

**Thirteenth sitting**

Friday, 9 June 2006, 10.25 a.m.

*Presidents: Mr. Sajda and Mr. Adyanthaya***GLOBAL REPORT UNDER THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE ILO
DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND
RIGHTS AT WORK: INTERACTIVE SITTING****The PRESIDENT**

I declare the thirteenth sitting of the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference open.

Today, the plenary sitting is taking place in different surroundings and a different environment from the other days of the Conference. Our task here is to discuss the Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*. We shall hold this discussion in a tripartite formation. This is why you are sitting with your groups, Governments, Employers and Workers.

The debate will be as interactive as possible. For this reason, there is no formal speaker's list. You have been asked to express directly to the secretariat your desire to take the floor. I already have a set of requests, and you may continue to ask for the floor throughout the sitting.

With your understanding, as President, I shall determine the order in which you will be given the floor. Following the practice established since the first Global Report debate in 2000, after an introduction by the Director-General, the floor will be first given to the spokespersons of the Employers' and the Workers' groups and others who speak on behalf of a group of countries.

It is my pleasure to give the floor to the Director-General, Mr. Somavia.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL

The struggle to end child labour is at the heart of who we are as an Organization, and I think that it is at the heart of everyone in this room and the countries and organizations that you represent.

I know that I am not alone in saying that a tremendous source of spiritual energy comes from visiting our IPEC projects and seeing the difference that our collective work is making in the life of specific children. Not only the children, but also their parents, who are normally engaged in their own parallel capacity-building activities. It also enhances the self-worth of the community, and I have seen this over and over again because when I travel I try to visit our child labour projects. As I say, in those communities where child labour projects exist, you can feel a new sense of hope, it sort of radiates, because people know that this is happening and they are proud of it, and they like it, and they know that

it is good. So it has an effect that goes far beyond the children and families who benefit from it.

We have made important headway, as the Report before us details. We can take heart that we are on the right road, but at the same time let us not forget, as we begin this discussion, that as we sit here in Geneva in the year 2006, there are still 280 million children out there who are working, not in light work, not in odd jobs, but work that risks their lives and damages their health, work that keeps them out of school, work that prevents them from developing their full potential for themselves, for their families and for their country.

Thus, while we naturally have to take encouragement from the Report, it is also a sobering reminder of a challenge we still have in front of us.

Where do solutions start? I think that the effort to end child labour does not begin with a programme, a project, or even a particular place. I think that it begins in the heart, I would say in our hearts. And this is not a rhetorical flourish, I think it is a fundamental ethical question about the kinds of values we believe in and the kinds of societies and communities we want to build. Perhaps that cannot be immediately measured in statistics, but let me say that is where we are winning: in the minds of people. In community after community, in country after country, there has been a steady forward movement from denial to awareness to action. Not long ago, communities may have turned a blind eye to the very existence of child labour. Today, they want to shine a spotlight on the progress that they have made. "Look here," they say, "we had a child labour challenge, we came together and we are turning it around. We are establishing child labour-free zones which exist in many cities of the world. We are committing to time-bound programmes." Almost 30 countries have already initiated that route. It can be done. This is what people are feeling, and from my point of view this is probably the biggest change that we have seen, because when we began the IPEC programme in 1992, the issue was denial. And we have moved from denial to being proud of taking action to end child labour with a view to eventually eliminating it. In a 15-year span, that is quite an extraordinary evolution.

This, of course, has not been done by the ILO alone. There has been a very large process of engagement by many. But, after all, we were at the heart of making all of this happen. And, as I say, it is around that reality, around that new consciousness, that we have to build towards the future.

So, what has worked in terms of practical policies to bring about the reduction of child labour? I would say, first and foremost, a growing conviction that although it is clear that child labour is linked to development (why do we have child labour? Because parents do not have jobs and children cannot go to school), we cannot wait for development to arrive before acting to reduce child labour. Development is an explanation, but not an excuse.

So we began acting with the tools we had. That is the reality and that evolution, I think, again, is extremely important. A lot of people came on board saying, "we know the linkage, it is going to be easier, if we have better development, more growth, more jobs for parents, more resources for education. But we are going to begin now with the tools we have." And what are they? I would say a combination of factors: political commitment, societal engagement, community action and a growing consciousness focusing on results, particularly in the fields of poverty reduction and ensuring education for all.

The emergence of a worldwide movement against child labour has supported and has also been nourished by national action. Nine out of ten of our member States have now ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which, as you know, is the most rapidly ratified Convention in the history of the ILO. And that brought along ratifications of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), so that now four out of five Members of the ILO have ratified Convention No. 138.

Paragraph 47 of last year's United Nations World Summit Outcome highlights the priority of ending child labour, citing the ILO Conventions. This is further reinforcement of our work: in that Outcome document of 150 Heads of State, there were not too many references to individual organizations or to individual instruments of organizations, so this is a pretty powerful statement, saying, "Look, we do want to move in the direction of Convention No. 182."

And, as we look ahead, I would point to three specific areas of focus. First, national action. Our experience clearly demonstrates that it is the countries that can and have designed policies and programmes on the scale and reach that have the required impact. So a national policy is very important and sets the framework, because it is within the countries that you have to decide on priorities, assign resources and give space to the policies that will make a difference. They can do what it takes to improve the reach and quality of education, to monitor child labour, to incorporate it into the statistics, to fund labour inspectors specialized in this field and put in place rehabilitation programmes for children removed from work and, very particularly, policies to ensure that children can have access to education and stay in education. All of those things are national policies.

It also means seeing development policies through a child labour lens and measuring the impact of all programmes with a child labour yardstick and, of course, in the definition of all these policies, tripartite participation is essential.

In other words, the big picture is about eliminating child labour, is about putting together the public and private policies that can deliver work for parents, opportunities for young people, education for

children and dignity for all. That is where we want to go.

Second, countries need real support to reach these goals, and the development cooperation community has played, and must continue to play an important role. Some 30 countries now support the IPEC programme, of which I would highlight: Germany, because it had the vision to say this is a development cooperation area; the United States, because it is a principal funder, particularly today with the very strong commitment of the Senate; Spain, which has put in place an extraordinarily interesting project in the Americas; and the European Commission, with which we have just signed a strategic partnership in which there will be increased resources on the child labour front.

