today in the context of globalization, population growth and increasing poverty throughout the world, decent work is now a priority which must be examined in depth. Thus, given our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the ILO we must re-launch this dialogue and the discussion on decent work as well as the four objectives listed by the Director-General.

The tripartite social dialogue is also one of the main topics mentioned by the Director-General in his Report, and this clearly shows the high priority attributed to social dialogue, which is one of the main tools for sustainable development. I should like to pay tribute to the Director-General for his Report, especially the part relating to the situation of Palestinian workers in the occupied territories. I think this clearly illustrates the importance given by the Director-General to the situation in Palestine. This is a situation which is of great interest to everyone, especially the countries of the Middle East. The Arab countries are keen to apply fully and completely the ILO Constitution everywhere in the world, but especially in the occupied territories. We must never forget that the Palestinian workers suffer terribly. They are deprived of the right to have to live under inhuman conditions imposed upon them by Israel. It is important for the ILO to show an interest in the needs of Palestinian workers and help them to improve their situation. The Prime Minister of Malaysia, in the special session earlier today, spoke of faults which have been committed by governments and asked whether people should suffer because of them. I wanted to quote the Prime Minister because he spoke very strongly and his words illustrated the situation in Palestine very well.

I should also like to mention the need to pay close attention to the situation of workers in Iraq. It is high time the Iraqi people, both workers and employers, were given the freedom to make and attract foreign investments.

In conclusion, I should like to congratulate the members of the Bureau for their election and especially, Mr. Ali M'Kaissi from Tunisia. I am quite certain that the new members of the Bureau will live up to our expectations. In conclusion, I should like to thank the Director-General and express my deepest

gratitude for all the efforts which he and his colleagues have made. I should like to assure you that employers of Saudi Arabia will always comply with the fundamental objectives of our Organization.

Original Spanish: Mr. MARTINEZ MOLINA (*Workers' delegate, Chile*) — I would like to convey to you cordial greetings from the working men and women of my country.

Chile is cited as an example of the application of a new capitalism which made the market rule supreme. Our authorities are making efforts to negotiate trade agreements with developed countries and yet, at the same time, Chile is also a country of glaring inequalities and huge pockets of poverty and exclusion.

We are the region of the world with the greatest inequality in income distribution. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) this huge income gap is mainly due to a reduction in the role of the State, the concentration of wealth, the radical change in our system of production and a flagging labour market.

In Chile, unemployment is steadily growing, hitting young people and older workers the hardest because it is they who have the most difficulty in finding work. This increase in unemployment leads to a considerable decline in the quality of work and is reflected in the growth of informal and temporary work, home work and street vending ranging from agriculture to services, and it is here that there is the most glaring lack of social protection. In many cases work is hazardous: workers lack protective measures for the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases and in the application of pesticides, insecticides and solvents which are being used in an unregulated and uncontrolled way.

A large majority of Chileans are watching this country join globalization process while at the same time they live in poverty and despair for lack of work and because workers are exploited by their employers.

In this context, child labour is fast becoming the norm, as families with limited resources try to increase their income through this means. According to official statistics, in Chile there are 125,000, boys and girls between the ages 6 and 17 who are working. The lives of these young workers have been changed forever. Deprived of their childhood, they have become child breadwinners. A consequence of child labour and especially teen work has been that many children drop out of school and vocational training. Our children therefore run the risk, in their adult lives, of never having a decent job. They can only aspire to jobs with minimum wages, perpetuating in the cycle of exclusion and poverty that they have inherited from their parents.

Child workers in Chile and throughout the world see globalization not as a new opportunity for the future, but as a present threat. Globalization must not mean growth of the market for the benefit of transnational and multinational corporations that come to our countries to strip us of our natural resources, leaving in their wake poverty and exclusion.

The workers are not against integration in world markets, but we demand that this include a social dimension, with respect for our human rights, trade union rights and the dignity of the workers. We call for a cultural shift in labour relations away from the perverse idea that workers are a disposable resource

and that trade union's work against economic development.

Working men and women are not costs for businesses; we have always been, and will continue to be, a resource for progress in our countries and for democracy. We therefore demand that globalization and economic integration cease to be a threat, and that they become more imbued with equity and social justice, so that we can make our dreams and hopes for a better future come true.

(Original Arabic): Mr. ABDUL GHAFOR (*Employers' delegate, Iraq*) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! On behalf of thousands of Iraqi industrialists, I would like to greet the President and all the delegations to this session of the International Labour Conference as we meet to talk about labour and worker-related issues at a global level. I would like to congratulate the President on his election and congratulate the Officers of the Conference. I would also like to thank Mr. Juan Somavia and his colleagues at the ILO for the efforts that they make to guide this Organization and to prepare for this Conference.

In Iraq, the social partners are doing their best to resolve all the problems that arise on the labour market and, together with the employment directorate, we seek to establish an atmosphere in which we can mobilize all possibilities and resources in order for the Iraqi economy to progress at this important and critical point in its growth. This efficient method with effective relations between partners has had very positive results and has allowed us to find solutions to most of our problems.

With this introduction, I would like to say that coping with the problems of child labour and its negative implications is possible if there is a genuine will to do so and a proper understanding of the seriousness of all aspects of the problem. Iraq is known for its civilization, its heritage, its values, its resources and its leadership, and its belief in the importance of children for the future of the country. As our leader, President Saddam Hussein has said, "childhood is only half of the present, but it is the whole of the future". That is why our concern over child labour has been, and remains, one of the issues that has been dealt with by Iraqi legislation. Iraqi entrepreneurs have also played an important role in this field during the period of aggression and the embargo that affected children in particular, both directly and indirectly. This situation does not discourage us as we consider it simply a consequence of the embargo and we regard it more as a challenge in order to thwart the malicious intentions of our enemies to destroy the Iraqi people.

From 1990 up to the present day, the Iraqi people, of all social classes, nationalities and religions has suffered the worst forms of barbarous attacks by a State that derides democracy, the protection of human rights and the fight against terrorism. That country has used organized terrorism against women, children and the elderly, destroying all our resources and possibilities for ensuring a dignified life for our people, and this is as serious as blindly dropping bombs.

Revitalizing the industrial sector is one of our priorities, and this is why, on behalf of Iraqi industrialists, I ask the Conference to shoulder its responsibilities and to call for the end of this embargo by Iraq's enemies that is preventing our industrial development.

The ILO, unfortunately, did not provide any assistance to Iraqi entrepreneurs during the embargo and has done nothing to resolve their problems, which nevertheless fall within its competence, and this despite the recommendations contained in the report of the ILO multidisciplinary mission to Iraq in the course of the year 2000.

Our Arab brothers in Palestine are the object of a savage and vicious Zionist attack, which aims to eliminate them from their national territory, with the declared support of the enemies of the Arab people who oppose our civilisation, our religion and our identity. This attack has destroyed the energy and the capacity of the Palestinian people, who are struggling to establish their free and independent State with Al-Quds as its capital. Our Arab brothers in Palestine have been accused of terrorism and the world has looked on as they are attacked and suffer. We appeal to all free peoples in the world to support the Arab resolutions concerning Palestine by condemning these barbaric crimes.

Mr. CHO (*Employers' delegate, Republic of Korea*) — On behalf of the Employers of the Republic of Korea, I take great pleasure in extending our sincere congratulations to the President on his election to preside over this session of the International Labour Conference.

In recent decades, we have witnessed the emergence of globalization, a phenomenon that has permeated the economic and social realms of all countries.

In spite of all manner of criticisms about the globalization of the world economy, it is no longer a matter of choice. If we do not advance toward globalization, we must necessarily go backwards. I would say that it is imperative that we keep pedalling the bike, otherwise the bike may topple over.

In order to promote sustainable economic development, we need social development. We have to address the problem of marginalized workers who are struggling to make their way in the global economy.

However, sustainable social development also necessitates economic development. Now, in this age of globalization we have to recognize the need to move from a passive model of protection to an active model of expansion of the economic pie itself. In this way we will be able to pull people on the lower rungs of the economic ladder up to the higher rungs. Such an approach will enable us to provide more decent work and more protection for marginalized workers.

In this regard, it is encouraging to note that the Director-General suggested at the Global Employment Forum that "we need a productive response based on enterprise and job creation" to cope with the global economy.

There can be no denying that free trade and investment have driven economic growth, created jobs and resulted in higher living standards for people in many countries. Nevertheless, there are also opposing voices, mainly from trade unions, against globalization.

These voices remind me of workers' responses during the era of the industrial revolution. At the time they thought that employers would wipe them away with capital and machines. But history proved these fears groundless. Increased productivity, based on entrepreneurship and new technologies, coupled with the self-adjusting capacity of a free market economy,

eventually led to an increase in wealth and greater welfare for people.

Globalization, together with advanced information technologies, has much greater potential to better people's lives than the industrial revolution. But such potential can only be realised when we do our best to take full advantage of the global economy. What is required is commitment on the part of the employers, workers and governments to realize both equity and efficiency in economic development.

Enterprises should fulfil their basic social responsibility of contributing to the wealth of each nation by creating jobs. Workers should develop new work ethics that are based more on a spirit of "live and let live". Employers should empower workers with new skills and knowledge. Governments should give full throttle to the job-generating potential of enterprises by implementing appropriate fiscal, financial and labour policies.

Among the ILO's Infocus programmes, employment programmes that include job creation and enterprise development seem to be accorded a somewhat lower priority compared to other programmes. Considering the importance of enterprise development for job creation, I would like to urge the ILO to pay greater attention to, and to provide more support in, this area.

The ILO needs to be a living organization. A living creature can survive only when it adapts itself to a new environment. Accordingly, I believe that the centrepiece of the ILO's effort to cope with the new global environment should be to encourage indigenous enterprise development and job creation.

Original French: Mr. PIRLER (Employers' delegate, Turkey) — On behalf of the delegation of Turkish Employers, and personally, I should like to sincerely congratulate the President of this session of the Conference on his election and to present my good wishes for this session.

As employers from a country where the informal sector represents 45 to 50 per cent of the national economy, we are very happy to see this subject included in the agenda of this Conference. Moreover, it was here at the ILO that the term "informal sector" was used for the first time, 30 years ago, to define the economic activity of people who work illegally, without social protection and who are not covered by any regulations. As stated on the first pages of the Report presented to this Conference, in recent years the creation of jobs in developing countries has mainly taken place in the informal sector. The impossibility of finding a job, or setting up a business leads people to join the informal sector. Let us not forget that jobs in this informal sector are far from being compatible with respect for human dignity.

It is therefore imperative that we all strive to make this sector smaller, even though in the short term it may appear to be a solution against unemployment.

To attain this objective we must first identify in each country the causes for the growth of this sector in order to be able to come up with remedies to it for, as is also indicated in the report, there are many reasons which contribute to the growth of the informal sector: rigid legislation, demographic trends, an inadequate growth rate, the challenges of globalization, and excessively heavy taxation and social charges on companies.

Unfortunately, as I have said at the beginning of my statement, Turkey has a large informal sector which

goes on growing. Today, we estimate that there are 4 million people working in this sector, whereas in 2000 that figure was just 2.5 million. This means that 40 per cent of all Turkish wage earners earn a living in that sector. Clearly, that is an alarming figure.

Of course, we all agree that the main problem in the world and in Turkey at the moment is unemployment. This is why we must all try to come up with solutions to this problem. In this context, the Global Employment Forum organized last year by the ILO was an important step forward.

However, if new action at world level is to be fully accepted and achieve success in the long-term, it must be accompanied by national initiatives.

We believe that the ILO must make its missions more effective. This means that before applying international texts and national regulations, we must take into account the real influence they will have on employment.

We, the Turkish employers, believe that the main disadvantages stemming from the informal sector are unfair competition to companies in the formal sector are unfair taxation, the non-respect of the rule of law, a growing budgetary deficit due to lost taxes and social contributions, the worsening situation concerning security and social protection of the workers and deteriorating employer-employee relations.

I should also like to take this opportunity to speak briefly on the prevention of child labour. Our Confederation approves of the principles and measures of the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, which Turkey has ratified. Since 1993, we have taken an active part in IPEC projects. To that end, we have set up a "children's office", which enables us to deal with the problems of children employed in the metal-working sector in Istanbul and to monitor their health. Our aim is to increase the number of these offices and to open them all over the country. It is my pleasure to announce that, thanks to our efforts to train and raise the awareness of companies and employers we have been able now to eliminate the work of children in the companies which belong to our confederation. Children who still work in these companies have a legal status and receive vocational training.

Before I end my statement, I would like to present our proposals on how to reduce the informal sector in Turkey. I think that they might be useful to other countries which have to contend with the same problems: the reduction in stages over a five-year period of taxes and charges; a reduction in taxation in proportion to an increase in the workforce; a reassessment of the "social duties" which hold companies back; a reduction and simplification of red tape; and encouragement of companies in the informal sector to register by means of tax measures and credit facilities.

We do not, however, believe that police repression is an effective way of combating the informal sector. We must remember that the informal sector constitutes a "safety valve" for the creation of jobs. We therefore think that the most effective way to combat this sector is to find out all the causes which lead to its creation.

Mr. BISNAUTH (Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, Guyana) — I wish to congratulate the President on his election to the Presidency of this 90th Session of the International Labour Conference. I am sure that under his able guidance this Conference will be brought to a successful conclu-

sion. Congratulations are also extended to the two Vice-Presidents.

Let me thank the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General for their valued and well-structured reports.

Guyana has always demonstrated its commitment to the work of the ILO and has paid careful attention to the Conventions and Recommendations adopted at the various Conferences, using them as policy guidelines. To this end, we have ratified 45 Conventions, including the eight core Conventions. In addition to that, in collaboration with the ILO's Caribbean Office, we have amended or enacted new legislation to give effect to the Conventions.