Workers' and employers' organizations have also pitched in. I want to thank the many delegates who have highlighted the child labour challenge in their plenary speeches and in our meetings, and I would add that this is another area where we can continue to explore South-South cooperation and the sharing of experience.

Third, we have to keep building on the capacity of societies to mobilize around the cause of child labour. The work we do as an organization is a vital experience that has shown clearly that we can make a difference when we have a sound knowledge base and show what can be done through concrete action. Some areas calling for collaborative efforts in the future include tackling child labour in agriculture, where seven out of ten child labourers work, addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS on child labour, drawing the links between child labour and youth employment, ensuring that education for all children is education at least up to the minimum age for admission to employment and, of course – as we discussed in another context – the type of education that paves the way to employability. The ILO's tripartite constituency are natural leaders in sustaining consciousness of child labour, keeping it on the agenda, and building alliances for its elimination nationally and globally.

Let me just mention some examples. I remember on one of my trips the Indian employers had made a booklet on this issue. For diffusion they had translated it into four local languages. Employer organizations are working nationally and internationally to remove children in mining. Chinese employers are mobilizing in relation to child labour in Hunan Province. Employers and workers from the Americas declared recently in Brasilia that they would work together on these matters in the region, and with the governments. In Ghana, the General Agricultural Workers' Union is collaborating with employer organizations and local governments, through grass-roots training, to take action to free children from having to work in the fields and get them into school.

We could go on with the examples. Let me just mention two. One is Brazil, with the *Bolsa Familia* programme, which has been extremely successful. There is also Mexico, with PROGRESA; as this Report says, these are two countries that have shown an important reduction in child labour.

These are just a few examples. Under the Declaration mechanism the Global Report presents a draft action plan. Your views, your guidance, will shape our responses and organization in the future. The action plan proposes that we set the goal of elimi-

nating the worst forms of child labour in the next decade. We believe it can be done.

Let me tell you why: because it is not just that if we keep the same rate of reduction, we will probably get there. My view is that I see an exponential growth of the consciousness and the desire to act, and that if we see where we were ten years back and then project the curve, it is not a steady curve; it is going up and up and up and up.

So this is not dreaming, these are not some of these goals that we sometimes set in the United Nations and the moment you set them you already know that they are not going to be complied with. I hate that! I think that, on the contrary, this is realistic. This is not "pie in the sky". And to go from realistic to real, of course we have to make it happen. But I think that this institution, with the reach that it has acquired, has the means, has the potential, has the possibility of doing it so that the ownership of each country, of each society, of our own tripartism that says, "look, we are going to make it happen, we want to make it happen". This is nobody against anybody. We do not want to point the finger on child labour. That is not the issue. That was the wrong way of going about it in the past. This is about convening ourselves within societies in order to say, "look, we are going to help everybody in the world who wants to do something about it" – and that is the best way to make this thing happen.

To get there, there are a lot of different things that will need to be done, but I am absolutely convinced that something like this is feasible and that it is because of the ILO's tripartite commitment on this issue that we have got where we are. We can set this ten-year goal and make it happen.

Thank you for your interest, thank you for being here and for keeping the faith alive.

Mr. TABANI (*Employer, Pakistan; speaking on behalf of the Employers' group*)

I wish to thank the President for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Employers' group on this subject of great importance. The Employers' group has a keen interest and many hopes in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up. We continue to see it as an essential vehicle through which basic worker rights can be further promoted and protected. The principle of eliminating child labour is one that has a special place in our hearts.

The Office is to be commended for its efforts in drafting a Global Report which has received considerable publicity from the media. The fact that the Report has received so much public attention will go a long way in promoting the profile of the Declaration.

Before I go on to the main part of my speech, I wish to thank the Director-General for the introductory comments that he has made to enlighten us in addition to what is already in the Report.

By far the most impressive aspect of the Global Report is the numbers that are presented. Child labour, the Report claims, has declined worldwide by 11 per cent over the four years from 2000 to 2004. Even more important is the fact that the decline was much greater for those engaged in hazardous work: by 26 per cent for the 5-17 age group and 33 per cent for 5-14 year-olds.

However, and this has been confirmed by the Director-General, there were still about 317 million economically active children aged 5-17 in 2004, of

whom 218 million could be regarded as child workers, and 126 million were engaged in hazardous work. The Employers believe that this is much too high, which means that the issue of child labour needs more targeted attention on a priority basis. We also have to bear in mind the statement from last year's Global Report on forced labour, that, in 40 to 50 per cent of cases of forced labour, the victims are children.

It is very disappointing that there are no new data concerning the unconditional worst forms of child labour, because this is the form of child labour that results in the greatest suffering to children and must therefore be eliminated with the greatest urgency.

Another point of concern for the Employers is that, as discussed in the Global Report, over 70 per cent of all working children are in the agricultural and mining sector. Because of this, these two sectors should now become the focus of the fight against child labour in the future.

There is both a sectoral as well as a regional divergence concerning child labour. As shown through the Report's regional breakdown, the economic activity rate among 5-14 year-olds has declined worldwide. It is, however, important to note that the underlying dynamics have varied throughout the different regions. While the Latin American and Caribbean regions stand out in terms of a very rapid decline, with the recent activity rate of 5.1 per cent, sub-Saharan Africa, the region with the highest incidence of child labour, enjoyed just a small decline in the activity rate, from 28.8 to 26.4 per cent. This is even more alarming if you consider that this decline is not caused by a drop in the number of economically active children, which in fact has risen somewhat, but through a high rate of population growth. Similarly, the drop in the statistics on child labour in Asia and the Pacific has not been significant. Unfortunately, the cogent reason for success in Latin America and the Caribbean region has not been provided.

The Report reveals the varied levels of success from region to region and from one industrial sector to another. The ILO should therefore look to learn from regions that have experienced significant success so that these strategies can be applied elsewhere.

In this respect, it is very encouraging to note the existence of "good practices", as mentioned in various paragraphs of this year's Global Report, and I refer to paragraphs 215, 339 and so forth. On the other hand, it is rather disappointing that some concrete examples of these good practices have not been provided.

The Employers' group feels that sharing experiences and information among member States goes a long way in helping governments and the social partners to find new and creative ways of responding to the problems of child labour. The ILO can certainly act as a catalyst for these exchanges. We look forward to the round table scheduled for this afternoon on good practices by the tripartite delegations of three countries.