Tripartism has been a cornerstone of our industrial relations practice. It has impacted significantly in reaching agreements relating to our socio-economic developments. The social partners are currently engaged in discussion of a draft social partnership agreement and, with assistance from the Caribbean Office, a National Productivity Council has been established.

The fight to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, as defined in [Convention No. 182](#), must not be compromised. No effort or finance must be spared in the battle to eliminate this scourge. In Guyana there has been no real evidence of such a practice but in this global village, no border is impenetrable. As such, the existence of child labour threatens the whole world.

This is not to say that child labour does not exist in Guyana. It is there in the family-owned farms, as well as in the informal economy. I anxiously await the outcome of the work of the committee that is presently meeting on the informal economy as a large percentage of workers, including children, are engaged in this type of activity and efforts to protect them with the social security safety net are usually met with hostility. A small percentage of child labour is also accounted for by the formal economy. A truancy campaign and increased inspection visits are two of the measures put in place to reduce the incidence of child labour in both the formal and informal sectors. Our vast and harsh terrain, some of which is only accessible by air, places a burden on our limited resources.

The advent of children at the workplace is often driven by low family income. As such, the ILO's campaign for decent work becomes a rallying point for the elimination of child labour.

The fight against HIV/AIDS and AIDS at the workplace has been given high priority by our Government. Patients can obtain drugs free of charge at public medical institutions and private practitioners can only acquire the drugs if they agree to make them available to the patient at cost price. The social partners are engaged in defining a workplace code based on ILO principles.

The Director-General referred to the trafficking in human beings and later stated that the Global Employment Forum, held in November 2001, identified a number of points that form the basis of successful employment strategies. Among the points listed are: first, trade as an engine of employment growth, particularly by opening markets in industrialized countries to agricultural and other labour-intensive products from developing countries; second, enhanced public spending on education, health and social development in developing and transition countries, using national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) resources, proceeds from the acceleration of debt relief and an increase in official development assistance;

third, improved educational levels and training opportunities through greater investment in skills development.

These are admirable statements but how can agriculture-based underdeveloped countries, like Guyana, benefit when the reality is that the industrialized countries are paying large subsidies to their farmers, thus closing the market to developing countries.

We are asked to make large budgetary allocations to education, health and social services and Guyana has been training its teachers, nurses and craftsmen, only to have them lured away to developed countries by lucrative offers, which do not always turn out to be so lucrative. The Director-General spoke about human trafficking. Maybe the time is ripe for a redefinition of the term. The developed countries openly advertise in the print and electronic media in our countries and send teams to interview and select the cream of our teachers, nurses and other skilled personnel.

Are we being given financial relief as a carrot to train for the developed countries, thus subsidizing them by way of training costs and maintenance of educational infrastructure?

The ILO may want to commission a study on the issue, as poor countries will always remain underdeveloped if this vicious circle continues unbroken, for we lose our best skills and, as a consequence, have to pay large sums in consultants' fees to foreigners.

I wish to place on record the substantial contribution the Caribbean Office is making towards assisting the work of the social partners. I also want to reaffirm our country's commitment to the goals of the ILO.

Original French: Mr. KAMARA (Minister of Employment and Public Service, Guinea) — I congratulate the President on his well deserved election and would like to begin by expressing my satisfaction. The Governing Body and the Director-General have once again demonstrated their great competence in presenting us with their respective reports on their activities.

As regards the Report of the Director-General on the activities of the Organization in 2000 and 2001, we are impressed with the wide range of areas of technical cooperation in which the majority of the resources are allocated to developing countries.

The delegation of my country, the Republic of Guinea, applauds the efforts the ILO has made, especially since 1984, and from which we have constantly benefited. They have addressed human resource management, social protection for workers and the promotion of tripartism.

The success of our Organization in technical cooperation serves as a basis for the proposed programme and budget for the next biennium, 2003-2004.

The Republic of Guinea supports the adoption of these proposals in order to grant the Office the means needed for its activities to promote peace, human dignity and decent work.

This year our Conference is discussing for the first time two important technical themes which because of their economic and social significance represent a constant challenge to us all.

The first issue is the informal economy, which is growing in the developing countries. The development of this sector is attributable, as we know, to a number of factors, principally linked to the inadequacy of the number of jobs created by the formal

sector and the rapid growth of the active population and acceleration of the rural exodus to cities.

Given the numerous difficulties confronting the populations of our countries, it is now essential for the international community to focus more on ways to reduce the burden of exclusion and marginalization which hinders the proper integration of the informal sector in development programmes.

My country, the Republic of Guinea, therefore supports the methodological approach of the International Labour Office, which consists in providing the informal sector with a less discriminatory institutional and economic environment, with a simpler and more flexible legal and regulatory framework, while respecting the specific features of the sector and favouring greater participation in the creation of jobs and wealth.

Our session also has on its agenda the registration and declaration of workplace accidents and occupational diseases, including the possible revision of the list of occupational diseases in Schedule 1 of the Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121).

My country also welcomes this initiative, in so far as good health in the economy is measured by a number of factors, including the health of economic agents. It is well known that enterprises are increasingly affected by the growth of occupational hazards such as workplace accidents and occupational diseases.

Occupational accident statistics in the world, in Africa, and to a lesser degree in my country, the Republic of Guinea, demonstrate the scale of the problem and the need to solve it, for professional hazards have tragic human, economic and social consequences for our countries. My country therefore supports the conclusions of the important report issued by the office on social protection for workers.

It also applauds the efforts made by the Organization to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and would wish to see effective participation by the Organization in the implementation and execution of the Guinea national aids control programme.

At the 89th Session in June 2001, our conference considered the promotion of cooperatives, and proposals were made for the adoption of new international legal instruments. The Republic of Guinea is pleased that new standards are being adopted in order to provide a framework for activities by the ILO's constituents.

Our session is being held at a time when humanity is still confronted by a threat to peace and security in many regions of the world. These permanent dangers hinder the untiring efforts of the ILO which has, since its creation, been working for global peace.

Now more than ever, our States must invest in efforts towards peace and security as a foundation for all social progress. The Republic of Guinea, a country of peace, supports this path towards world peace and stability, which are required to combat poverty and underdevelopment.

It welcomes the results achieved already by the international community, which it encourages to step up its efforts in order to establish peace everywhere in the world.

Original French: Mr. NGON-BABA (*Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Central African Republic*) — First of all, on behalf of the President of the Central African Republic and Head of State, His Excellency Ange-Félix Patassé, on be-

half of the delegation that accompanies me, and on my own behalf, allow me to discharge a pleasant duty, that of greeting and thanking the Swiss Confederation, and more particularly the canton of Geneva, for the hospitality it has always shown to all the Conference delegations and in particular to the delegation of the Central African Republic.