A very interesting fact highlighted in the Report is that almost 87 per cent of ILO member States have ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), to date.

These States account for about 77 per cent of the world's child population. In the case of Convention No. 138, the rate of ratification is over 79 per cent, and these States account for 63 per cent of the

world's children. Of course, the ratification of a Convention is only one means of giving effect to the Conventions. We look forward to hearing from the Government representatives present here today, including those which have not ratified the two Conventions, about their initiatives to address child labour within their national contexts.

One aspect that continues to be of concern in the Employers' group is the role of employers' and workers' organizations in addressing child labour. This part of the Report is very disappointing to us because, despite the extensive efforts made by the Employers in addressing child labour, there is only a limited amount of information provided about the role played by the social partners in its eradication. There is equally little information about how the Office is working with the social partners, particularly employers' organizations, to build the capacity to address child labour.

We have to remember that since the founding of the ILO, employers' and workers' organizations have been the historic pioneers in promoting the fundamental principles, including that relating to child labour. Through the ILO and other international organizations, the Employers continue to play a critical role in national and global efforts to combat child labour. Employers' organizations can, on the one hand, help to ensure that their member enterprises are aware of and understand their obligations as regards child labour. On the other hand, national employers' organizations have the potential to help in the collection of data on the incidence of this type of labour in the various industrial sectors, and to influence the development of appropriate national policies on child labour elimination. Finally, they can also partner with trade unions and other natural partners in the design of relevant responses, particularly vocational skills and training for working children, and to promote public awareness on the harmful effects of child labour and the rights of children.

In this context, we refer to the evaluation, referred to in paragraph 220 of the Report, which states that no inventory of activities on child labour carried out by the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) can be found anywhere. In fact, we are informed that ACT/EMP is deeply involved in many diverse programmes concerned with the elimination of child labour. Using funding from the Norwegian Government, ACT/EMP has been able to develop and implement programmes in ten different countries in Eastern Europe and Africa. These programmes are designed for each employers' organization, depending on their national needs.

This leads us to the concern that perhaps the sources and data used are not really up to date, which, as indicated in the example above, could result in undermining the credibility of this Report. Part of the media attention has been brought on the questionability of the claims made by the ILO in drafting this Report, including in the assessment of the current percentage of child workers. However, we are hopeful that this can be clearly rejected through evidence of the sound methodology used.

Concerning the ILO action against child labour, I would like to make a special point on the subject of IPEC. The employers are pleased that growth and expansion of IPEC has continued albeit at a rapid pace since 2000 and that IPEC is now operational in 86 States. Of these, 60 countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC. Also, it

is important to note that since 2002, essential shifts were identified in IPEC's future strategy to abolish child labour. IPEC is now moving towards the provision of more tailor-made assistance to member States in order to put greater focus on facilitation, technical and policy support in order to encourage national ownership of programmes. We feel that this is a very positive development.

Also, we are pleased that IPEC has begun using new forms of advocacy tools. Such projects are for example: SCREAM, the World Day against Child Labour, as well as the Red Card to Child Labour campaign. We believe that embracing new and different advocacy tools and finding new and creative ways to help in the fight against child labour. IPEC's time-bound programmes are critical in this respect, but other means must also be explored to tackle the issue and raise awareness. We must face the sad reality, as recognized in the Report, that child labour is not on the top of everyone's agenda. This is especially true given the mounting complexities that are intertwined with, and contribute to, child labour. It includes a broad range of areas such as poverty, education, HIV/AIDS and youth employment, which are also priority issues.

However, we must continue to keep up the worldwide pressure to abolish child labour, which in the past has come from the international community in addition to domestic public opinion. Promoting such a worldwide movement should be one of the primary strategies of the ILO and its social partners. At the same time, we have to remember that there are other organizations within the United Nations system which have been increasingly active in this field – in particular UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank. Though the ILO no doubt is the centre of excellence on this issue, it needs to increase its cooperation with these multi-lateral organizations for sharing knowledge and expertise and to ensure that there is no overlap that would result in the inefficient use of resources.

Here again, I wish to emphasize that it is not just for the international community to increase its efforts; every government has to play its own important role in the abolition of child labour.

As I mentioned earlier, the region most affected by child labour is sub-Saharan Africa. This is most likely due to poverty in most of its 48 countries. But there is also hope. When looking at the numbers regarding education, the picture is encouraging. The Employers are pleased to see that since 2005, the problems of African countries have come to the attention of many governments in the world, including at the G8 Summit held in Gleneagles. The report of the G8 Summit disappointingly did not mention child labour, but there are a number of entry points where child labour could strategically be placed in the follow-up to the agreed G8 agenda. Because of this, the focus of the abolition of child labour has to be shifted a little more to Africa.

I will now turn to the issue of the action plan, which will be critical in shaping the policy and work over the next four years.

In this regard, we should not forget that the purpose of the Global Report is "to provide a dynamic global picture relating to each category of fundamental principles and rights noted during the preceding four-year period, and to serve as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of the assistance provided by the Organization, and for determining priorities for the following period in the form of action

plans for technical cooperation designed in particular to mobilize the internal and external resources necessary to carry them out”.

This year’s Global Report sets the goal of the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016. It is a courageous commitment. While the ILO has a broad reach through its IPEC programme, we believe that such a goal will need all the efforts of the different stakeholders. Though the elimination of all worst forms of child labour is an ambition that we certainly fully support, we feel it is more effective to focus on understanding the specific role the ILO will and can play in achieving it. It will be necessary to prepare an action plan to be placed before the IPEC Steering Committee in November of this year. Furthermore, all national steering committees should be activated for preparing their own action plan to meet this target.

In this context, the Employers have noted the statement in paragraph 361, that while the extent of the ILO’s contribution to the significant reduction in child labour over the last four years may be difficult to assess, the approaches it has promoted have clearly been a major factor. If the ILO does not have a grasp of the impact its efforts have had in reducing child labour, how can it then determine what will work towards the achievement of its goals? As we sit here today, I am sure that most participants of this meeting will agree when I say that we are keen to provide guidance and help shape the efforts undertaken to address the issue of child labour. However, we must have the necessary information on which to base our assessment of where these efforts should be placed. In the next four years, the Office must monitor more effectively to determine the impact of IPEC’s programmes.

Some general categories of programmes proposed for the next four years for action by the ILO are mentioned in paragraphs 370-387. These are actions to strengthen the efforts to development coherent and comprehensive approaches to abolishing child labour; to deepen and strengthen the worldwide movement as a catalyst; to involve the social partners more intensely and strategically in the fight against child labour; to promote further integration of child labour concerns within overall ILO priorities; and to help build and strengthen research capacity at national level, as well as to devote a larger proportion of its efforts to Africa. These are useful starting points to which we wish to add our support. We appreciate the encouraging idea expressed in paragraph 388 summing up the Report and assure the ILO of our fullest cooperation in its efforts to consign child labour to history.

Mr. STEYNE (*Worker, United Kingdom; speaking on behalf of the Workers’ group*)

I begin, for the Workers, by stressing that this is primarily a global report of action against child labour by ILO constituents. While it also discusses many aspects of the ILO’s, especially the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)’s vast contribution demonstrating that the ILO remains the lead United Nations agency in the struggle against child labour, it is not intended to be a report of IPEC’s activities.

We welcome the further ratifications of the Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). Universal ratification of both is within reach and the campaign must continue and be re-

sourced. May we take this opportunity to urge, among others, our good friends in the Government of India to move rapidly towards ratification too. So long as the world’s greatest democracy remains among the few yet to ratify, not only does it hold back the nation’s path towards equitable development, but it also leaves one-sixth of the world’s children outside the purview of these key human rights instruments. We make the same plea, among others to the Government of Australia, and regarding Convention No. 138, to the Government of the United States.

The Report examines national level action, though there is more good practice to show-case, but also underlines the effectiveness of the ILO’s work in promoting ratification and implementation in member States and the significant work being done even in some member States that have not yet ratified. While self-critical, the Report conveys much good news. Donors must be encouraged by the value they are getting from their contributions to IPEC. The multiplier effect of IPEC activity is clear. Yet, while primary responsibility for the elimination of child labour lies with member States, unfortunately, not all are heeding IPEC’s strategic approach.

The Director-General’s preface traces the growing consensus that child labour not only violates the fundamental human rights of the most vulnerable and powerless people in the global labour market, but also that it continues to hinder social and economic development of member States. He highlights three further areas of policy consensus.

First, the struggle against child labour is inextricably linked to the campaign for education for all. Child labour will not be eliminated without universal education, and universal education will not be achieved without the elimination of child labour. Until then we shall never tire of reminding governments that for every US\$1 invested in education, the nation will reap a US\$7 return in economic growth and development.

Second, an holistic approach is required, which integrates that struggle and the key objectives of national and international economic and social policy of decent work for adults and compulsory education, at the very least until the minimum age for entry into employment. That means integration into decent work country programmes including inter-agency cooperation, with strong labour inspectorates and policy coherence, internationally. Coherence requires acceptance of the parameters of the Conventions, as well as the Declaration, and giving top budgetary priority to education. Otherwise we just get incoherence.

So we would have welcomed stronger treatment in the Report of the need for international coherence in the United Nations family, and particularly for the international financial institutions and the World Trade Organization, to support the ILO’s child labour standards and free, universal, quality, public education.

Our view is clear. The fundamental rights at work proclaimed in the Declaration are indivisible and mutually interdependent and reinforcing. The elimination of child labour requires decent work for adults. Decent work requires respect for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, freedom from forced labour and discrimination. We know where trade unions are strong, where collective agreements are made and kept, there is no child labour.

Third, employers' and workers' organizations, as Mr. Tabani said, play a decisive role in the struggle against child labour. As we said at the Hyderabad stop child labour conference in India in 2004, child labour is not a charity issue; it is an issue of human rights, social justice, power, gender, education, labour markets and decent work for adults. And because it concerns not just human rights but also gross malfunctioning of labour markets, it requires governments, employers and trade unions to be at the heart of the alliance to end child labour. Here is an example of recent labour market malfunction. Labour shortages in South China's Christmas decorations manufacturing sector appear to be resulting in recruitment of child workers. No doubt mature industrial relations based on trade union freedoms there would increase productivity and avoid that problem.

Let me now turn to the body of the Report. Taking into account those strategic pillars, which require international and national policy coherence, the Workers share the conviction that, with political will and cooperation between all actors; the prize of a child labour-free world is within reach. But we emphasize that we seek what the Declaration and the two Conventions require – not just the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, but all forms of child labour as defined by the Conventions.

The Report suggests that only the worst forms can be eliminated by 2016. First, of course, we would much prefer the date to be 2015 to match the other Millennium Development Goals. That would be policy coherence even if we had missed the interim 2005 target of equal access for girls to education.

Of greater concern to us is the disconnect between the aim of eliminating only worst forms and the need to eliminate all forms of child labour. Our understanding of the strategy now underpinning IPEC's programme approach is that, while prevalence of the worst forms of child labour may be an entry point for determining where interventions should start, such interventions should remove not just those engaged in worst forms of child labour but also seeks to remove from work and place into school all children working in such enterprises.

Children left behind in non-worst forms may then replace children who were performing worst forms of child labour. It is more likely that older children would be removed while younger children performing non-worst forms might be left behind and given that, in several sectors, boys, especially adolescent boys, are disproportionately engaged in worst forms, the result could be that boys are removed while girls are disproportionately left behind.

For example, a 14-year-old boy performing a worst form of child labour will be removed from work and placed in school, while his 6-year-old sister, performing a non-worst form, would be left in the workplace. That is unacceptable and unsustainable. It would perpetuate gender discrimination in access to education – a contravention of the Millennium Development Goals and the human rights for the girl child and inconsistent with any claim to policy coherence. It would also be in contradiction to the obligation to eliminate all child labour.

We understand IPEC's approach is to ensure that the workplace in which worst forms are prevalent becomes a workplace with no child labour. So we must pose a direct question about table 1.1. Fantastic we say: 44 million fewer children were performing worst forms of child labour in 2004 than in the

year 2000 – 37 million of them children aged between 5 and 14. Even better. And then we see that the overall number of child labourers, as defined by the two Conventions, has declined by just under 28 million.

What has happened to the 16 million children who appear to have been removed from the worst forms but not from child labour per se? Well a number of children, of course, will have become child labourers during the period too – we have not yet stopped all new recruitment. The 5-17-year-age cohort increased between 2000 and 2004 by some 35 million and children grow older too, and some will reach the age at which their work is no longer covered by the Conventions.