I would also like to take this opportunity to join the eminent speakers who have preceded me in congratulating the President of our session, Mr. Jean-Jacques Elmiger, Secretary of State at the Federal Department of the Economy, on his election and, through him, I would like to congratulate all the officers of our Conference.

The Report of the Director-General on the implementation of the ILO's programme for the 2000-01 biennium, its appendix on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories once again give our Organization more of a central place in the vanguard of radical global changes and above all the implementation of strategic budgeting at the ILO.

The main objectives set out in the Report, to wit ratification of the core Conventions, the most important facet of occupational safety and health, i.e. the fight against HIV/AIDS at the workplace, the creation of jobs for all categories of the working population, the improvement of the employment and working conditions of vulnerable groups and their vocational integration and the strengthening of social dialogue by means of an open form of tripartism, perfectly reflect the strategic context of the fight against poverty in my country.

This is an opportunity to express all the gratitude of the Government of the Central African Republic to the Director-General of the ILO, acting through the ILO's Office for Central Africa and its multidisciplinary team, for all the support given to my country in the progressive implementation of these objectives during this biennium.

Nonetheless, while it should be said that the degree of implementation of the programme for the biennium 2000-01 is satisfactory in general, it has to be noted that the resources allocated to regional activities have been considerably reduced.

You will agree with me that it is obviously impossible to address all the programmes covered in this Report. However, I think it is necessary to mention some important points, which are likely to have a favourable impact in the context of globalization.

The first point concerns the importance of financing vocational training.

Among the measures intended to promote competitiveness and employment growth in a globalizing economy, it is more than important to attach greater significance to the considerable asset of having high-quality labour, which is skilled and educated, whatever the level of a country's development.

The successful implementation of an economic policy depends on this.

Vocational training can offer a solution to the employment problems of women, young people and workers in the informal sector and other vulnerable categories, including disabled people, demobilized people, etc, etc.

I think that it is crucial to devote sizeable investment to vocational training.

The second point concerns the social security cover of developing countries' populations, many of whom are struck by fast-spreading poverty and an increasing

lack of security because economies have been hard hit by relentless globalization.

How can one provide social security cover if structural adjustment programmes have not achieved the desired objectives, if few jobs are being created owing to a string of deflations and cut-back measures which make the socio-economic situation precarious and explosive?

In this specific context, and aware of the important role played by social security and the fight against poverty, the Government of the Central African Republic has made a request to the ILO and is relying on the latter's valuable assistance to restructure its social security system, which is in a sorry state. The Government will take advantage of this restructuring to extend social security coverage to other segments of the population who are not yet covered, such as the informal sector, the professions, craftsmen and craftswomen, etc.

In conclusion, I would encourage the Director-General's office to continue to make the ILO the laboratory or privileged forum for reflection and exchanges on the new and difficult social problems that are arising in the world of work.

The inclusion of the informal economy on the Conference's agenda is indeed very important.

I no longer think that we should often leave it to the experts of economic institutions to dictate our social future. Tripartism entails responsibility.

The Central African Republic, my country, remains deeply attached to the values of the ILO and will continue to remain faithful to its ideals, as it has done for more than 40 years now.

Mr. JUNG (*Workers' adviser and substitute delegate, Republic of Korea*) — The new Report provides the States Members of the ILO with a transparent overview of the work of the Office for implementing the Decent Work Agenda. However, there is still a great deal of uncertainty on what role the ILO plays in the face of the changes that affect the lives and future of the peoples of the world.

While the ILO has expanded its visibility and influence in the most significant global debates, many international institutions continue to turn their backs on the Decent Work Agenda and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

The ILO needs to present a powerful new vision, based on the founding principles of the Philadelphia Declaration, to lead global changes and debates. The ILO needs to demand that all organizations with strong trade and economic orientation, such as the IMF, the World Bank and others, ratify and respect the core international labour standards. It needs to evaluate and expose the impact of these organizations on the Decent Work Agenda. The supervisory mechanism of the ILO needs to be applied to these bodies. It is in this light that we look forward to seeing the work of the Working Party and World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. We also hope that the ILO will be able to support the work of the soon to be established ASEM Labour Ministers Meeting to promote fundamental principles and rights at work in the region.

The Director-General's Report points to the glaring gap in the Asia Pacific region concerning decent work and the need to address this through wider recognition for workers' rights and social dialogue.

In the Republic of Korea, the informal economy, including the atypical employment sector, has, over the last four years, expanded rapidly, following the Asian financial crisis and the drastic structural adjustment programme. The result is the following: nearly 60 per cent of the total workforce works in the atypical employment sector; 70 per cent of women workers make up 50 per cent of the total atypical workforce. In spite of the ratification of the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the wages of workers in atypical employment hover at around 50 per cent of those in the regular workforce.

The worsening of our working conditions, caused by neoliberal restructuring, has resulted in an annual increase of 20 per cent in industrial accidents and of 10 per cent in fatality rates. Some 2,700 workers are dying each year in industrial accidents. The successful adoption of a protocol on notification and recording of accidents and diseases would help to provide a clearer picture of the reality, paving the way for a more systematic effort.

The Decent Work Agenda in the Republic of Korea is stifled by the Government's repression of legitimate trade union activities. The Korean Government has trampled on the trade unions in the railways and power industry, which have criticised the headlong rush to privatization and demanded an alternative course. The Government, in typical neoliberal fashion, branding the trade unions as an obstacle to structural adjustment which needs to be removed, has imprisoned in the last four and a half years 762 trade union leaders, including the KCTU president Dan Byung-ho. Currently, 39 union imprisoned, while 50 others are wanted for arrest. The international trade union movement, at the initiative of the IMF and the PSI, is organising an international day of action on 27 June for the release of imprisoned trade unionists in the Republic of Korea.

The Korean Government asserts that it is against the law for workers in the civil service to join or form a union. In keeping with its word, it sent in thousands of riot police to the inaugural congress of the Korean Government Employees' Union and arrested hundreds of the delegates. The Government imprisoned six leaders of the union and is pushing ahead with dismissals against the key activists as punishment. The Government has barred the existing union from discussion on the reform of the law to introduce trade union rights, revealing an intent to permit only those unions which it can control.

The commitment to achieving decent work starts with the ratification of core Conventions. It does not mean that all of the related laws should already be in compliance at the time of ratification. Ratification is a declaration of the commitment to uphold the standard as a goal and to work towards achieving it. This effort is assisted by the technical cooperation which the ILO can offer.

I take this opportunity of addressing the Conference to propose to the Korean Government that it establish an ILO-supported joint task force of trade unions, employers' organizations and the Government to ratify the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and return to the Conference next year with a notification of ratification.

This kind of joint effort is the essence of social dialogue.

Mr. KEARNEY (*representative of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation*) — Today, in spite of the best efforts of the ILO, decent work is no more than a dream for millions of workers. Indeed, in some industrial sectors, such as textiles, clothing and footwear, the decent work deficit is growing by the day. Is it merely a coincidence that these are sectors operating increasingly out of export processing zones and dominated by a new generation of multinational companies based in the Republic of Korea or Taiwan, China?