But we cannot believe that 16 million of these 35 million more children in the world would have become child labourers during that period. Especially as the total number of working children (that means children working legitimately as well as those in child labour), in the 5-17-year-old group, has declined by 34 million.

These figures do cause us serious concern. They imply that 16 million children have moved from the worst forms of child labour, not to school or appropriate training as Convention No. 182 requires, but to other jobs. While perhaps not hazardous, they must be jobs for the which the children have not attained the minimum age, otherwise they would not be included in the statistics. Of the 44 million children removed from the worst forms, just over 7 million were 15 years or older. That suggests that 43 per cent of the children between the ages of 5 and 14, previously in the worst forms, are still working. We know where children of that age should be. They should be in school, not at work.

I come back to coherence. We have made significant progress. But that statistic implies that, whatever IPEC's holistic approach, not all governments are implementing consistent, coherent, holistic methodologies, including with their labour inspectorates, and are therefore not fulfilling their obligations to pursue the elimination of all forms of child labour. Nor will they be able to do so without adopting new strategies. It also means that, to be sure about what is happening, we require more sophisticated statistics set in a clear demographic context. We would be delighted to be mistaken, but we cannot in our deep discussions find another sensible interpretation of these figures.

I know from my own country how incoherence in collection of statistics hinders effective national action, and in that light might I add that the Report says far too little about the situation in industrialized countries in general.

That brings us back to our starting point. The Declaration places on member States a constitutional obligation to pursue the elimination of all child labour. And so we need to pursue, with greater vigour, clearer understanding of the complementary relationship of Convention No. 182, and the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), and Convention No. 138 and the Minimum Age Recommendation, 1973 (No. 146), which Convention No. 182 reminds us remain fundamental instruments on child labour. I know from first hand experience that this confusion exists, not just among governments, but among some of our NGO and employer partners.

So, concentrating the Report on Convention No. 182 may not have aided us in that endeavour. But

the Workers are also deeply concerned that almost half of ratifying and reporting member States still lack the plan of action that Convention No. 182 requires: 70 per cent have still not made determinations of hazardous work; 80 per cent have developed neither monitoring nor preventive mechanisms; a staggering 83 per cent have not reported measures to ensure universal basic education; and, worst of all, 95 per cent of ratifying member States report no action regarding special attention to the needs of the girl child.

Briefly, may I add that mainstreaming gender issues in the Report means examining every point from a gender perspective. It does that insufficiently and we would have liked anyway a chapter devoted to the girl child, including, in particular, greater examination of the plight of girl domestic servants. That might also have encouraged that vast majority of governments which report no action to fulfil their obligations to address the needs of girls. I want to stress this point. For us, the huge proportion of girl child labourers, including preadolescent girls, who are virtually enslaved as domestic servants, must be a priority among priorities. I have heard domestic service described as benign. That is very wrong. So many of the characteristics of the worst forms of child labour described in Recommendation No. 190 apply to the work of these children – excessive hours, confinement, exposure to abuse. Consider also the mental torture of the little girl who gets up at 4 a.m. to prepare the clothes and breakfast for the master's children, then sees them off to school, while she stays behind to face a day of chores that would exhaust a grown adult.

Similarly, we would have liked to have seen a more comprehensive treatment of certain key areas – for example sub-Saharan Africa – and key issues, such as the linkage between child labour and forced labour, conflict and trafficking, though we do recognize, of course, that some were discussed in the report on forced labour last year.

We must also pay more attention to child labour in agriculture, as well as domestic service. There is no question that much work in agriculture also comes under Convention No. 182, as we heard from children's testimonies in the Committee on the Application of Standards case on the United States this week.

We welcome the beginning of a deeper discussion on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the child labour challenge. The brief consideration of the subject indicates the need for far greater attention to this matter, which is of the gravest concern.

So, while there may be some cause for celebration – indeed there is – there is still much more member States must do. And IPEC and the other departments in the ILO cooperating with it must be adequately resourced to provide the tripartite constituents with the technical assistance needed to develop effective and comprehensive strategies.

I shall not dwell at length on our continuing campaign for IPEC to work more consistently with the social partners in every country. While there is coverage of the work of trade unions in the Report, the text of paragraph 378 does not fully describe the situation. We would have welcomed a much broader and more detailed account of IPEC's engagement with the international trade union movement and national trade unions and with the employers and, as Mr. Tabani said, of the activities of the social partners.

We agree with building broad social alliances, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), so long as – we stress – so long as they fully support the aims of both Conventions Nos. 182 and 138, which is the institutional glue, for example, of the Global March. And that criterion, that NGOs support both Conventions, is one that should apply to the relationship with NGOs, not just of IPEC, but of constituents and donors.

Our engagement in the Global March brings us together in a great alliance in which we can hear the voices of children. I commend to the Conference the children's statements from the first and second Children's World Congresses on Child Labour, held in Florence in 2004 and New Delhi in 2005. They clearly demonstrate the link between education and empowerment of children, including former child labourers.

But, returning to IPEC, unfortunately, some IPEC field staff are still calling on NGOs before they call on trade unions, and that is unacceptable in a tripartite organization. But donors must understand the challenges IPEC faces. Its management has demonstrated ever-greater commitment to tripartism and we thank them warmly for that. But, of its 400 staff, only a handful in the strategic team in Geneva have permanent contracts – unsustainable if we are committed to IPEC as a strategic programme. If donors want IPEC to fulfil its obligations to tripartism, they must allow it to expand its already expert and excellent, but overstretched, management team, and to recruit a wider range of field staff with greater understanding of labour markets and industrial relations, and of working with and affinity with the social partners. In the interim, we propose that IPEC should develop secondments from social partner constituents. We also believe that IPEC and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) together should develop further a strategic capacity releasing and support programme for trade union partners, starting in a number of key strategic countries.

Many trade union organizations have expressed concern that, while the Report refers to decent work, it could have done much more to explain and stress the interrelationship between action against child labour and action to promote other fundamental rights at work.

Certain member States would have made greater progress against child labour had they also fulfilled their obligations to respect freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and we would like to repeat something else we said at the stop child labour Conference in Hyderabad in India directed to those Governments and NGOs who had trouble understanding the central role trade unions must play in the struggle against child labour.

Trade unions are increasingly including child labour issues in their organizing and bargaining agendas, and in their discussions with multinational enterprises about the responsibilities of multinational enterprises (MNEs) to ensure that fundamental rights at work are respected in global supply chains, for which, by the way, we still require more coherent and vigorous ILO support.

But trade unions cannot include elimination of child labour in their bargaining agendas unless they are free to organize and bargain. I say that most pointedly with reference to those sectors of the global economy where trade union rights are most commonly denied: in unprotected, informal work;

in domestic service; in agriculture; in export processing zones; and in the public services – and that, of course, includes teachers' trade unions, with their crucial role in the alliance against child labour. What do these sectors have in common? Well, for a start, some are precisely the sectors where child labour is most prevalent. They are also predominantly feminized sectors of the global economy. For numerous developing countries, not least in sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture and informal economy work are not just the main employers of children, they are, simply, the main employers. So, how about this for incoherent policy? Governments make all the proper noises about understanding how central is the role of women and women's empowerment in the struggle against child labour, and then they continue to persist with policies that promote informalization and prevent women from organizing in the workplace. Intentionally misogynist? Perhaps. Incoherent? Certainly. Counterproductive? Without a shadow of a doubt.

Permit me to say a few words on the matter of the informal economy. The Report refers to the superb IPEC/ACTRAV intersubregional workshop, held in Chennai in December, on good trade union practice against child labour. Colleagues from many countries explained how they linked organizing in the informal economy with the struggle against child labour. It makes sense: if child labour is most prevalent in the informal economy – which it is – and if the best daily defence against child labour in the workplace is the presence of a free trade union – which history shows us – then increased efforts to organize informal workers will contribute directly to the struggle to get children out of work and into school. There is a further complementary effect. Adults in decent work will have children in school, so those organizing attempts that lead to formalization, to protection, under law, to decent work are a further sustainable contribution to the elimination of child labour. So, among the priorities for action must be further support for organizing informal economy workers.

We have, in the IPEC Steering Committee, begun a stimulating discussion about the link between education for all, legitimate youth employment and the struggle against child labour, and I shall conclude by saying just a few words about that, and my colleague from Education International will expand further. The Workers have been at pains to stress that all children have the right to a broad and comprehensive education – polytechnical in the sense that all children have the right to explore the cognitive/intellectual – the arts and the sciences – as well as the practical and manual. So, in the context of the link with youth employment, we have also stressed we do not believe in education for the children of the rich and only vocational training for the children of the poor. I repeat: labour markets may not need poets and philosophers, but democracies do. Mr. Anand from the Indian Employers has described that position as Gandhian – a significant compliment, in my view.

Andhra Pradesh demonstrates that the poorest parents will send their children to genuinely free and accessible schools. We want sustained improvement in the quality of education for all children – and Sister Eastman of Education International will say more about that too – but we cannot wait until every school is perfect. As the Director-General said, we have to start from where we are.

We must assign resources to enrol all children now. The more enrolled, the more the demand for quality will grow. Our minimum aim is universal, free, compulsory, full-time basic education (that is, primary education plus three years of secondary education, which is necessary to match minimum ages for entry into employment and achieve the Millennium Development Goals), delivered as a quality public service. If the world would garner the political will, it certainly has the resources to deliver that. Yet, we are still far from reaching that goal. So I remind you again of the Global March's calculation: just four days' global arms expenditure would ensure education for all. That, surely, would be a far greater contribution to peace.

In conclusion, my brother, Sir Roy Trotman, will later reflect our views on the proposed global action plan in his concluding statement for the Workers.

Original Arabic: Mr. ATTAR (Government, Saudi Arabia; speaking on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council States)

I have the pleasure of addressing you here today on behalf of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which includes Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and Yemen.

Allow me to convey our esteem and our warmest thanks to the Director-General for the work which has been done in the preparation of the Global Report which this year deals with the third of the fundamental principles – the end of child labour. This Report is entitled *The end of child labour: Within reach*.

We share the hope of the Director-General that child labour, thanks to our joint efforts, will be relegated to the past. Through our joint efforts we must rise to the challenge and overcome the social injustice which puts children to work. Our efforts should also be aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals of poverty reduction, ending hunger and education for all.

Here, we should like to express our gratitude to the ILO, which has adopted the goal of eliminating child labour, which has focused its efforts on this issue, and which has created the IPEC programme that encompasses so many countries, to put an end to child labour throughout the world. These efforts have borne fruit, because the elimination of child labour is one of the most important issues on the agenda of the media, of international organizations and of the specialized agencies which are at the forefront of the fight against child labour. Today, we see the fruit of this action, because, since the first Global Report on child labour published four years ago, there has been an 11 per cent reduction in the number of children who are working, and the number of children in hazardous work has fallen by 26 per cent.

Inspired by the values rooted in the social, moral and legislative structures of the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which were born of our civilization, our religion and our traditions, our States have based their policies and orientations on the need to protect children from any form of abuse, humiliation, exclusion or exploitation.

Our policies seek to strengthen the role of the family, to protect it against anything that might undermine it or separate its members, to provide them with the necessary care and guarantee their rights, offer benefits to help them provide a healthy up-

bringing to their children, and improve their standard of living to enable children to thrive and develop their talents and skills.

These policies, backed by an integrated system of modern laws and regulations, ensure that children do not fall into poverty and deprivation. For these laws prohibit child labour and guarantee a system of care and social benefits that protect the head of household as well as family members in the event of illness, old age or incapacity, and protect widows and orphans. The law also penalizes both physical and psychological abuse of children, and guarantees the highest levels of health, social protection and education and decent standards of living, and protects them against ill-treatment and exploitation. The laws of the GCC States contain detailed provisions on the work of young people and the latest amendments introduced bring them into conformity with Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.

Mindful of the need to protect children and guarantee their rights in accordance with international standards, our States have adhered to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified Convention No. 182. These policies and efforts have borne fruit, for today there are no cases of work of this kind in our region, and our children are protected from exploitation that is contrary to moral values, traditions and international Conventions.

The challenges we face are many, and we must pursue our efforts to prepare for a future fraught with challenge. We will have to find more effective means of nurturing children's creative abilities and their sense of social integration, to help them develop their sensitivity by educating them in civics and a spirit of tolerance, while rejecting extremism, discrimination and violence. This can only be done through a joint effort backed by the necessary resources and the technical assistance of the ILO and other specialized agencies.