In many such zones, national labour legislation does not apply or is not implemented. Bangladesh has long promoted its free trade zones as being union-free. In India, states such as Andhra Pradesh have instructed their labour departments to cease inspections in the zones.

Production in Sri Lanka, another major clothing exporter, comes mainly from export-designated zones where trade unions are almost non-existent. Hardly surprising when efforts to unionize are met with harassment, intimidation and mass firings. Many of the companies at the forefront in denying workers' rights are Korean.

Korean inward investors in free trade zones dominate Guatemala's garment export industry, where abuses of workers' rights are endemic. When workers at the Choi Shin and Cimertextiles factories began to organize last year, management embarked on a campaign of terror which included mass dismissals, union members being attacked with bricks and bottles, and the home-visiting of leaders and activists, accompanied by death threats to themselves and their children.

Elsewhere in Central America, when workers overcome obstacles such as these and secure union recognition, Taiwanese and Korean owners, as in the recent case of Tianan in El Salvador, simply close the plants and move elsewhere.

In Lesotho, in March, the managing director of a subsidiary of the Taiwanese multinational, Nien Hsing, in uncontrolled fury at a protest by workers over grievances about pay and working conditions, snatched a pair of scissors and stabbed a union shop steward, Marashalane Ramaliehe, in the neck.

Not much chance of creating greater opportunities for workers to secure decent employment and income in these situations!

Less than three weeks ago, 44 workers at Shri Ji International in Agra, India, died a horrific death when fire consumed their shoe factory. There were no fire precautions, no emergency exits, no health and safety provision, yet the factory had a current clearance certificate from local labour officials. Clearly, a huge task lies ahead in trying to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all workers.

Abuses of workers' rights occur also in the heart of the industrialized world. In Indiana in the United States, employees at Brylane, part of the French retail giant, Pinault-Printemps-Redoute, seeking improvements in working conditions, began to organize last year. Management immediately embarked on a union-busting campaign which still continues today not much social dialogue here.

Brylane's behaviour has focused attention on other parts of the PPR empire, including its supply base where, in India, workers endure 13-hour workdays, six days a week, for starvation wages. In Indonesian supplier plants, workers faint from exhaustion after workdays that sometimes continue through to 5 a.m.

At least one major part of the chain sources from Burma.

This corporate social irresponsibility is rife among the world's leading retailers and merchandisers and it encourages the corporate criminality that exploits and endangers their lives.

It is time to call a halt and to declare war on the poverty, injustice and exploitation that flow directly from breaches of international labour standards. But are the weapons for such a war adequate?

There must be some doubt whether the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the strategic objectives for its implementation are sufficient without effective enforcement mechanisms.

Radical new thinking on how the ILO might operate in the future is urgently needed. What about the creation of an ILO Worker Protection Council, with powers of sanction and modelled on the United Nations Security Council? Should consideration not also be given to the establishment of an international tribunal to deal with crimes against workers? What sanctions, including attaching workers' rights conditionalities to international trade deals, could have the greatest impact? How could multinational manufacturers, merchandisers and retailers be rendered accountable for the labour rights abuses from which they currently profit?

Achieving decent work will not be accomplished by hope alone. It will require commitment and energy and, above all, the ability of the ILO to bring laggards and offenders to heel. But until it is clear that the ILO has such power, and the courage to use it, the bad will continue to undermine standards and abuse rights, and decent work for all will continue to be but a dream.

Original Arabic: Mr. AL-JABOURI (*Workers' delegate, Iraq*) — May the peace of God be upon you. Allow me to address to you my deepest greetings, the greetings of the workers and the people of Iraq — this resistant people — and the salutations of their historical leadership presided over by Mr. Saddam Hussein.

It is a great pleasure for me to convey my thanks to the Conference and to the Director-General, wishing all participants great success in their work.

The end of the second millennium has been marked by serious political, economic and social upheaval. Social justice has been weakened, leaving us with a world different from the one we were seeking. Power has been left in the hands of vested interests and the positive progress made by humanity in the context of social peace and justice has been undermined.

The unipolar system prevailing nowadays has brought about the world of globalization, free trade and commercial relations as well as a market-oriented economy.

All these factors confront us with the responsibility of dealing with unsolved problems relating to critical social phenomena. These pose a threat to national social security and to international peace and stability. Everyone is struggling for survival in an environment which appears to be governed by the law of the jungle given the increasing absence of international structures and systems.

A look at the agenda of this Conference is enough to reveal the image of the world we are living in as well as the complicated problems we are facing. It is as if the world of labour is reverting to the period prior

to the advent of national and international efforts to develop labour relations based on justice.

Social protection nowadays is shrinking. The unemployment rate is increasing and affecting a large number of workers. The informal economy is widening to become a very large sector, including a large proportion of the workforce.

We have also to acknowledge the alarming rates of child labour. We have to admit also that we are unable to curb it and this has been the case for over two decades of continuous action. That is why we have to make greater efforts in order to put an end to the worst forms of child labour. If not, we will be unable to come to terms with the whole phenomenon in the future.

The world today requires all the social partners to shoulder a critical responsibility. We have to provide a favourable environment for future generations to live in. If we fail to do so, they will face enormous hardship, conflict and violence in a world where people should work together to live in peace, security and justice.

The only choice that we have is to contribute towards building such a world. Let us act together to achieve that objective within our great Organization, which has been, since its inauguration, a beacon for peace and justice in the world.

While addressing this assembly I would like to inform you of the cause of Iraqi workers. The Iraqi workers have been subjected to great hardship due to the continuous military aggression carried out by the United States and the United Kingdom, and because of the embargo put in place more than 12 years ago.

The results of such aggression are the destruction of infrastructure, increasing unemployment and poverty among our people and the deterioration of our social protection system.

I would like also to convey to you the cause of my comrades, the Palestinian workers, that have been suffering greatly because of the military attacks, occupation, siege, killing and destruction practised by the Zionist enemies. They have been victims of unemployment, victims of starvation, victims of displacement and of violations of their rights. This is done in a world that is governed by double standards.

We call upon the ILO to provide more technical support for both these peoples, as well as the people of the Syrian Arab Republic, and of Lebanon, who are also victims of occupation.

The ILO should provide all assistance to the people of Iraq and Palestine, and to other peoples. We want the Organization to provide them with more technical support. I would like to address our deepest appreciation to the Organization for what it has already achieved in the past two years. We stress upon you the need to reconstruct our world, especially in all these countries that have suffered so much due to the hardship caused by aggressors.

Original Russian: Ms. MUSAEVA (Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Tajikistan) — I would like to express my profound appreciation to the organizers of the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference for their efforts to ensure its success.

Today's world shows increasing recognition of the concept of dialogue between civilizations, with humanity showing unity in the face of various challenges and threats, regardless of ethnic, geographical, religious and other differences.