The action plan presented in the Global Report is very ambitious. It aims to enhance countries' capacity to promote social dialogue and strengthen the worldwide movement against child labour, and disseminate the principles of human rights through the values of love, solidarity and peace advocated by the heavenly religions, including our Islamic faith which aspires to human happiness and welfare. However, the effort made will have to match the responsibilities we must shoulder in order to meet these objectives. Cooperation between our countries in this regard is growing daily.

The GCC States support any sincere effort to protect the world's children. We endorse the ILO's efforts to help developing countries that are unable to meet the development needs of their people, in order to protect children and eliminate the worst forms of child labour. As pointed out by the Director-General, we must work together to make our hopes come true and put an end to all the worst forms of child labour, and we aspire to meet our ultimate goal of seeing the world free of child labour, through the fight for peace, stability, development and dignity for all peoples of the world. Let us join forces against all the situations in which children are victims of abuse.

*Original Portuguese: Mr. FONSECA VIEIRA DA SILVA
(Minister of Labour and Social Solidarity, Portugal)*

The Report on the end of child labour under discussion here today is extremely important.

The current situation regarding child labour and its worst forms is unacceptable. However, I must say that the Report gives us hope, as it clearly traces the path that has been followed by various countries and regions of the world in their efforts to reduce child labour and to apply good practices in the fight against what is a serious problem in terms of social development.

Thanks to engagement on the part of wider society and the commitment of its successive Governments, my country, Portugal, has succeeded in reducing child labour, previously a real scourge, to minimal levels.

Nonetheless, the fall in traditional forms of child labour does not mean that new forms of labour or occurrences of this problem will not arise. This is why we have continued to engage and invest in the identification and monitoring of child labour, a phenomenon against which we are fighting with the aim of stamping it out.

In order to make further progress together, I believe that we must adopt a four-pronged approach. First, we must strengthen the standards which seek to eliminate the exploitation of children, that is to say, ensure that ILO standards prevail. There is a need to reinforce these standards, both from a legal and a practical point of view, in the fight against the exploitation of children. Secondly, all children must receive an education, which must be a right and a weapon against child labour. Thirdly, decisive progress needs to be made at the United Nations concerning the fight against poverty and the inequalities which are so often the main cause of the exploitation of child labour. Finally, the fourth prong consists of clearly strengthening the social fight against child labour, by which I mean social cohesion, so that all the communities and families are involved, this being where this struggle is taking place; a struggle for civilization, which simply must be won.

Cooperation is vital in the task facing those countries engaged in the fight against child labour. Therefore, it is with great satisfaction that we note that the Portuguese language version of the Report was presented and discussed at a conference on "Combating the exploitation of child labour in the Portuguese-speaking countries". These countries are located across the globe and have differing economic and social situations; nonetheless, they agreed on a joint declaration reaffirming the policy priority of combating the exploitation of child labour, with each member State making a commitment to be involved in this process; the Declaration refers to multilateral cooperation in this area.

This multilateral cooperation has long been advocated by this Organization. The action of the ILO and its dedication to this cause can be seen clearly in various fields. The Declaration emanating from this Conference also refers to a worldwide set of standards and a comprehensive policy capable of combating the causes of child labour.

If we want to obtain results, then we must have a clear picture of the true situation, an understanding based on qualitative and quantitative information and a series of valid statistical indicators. In this regard, the Report we have before us is undoubtedly of great value, constituting a point of reference owing to the importance it attributes to awareness-raising among the stakeholders, the promotion of education, the fight against poverty and the promotion of decent work.

The elimination of child labour is a prerequisite for development. All governments and civil society must help combat this scourge and cooperate in this areas.

Mr. KILLEEN (*Minister for Labour Affairs, Ireland*)

Mr. President, thank you for accommodating my intervention at this stage. I wanted to be here again in Geneva today on behalf of the Irish Government to address this special plenary sitting on the Director-General's Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*.

The Report says that if the current pace in the decline of child labour were to be maintained and the global momentum to stop child labour continued, the ILO believes that child labour could feasibly be eliminated, in most of its worst forms, in ten years. We must, I think, ask ourselves – is this good enough, and how can the pace of improvement be hastened?

I note that the Report states that the number of child labourers fell worldwide by 11 per cent in the four years from 2000 to 2004 but there is still a distressingly high figure of 218 million. The number of children and youths in hazardous work decreased by 26 per cent to reach 126 million with the most pronounced drop, of 33 per cent, in those aged 5-14 years.

I commend partners from Latin America and the Caribbean, who have seen the most rapid decline in child labour over the four-year period with the numbers there falling by a very encouraging two-thirds. Indeed, I also commend Brazil and Mexico for the progress which they have made, especially in area of education.

We strongly support the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) which assists in building national capacity to deal with child labour and in providing policy advice. In addition, through direct action, the Programme over the past decade has reached some 5 million children. These initiatives have played a significant role in mobilizing action and demonstrating how child labour can be eliminated.

I believe that education should be the lynchpin of any programme to eliminate child labour. Access to basic education is a fundamental human right that has been denied to millions of children, condemning them to a downward spiral of poverty and despair.

I would like, at this point, to specifically mention the SCREAM Programme, which was developed in Ireland and which, as an ILO-endorsed Programme, has been used extensively. Since 2002, when the SCREAM Programme was first launched, it has been translated into a number of languages to ensure global coverage. It has proved a useful tool for teachers in a number of countries where capacity-building workshops have been organized.

I should also inform the Conference that earlier this year, *Trócaire*, an Irish non-governmental organization, ran a very successful sustained campaign aimed at highlighting in Ireland the issue of child labour amongst the school-going population. I want to congratulate them for their efforts in this regard and I understand that their very effective television advertisement has been widely screened outside Ireland, and is also being used in schools in a number of countries.

I believe that we should work through the ILO, as the centre of excellence on child labour. The ILO should help by building and strengthening research

capacity at national level and promote networking among member States.

We do need special measures for Africa, which is where the most progress can be made. I support the proposal of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour to devote a larger proportion of its efforts to this continent. Ireland's development aid is mainly focused on Africa. We are spending over €40 million a year on education. The largest portion of this expenditure is in Africa. The aim is to ensure access to good quality education for all. Education, as I said, is a key driver of change in reducing the factors which lead to child labour.