In this context the ILO's experience, values and instruments, based on a tripartite approach and social dialogue, provide a favourable environment for strengthening the atmosphere of mutual confidence and cooperation in the new millennium, and the social significance of globalization in particular.

During its nine-year membership of the ILO, Tajikistan has been a committed upholder of the Organization's ideas and principles. It has ratified 64 fundamental ILO Conventions and Recommendations which are being applied in the Republic, and for two years now has regularly paid its membership dues. As members of Tajikistan's tripartite delegation, we support the ideas and principles expressed in the Director-General's Report, especially those on the elimination of child labour and on strengthening of local capacities in the framework of global employment.

Tajikistan is now beating a steady path towards the creation of a secular democratic state, based on the rule of law and peace, after ten years of constant pressure from terrorists and extremists who found sanctuary in Afghanistan under the Taliban. In these difficult conditions our Government called on the world community many times to join forces to neutralize the threat emanating from Afghanistan to the world as a whole.

The need to build a buffer zone around Afghanistan, as suggested by our President, Mr. Rakmonov at the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1998, was confirmed following the tragic events of the 11 September 2001. Tajikistan is now one of the centres providing international humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

The new geo-political situation in Central Asia offers broad possibilities for regional and international cooperation, giving an impulse to social, humanitarian and other types of interaction in the interests of workers. In this connection, given the growth in the Republic of Tajikistan's international status over the last year, there should be an adequate ILO presence in the country. We would like to be a regional partner of the ILO in the implementation of specific programmes and labour measures. This is important because Tajikistan and Afghanistan are neighbouring countries whose borders have good transport, communications and whose people share a language, religion, traditions and cultures, which means that it would be possible to train young Afghans in non-military professions in our educational institutes, and call on the experience of Tajik specialists working in Afghanistan on special programmes for the post-conflict reconstruction of the country. This could be facilitated by opening a regional office of the ILO in our country, which would be made possible by the entry of a number of countries into the European Union and the appropriate release of financial resources by the ILO.

All of the issues examined at this Conference are extremely important for the development of a Decent Work Agenda, and will be required by the Republic of Tajikistan and many other countries. Discussion of the Global Report on the Implementation of the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, is particularly relevant for these countries in transition. This is a kind of litmus test or indicator, which makes it possible to judge the intrinsic essence of the reforms and their impact on social and labour relations in countries.

I would like to emphasize that the growth of the informal economy is a pressing problem for Tajikistan. An important goal today is to create conditions for facilitating decent work throughout the economy, including the informal and real sectors. They should be geared towards development, poverty reduction and achieving equality between men and women.

These and other social and labour problems are given serious consideration in the Poverty Reduction Strategy recently adopted in our country, which is the basis of the social and economic programme for our country's development in 2002-04. The focus is on targeting measures at these groups, such as young people, military personnel, disabled persons and women, who are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society, and who can feel the greatest effect.

An example of this is the Dushanbe Centre for Employment and Modular Training, opened in February of this year, and to date the only one of its kind in the central Asian region. It was set up in close cooperation with the ILO and UNDP and with financial support from the Government of Japan. It is important to expand such initiatives at the regional level, developing a network of similar centres for other vulnerable population groups.

An important agreement has also been reached on the implementation of an ILO project to train young people and adults in entrepreneurial skills. Tajikistan's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Asian Development Bank have begun examining various pilot regions as part of a study of the development trends in the informal economy.

I hope that at planned meetings with the ILO, we will be able to discuss this and other important questions, reflected in the draft programme of cooperation between the ILO and Tajikistan for 2002-04. The programme, which is the first programme of cooperation between Tajikistan and the ILO, has undergone the necessary approval procedures, and we hope that it will soon be signed. This would allow fuller implementation of the principles of social justice, and would help to reinforce peace and justice in our country.

Original Spanish: Mr. DOZ (Workers' delegate, Spain) — On behalf of the Workers' delegation of Spain, we welcome the progress made on ratification of the fundamental Conventions, the approval of the Global Employment Agenda, the setting up of a World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, and the progress made in IPEC, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, even though there is much left to be done in this area.

We would like to express our solidarity with the trade union movement in Colombia, which is subject to the violence of paramilitary organizations, and we would like to ask the Colombian Government and international institutions to take more effective action to put an end to impunity and to defend fundamental rights, starting with the right to life.

We would also like to declare our solidarity with the Argentine workers, and all Argentinians in general, who are suffering from the consequences of policies fostered by the IMF. International action is vital in order to resolve the Palestinian conflict and put an end to violence in the occupied territories and Israel,

on the basis of the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people, as set out in the United Nations' resolutions. To these cases we would have to add a long list of national situations where poverty, injustice and the denial of rights is the rule. The ILO, and many other international agencies, have a vast amount of work to do.

It is our opinion that the ILO must focus its activities in the future on securing effective respect for ratified Conventions, reinforcing its role in world government vis-à-vis the international organizations of the United Nations system and in global economic and trade agreements, fostering the creation and maintenance of social protection systems, and promoting social dialogue and collective bargaining as the most democratic instruments for governing economic processes and the changes resulting from globalization.

Echoing the important declaration approved last week, by the Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation, we would like to express our concern at the events which are taking place in Europe. On the one hand there is the rise of the extreme right, and an increase in racism and xenophobia, which leading furthermore, is influencing the policies of our governments, leading them, for example, to focus on immigration policies based exclusively on criteria such as internal security. It appears this approach will prevail at the next European Council summit, which will take place shortly in Seville.

After removing from the work agenda all the measures which favour for integration of immigrants and support a common European policy, such as reuniting families, the long-term status of immigrants and the common regulation of migratory flows, how can we justify only to speak about repression of illegal immigration by the police.

On the other hand, employers and governments in many countries, as if they were responding to a pre-set agenda, are imposing serious restrictions on labour rights and social protection systems, and changing standards of collective bargaining in order to individualize and fragment it. Proclaiming conservative ideas on the need to improve economic competitiveness and job creation, however insecure those jobs may be, and on the basis of reducing labour and social costs and a unilateral interpretation of the concept of flexibility, they are attacking the very foundations of the European social model, based on efficient and sustainable social protection, high quality services, decent jobs and the right to social dialogue as the main regulatory mechanism.

When we take into account these types of measures which are imposed, we are first and foremost sacrificing social dialogue and this is the situation which we see taking shape in Spain. In order to impose a reform of labour and our system of unemployment which seriously curtails existing rights, the Government on 24 May passed legislation of doubtful constitutional validity, since none of the conditions of urgent necessity required by the Spanish Constitution were present. Social dialogue and the legal powers of the Economic and Social Council have been annulled. The Spanish Government has made a complete u-turn in its labour policy, undermining previous agreements. Even more significantly, it has done this while holding the Presidency of the European Union.

I would like to briefly mention the most negative aspects of this new legislation of the Spanish Govern-

ment. Unemployment benefits are no longer a subjective right, despite the fact that workers and businesses contribute to them, and unemployment benefits can be discontinued if a person does not accept a job offer coming from the national employment services, no matter how badly paid or precarious this job may be. Certain unemployment benefits are being denied, and this politically and morally indefensible when social contributions are generating a surplus of 3,600 million euros in the Spanish system and 43 per cent of unemployed persons are not receiving any benefit.

While workers in seasonal jobs still represent 32 per cent of our labour force, the Spanish Government is making even more use of a seasonal contract system which is extremely insecure. This goes against the agreements concluded by the employers and trade unions.

For the above reasons we have called a general strike for 20 June in order to do away with this Government reform and restore social dialogue.

Both trade unions have reiterated their commitment to the general interests of workers in Spain while advocating moderation and flexibility. This has borne fruit and we are not prepared to throw away what has been achieved through previous social dialogue.

This type of action cannot remain within national borders: it must be conducted on a European scale and beyond. International action is essential to protect social and labour rights in our countries and to create a new economic and political order which is fair and democratic. Real and lasting peace and security will not be created by anti-terrorist and militaristic policies, especially those which weaken or limit our human rights, but depend on social justice, sustainable development and the effective presence of democracy and human rights.

Original Portuguese: Mr. LIMA GODOY (*Employers' delegate, Brazil*) — It is a great pleasure for me, on behalf of the Brazilian employers to address my congratulations to the President on his election to lead us in our work. I should also like to extend my congratulations to the Vice-Presidents as well as to all delegations, all of which will have a part to play in the success of this important event.

In the same way as so many other developing countries which constitute, as we know, the majority of the world of work, Brazil is struggling to build a more just society in which, through decent work — as defined by Juan Somavia — all its citizens will be able to have a decent standard of living and be able to achieve their legitimate right to happiness.

We would like to state that our national strategies are in line with the most recent guidelines of the ILO, as analysed by the Global Employment Forum which was held in November last year. On that occasion it became quite clear that the ILO cannot offer a standard policy, as it were, for all governments, since situations differ from one country to another. There is no panacea to solve all employment problems. We need employment policies which will have to be adapted to the specific conditions of each country, but be based on contracting regulations which include both flexibility and an indispensable minimum of security for workers, which is of course no mean feat, in order to promote investment in labour-intensive sectors, to promote the spirit and entrepreneurial activities, and last but not least to promote facility of employment,

through greater theoretical and practical knowledge. We are pleased to find these guidelines clearly included in the strategic planning and the operational objectives of the ILO.

We should also like to thank the Governing Body and both the staff and the Director-General of the ILO for the excellent results obtained through the application of the concepts of responsibility and the results-based budget. At the same time we would like to suggest that an external auditing system would further improve the evaluation of these results, and this would be a desirable step forward in the process of updating the management methods of the ILO.

In response to the Director-General, we should like to call the attention of one and all to the fundamental need for the ILO to go beyond its role of promoting, throughout the world, the working conditions which exist today in the developed world. It is indispensable, for reasons of coherence and effectiveness, that the ILO undertake to insist that the First World adopt the far-reaching, macroeconomic policies advocated by the Global Employment Forum which will help to bring about measures indispensable for development, so as to achieve — above and beyond the definition of principles and the formulation of rules — the transferal of scientific and technological know-how and — why not — of financial resources, following the example of the well-known strategy that made the European Union possible. This, in addition to seeking to implement policies that would lead to the opening up of the markets of the developed countries to the products and services of the developing ones.

The special nature of the ILO is such that it does not have to have a restricted vision of the realities of a globalized world, as if the decent work could become reality without the construction of a socially and economically integrated universe, under the aegis of human solidarity.

The globalization of decent work will only be feasible within the framework of an overall economic and social project, which is the only way to attain sustainable development as well as world peace.

It is in keeping with the above that the Brazilian employers would like to suggest to the ILO that it take to the United Nations and to all the social partners throughout the world, especially those that are leaders in the field of knowledge, as well as those that have economic power, this message which the ILO has preached for such a long time with such convictions in the field of work, expanded now to fit the threat hanging over mankind's very survival: if we want decent work, we need to promote *a decent world* for one and all.

Original Spanish: Mr. PRIETO (*Employers' delegate, Mexico*) — I would like to congratulate the President on his election to preside over this Conference.

Globalization and technology have been subjects of debate in most international forums, but in none of them has it been discussed in a spirit of tripartism. Tripartism is the origin and the very essence of this Organization; it is the undeniable foundation of our successful activity; but above all, it is where social dialogue has given meaning and vision to the social partners.

Mexico has been making substantial progress in tripartism and social dialogue, especially by establishing the New Labour Culture and the Social Dialogue

Committee for the production sectors. In this context, we have been working for some time to recognize our diversity and find common ground, always with the well-being of our country in mind, with increased employment and improving the economic situation of Mexicans as our goal. All of this with a level playing field for all the social partners and with due regard for differences of opinions, which has been a very positive exercise for us. Employers have been participating responsibly and creatively in all of these forums.

Of the different issues under discussion at this gathering, we understand that child labour is rooted in poverty, which must be perceived as a social, not a labour problem. However, we must try to take into account the other sources of the phenomenon, such as the needs which exist in agricultural communities, regional customs and indigenous traditions which give rise to child labour that does not necessarily reach the level of exploitation.

We certainly endorse the principles embodied in the most important Conventions of the Organization, which are covered by the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Nevertheless, national and international standards are not the only means of tackling and solving this serious problem which we must all address in all of the countries in which children work by dealing with social problems and employment opportunities in each region.

In order to combat this scourge, we must address national economic issues which motivate and guide our young people and their training and education in order to find jobs for them in the formal sector but only when they reach the age of admission to employment. This is the case of organizations such as SELIDER, a Mexican foundation which promotes youth leadership and trains and guides young people, promoting volunteer work for young people to meet the needs of disadvantaged communities.

We know that poverty is the determining factor in child labour; we also know that wealth is not a solution unless it is fairly distributed and based on decent work at all levels.

Another issue on the agenda of this session of the Conference is decent work in the informal economy. We are concerned at the increase in this type of activity, whose negative effects are borne by both workers and enterprises. We are alarmed at the growth of the informal work because these informal sector jobs evade social security coverage and taxation and the absence of control over the origin of materials or products sold on the informal market means that the boundaries between informality and illegality are blurred.

All of this results in a lack of protection for workers and unfair competition for employers, and hurts governments. It amounts to unfair competition, leads to defective goods and processes, and encourages theft and contraband and the evasion of fiscal, social and wage obligations affecting everyone.

There is no doubt that it is the informal sector which registers the highest rate of exploitation of children, and reducing informality would contribute a great deal to the fight for the elimination of child labour.

We feel that it is possible to combat the informal sector. An effective measure to integrate informal enterprises into the formal sector would be to open up more opportunities to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as important sources of job creation; to

deregulate without losing order; to improve access to credit for the creation and development of enterprises and to adopt adequate labour legislation. In this way we will be able to offer decent jobs as well as better pay to adults and pave the way for a world without child labour.

It is now time for us to translate our ideas and words into action promoting change which most of us would like to see; it is time for our aim of creating better options in the world of work to become a reality; it is time for our aim of reversing the trend of growing poverty which compromises dignity and stability to become a readiness to act steadfastly. Let us fight for a more united world, not only a more globalized world. Let us fight for a more human world, not only a more technological world.

Original Arabic: Mr. GHOSN (*Workers' delegate, Lebanon*) — We have studied the Report of the Director-General and would like to applaud the efforts made to deal with the fundamental issues of interest to us all. We would also like to pay tribute to the way in which the Report deals with the question of child labour, which is a growing problem, particularly in the informal economy, and saps the very foundations of society.

We consider that the first challenge that we must face as workers are the problems encountered by children in precarious working conditions. This is a problem which could get worse with time. For this reason, it is important to guarantee all children's right to existence, by providing them with the social, medical and legal protection necessary. It is also essential to focus on information and communications technology in order to promote the self-education of children at reduced costs.

In the framework of promoting the rights of the child, we consider that the theory of globalization is a threat to national cohesion and to the specific features of national heritage. Globalization threatens the poorer social categories as well as workers, peasants and craftsmen and threatens the national interests of States and peoples, and imposes unjust policies which cancel out the States' social role, which does not serve large capital and small capital interests which are related thereto.

As a trade union organization and a confederation of workers in Lebanon, we are concerned by the struggle against the effects of the globalization of economic policy, where pressure is applied so that the State abandons its social role, and so that the public sector is destroyed in favour of capital and monopolies. This is against the rules and principles upon which the ILO was founded concerning the protection of workers, both in and outside their countries.

As regards privatization, which is the fruit of globalization, this has a negative effect on the workforce and will continue to threaten employment, given that employers are taking more rigid positions against the claims of trade unions, which are considered to be against technological development. The facts show that privatization has the aim of reducing the workforce in order to reduce investments. Workers' trade unions must confront these policies which create new victims in the working class and among the poor. In order to overcome this menace, our trade union movement insists on having complementary and social justice that the State must guarantee to ensure stability and security at the social level, and par-

ticularly the development of medical services and the creation of unemployment insurance funds.

As regards occupied Palestine and the aggression which is directly suffered by its people as a result of the Israeli occupation forces, cities and infrastructure have been destroyed and workers have lost their jobs. The Palestinian State has also been undermined, threatening the stability of the region.

In order to ensure a more just world order, which is the objective of all peoples, we call on the ILO to assume its role without succumbing to pressure so as to enforce this principle. It is important that the international community recognizes the need to establish the Palestinian State and to ensure self-determination for its people in order to put an end to the Israeli occupation which does nothing to promote peace in the region.

On behalf of the workers of Lebanon we reaffirm our support to for the Intifada of the Palestinian people and call on the international community to put pressure on Israel to apply international resolutions and free the occupied Arab territories of Palestine, Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

I thank you again and wish you every success with this session for the benefit of workers everywhere and the people of the world.

Mr. SEN (*representative of the Trade Unions International of Public and Allied Employees*) — At the outset I would like to express my gratitude to the ILO Governing Body for providing me with this opportunity to address the plenary session of the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference.

Today, workers of the world are experiencing an unprecedentedly difficult period. Never before have the jobs of workers and employees been so jeopardized and the workers rendered so completely insecure in respect of their jobs, social security and trade union rights.

The World Bank/IMF-dictated structural adjustment programme, after more than a decade of being put into practice, has proved to be definitely an anti-worker approach. Our Trade Union International is concerned primarily with public service employees. The public services employees in general, either in developing countries or in advanced capitalist countries, have become the direct victims of the neo-liberal economy and the structural adjustment programme.

As the reforms dictated by the IMF/World Bank are implemented and public sector industries closed down or privatized, thousands of workers and employees are rendered unemployed in employees, the banking, insurance and the entire financial sector employees are hard hit as governments in the developing and developed countries are taking mindless steps towards privatization. The workforce in this sector is being hastily reduced and there is no new employment, and unemployment has assumed formidable dimensions.

The privatization of other government departments and enterprises is also taking place in different countries. From telecom and postal services to railway services are being privatized. Many of the government departments in several countries have either been privatized or simply closed down. The casualization of staff, the increase in home-based workers, the steady reduction of regular and permanent employment in the public services are the

order of the day in all developing and developed countries.

The public service employees have therefore started resisting this onslaught. The recent strikes of public service employees and other sections of the working classes in different parts of the globe are an indication that workers are determined to resist this offensive. The latest general strikes in India and Italy on 16 April 2002 are examples of this.

The situation in the former socialist countries, like Russian Federation, other CIS countries and Eastern European countries seems to be the worst. Not only is there a rampant privatization and sharp reduction of staff, but even the non-payment of salaries to existing employees are new phenomena in these countries.

Unfortunately, the governments in these various countries, particularly in the developing countries, are desperately trying to stall these rising struggles through draconian anti-worker measures. In some countries, like the Republic of Korea, anti-employee enactments have been carried out. In India, retrograde amendments to existing labour laws are on the Government's agenda. In Pakistan, the authoritarian regime is suppressing all lawful trade union activities, as a result of which employees are unable to effectively voice their protests.

It is in this context that the 2002 Report of the ILO Director-General regrettably lacks any serious concern over the negative and harmful aspects of globalization. Moreover, because the advocacy of the Director-General in the 2001 Report for a consensus on globalization was an unreal suggestion, while globalization is directly directed against the working classes and the poor to serve the profit interests of the MNCs and the governments of the advanced capitalist countries, there is practically no room for consensus. On the contrary, the unprecedented economic offensive of capitalist globalization should be stopped forthwith and the ILO is expected to protect the interests of the workers from this onslaught. Unfortunately, the Director-General's 2002 Report is not at all helpful for the working classes and employees.

The TUI recognizes the important role played by the ILO at the present time and would like it to further strengthen its role in establishing and implementing international labour standards, despite financial and other forms of pressure by the dominant economic powers and neo-liberal forces who seek to impose their hegemony.

We feel very much concerned by the lack of efforts made to ensure that the Workers' group of the Governing Body becomes fully representative of all elements and trends of the world trade union movement. The United Nations principles of rotation, so that all trends have the opportunity of being represented, is not followed here. It is also a matter of great dissatisfaction that the principles which are applied in the election of Government members of the ILO Governing Body are not at all applied in the election of Workers members of the Governing Body. Even ILO ACTRAV shows a built-in discrimination in favour of one particular international trade union over other international and regional organizations. There should be more consensus-based functioning and decision-making at the ILO with the involvement of all segments of the trade union movement.

On behalf of the Trade Union International of Public and Allied Employees which represents 20 million public service employees from different countries, I

appeal to the ILO Governing Body and the delegates of the Conference to pay proper attention to the problems raised here, so that the appropriate remedial steps are taken to set right this worrying situation.

(The Conference adjourned at 8 p.m.)

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