I wish to inform you that the Irish Government's current partnership programme with the ILO for the period 2004-07 is directed at agreed areas for support. My Government values the close partnership we have with the ILO. This trusted relationship allows the ILO and Ireland to identify which programmes are most in need of funding support. Ireland's current partnership programme supports the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour.

We are also working with the ILO in promoting women's entrepreneurship and employment for women with disabilities. Support for these programmes also addresses child labour in a cross-cutting fashion. Through protection against forced labour and the creation of family income generation, the pressure on families for children to work is reduced and children benefit from more opportunities to continue in education.

We are currently reviewing our partnership programme with the ILO and planning for the future. Our aid programme is growing. We have the opportunity and, indeed, the willingness to provide additional support to the ILO's efforts to eliminate child labour and exploitation in all its forms. As recently as yesterday, officials from Ireland's aid programme met with ILO counterparts to map a way forward.

We must today commit ourselves to actions which will ensure that, on our return to this issue in 2010, we will see significant reductions in the number of child labourers across the world, based on the specific actions we have identified. We have done the research, we know what works; now is the time for even more effective and targeted action.

Mr. STOSTAD (*State Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, Norway*)

I am honoured to take the floor at the International Labour Conference for the first time. Let me start by congratulating the Director-General and his staff for once again having presented a most relevant Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*. The eradication of child labour has, for many years, been a top priority for my Government and we have given our full support, both politically and economically, to the ILO's work on the abolition of child labour.

The Report before us is the second Global Report on child labour, and for the first time we can see a glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel. The Report shows that our common efforts are paying off. The number of child labourers globally has, as also referred to by the previous speaker, fallen by 11 per cent over the last four years. For children in hazardous work the decrease is 26 per cent. We have, during the same period, seen significant advances in ratifications of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973

(No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). It is indeed remarkable that Convention No. 182 already has been ratified by 160 member States. This rights-based approach is a crucial premise for achieving durable results on child labour, as well as in other areas where children are exploited or abused.

These figures, however encouraging, should not make us believe that we can relax in our efforts. With some 218 million children still in work, the activities of the ILO in this field, as well as the political and economic support of member States, should continue and indeed be intensified. The active participation of other organizations within the United Nations family, such as UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank, should also be increased. Most importantly, governments, social partners and other stakeholders in countries with the greatest prevalence of child labour must further intensify their efforts to address the root causes of this disgrace.

The abolition of child labour is dependent on economic resources, but most of all on political determination at national level. The governments of member States with a large number of working children should, therefore, as soon as possible, initiate national action plans on child labour, preferably integrated into decent work country programmes as part of their national poverty reduction strategies. In accordance with Convention No. 182, priority must be given to the worst forms of child labour, such as slavery, forced labour, trafficking, prostitution and hazardous work. Special attention should be given to girls, who are often exposed to the worst forms of exploitation, for example in the sex industry.

Keeping these political conditions in mind, we fully share the Director-General's ambitions that we should be able to eliminate at least the worst forms of child labour within the next ten years.

The 2005 World Summit made decent work a common goal for all United Nations Member States. Child labour is not decent work. Children should be at school, not at work. The poorest countries of the world can only find their way out of poverty by offering education to all children. It is no longer acceptable, nor is it economically, socially or politically sustainable, that parents are kept in such poverty that they are forced to send their children to work instead of sending them to school. And this link, between child labour and education for all, holds the key to the long-term solution of the problem. We therefore thank the ILO and its partners for initiating the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education, and have already announced that Norway will indeed participate in this initiative.

Child labour, and in particular in its worst forms, is first of all detrimental to the child itself. Many of these children find themselves worn out or injured, and thus unable to take part in working life when they reach the legal age for entering the workforce. This situation is of course also detrimental to society itself. A well-educated and healthy workforce is of vital importance to secure wealth and prosperity.

A fair globalization which gives opportunities to all people is currently perhaps the most important issue on the international agenda. Globalization can never be fair if it causes millions of children to be part of the workforce instead of getting education. On the other hand, it is not enough to send children to school. They must also be given decent jobs

when they have finished their education. The ILO Decent Work Agenda is therefore most important in order to give children and young workers a future. Decent work for all is also the only way forward for those parents who see no way of survival other than sending their children to work.

Before I close, let me address one systemic issue of crucial importance to our common goal of fair globalization: the challenge of good, coherent global governance. The United Nations, of which the ILO is a very important part, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (WTO) must see eye to eye. Unfortunately, that is currently not the case and, as we know, coherence starts at home, with all ministers looking in the same direction, towards the same goal, and bringing coherent perspectives to the global level. We are all responsible for making this happen.

Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jonas Gaur Støre, started this process by addressing the issue of coherence between the ILO and the WTO at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong, China, in 2005.

Only by making decent work a global goal, a goal for all ministers and all international organizations, can we hope to succeed in making globalization fair, morally acceptable and politically sustainable.

Original Arabic: Mr. CHAOUCH (Minister of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Tunisians Abroad, Tunisia)

I would like to make a few remarks in the context of the discussion of the Global Report *The end of child labour: Within reach* and to bring you up to date with regard to the situation of our country in relation to child labour.

Economic development is impossible without social development. Respect for the fundamental rights at work that form the focus of the ILO Declaration of 1998 makes it possible not only to ensure minimum conditions for decent work but also to promote honest competition between organizations and the creation of social peace, which is one of the fundamental prerequisites for improving enterprises' productivity.

The elimination of child labour is one of the central principles of the Declaration, as it is an issue that involves a vulnerable segment of society in need of special protection. Children must be given the chance to enjoy their natural development, both physical and mental, and need to attend school in order to allow them to develop their gifts and skills and to have total confidence later on as they integrate into social and professional life.

We would like to pay tribute to the unstinting efforts of the International Labour Organization to help countries to put an end to the phenomenon of child labour, particularly through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), which has benefited a large number of countries where child labour is a problem, and through the awareness-raising seminars on the theme of child labour held throughout the world. The Organization's efforts have thus made it possible to reduce the number of working children in the world – especially those employed in hazardous or immoral work – as shown in the statistics contained in this year's Global Report.

Child labour can never be eradicated without a clear political will arising from the conviction that child labour is harmful not only to the health, safety

and morals of children and of future generations, but also to the economies of the countries afflicted with this scourge and those of other countries as well.

Tunisia has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

Tunisia has not merely ratified these Conventions. It has also committed itself to eliminating child labour by establishing mechanisms and adopting legislative provisions which have made it possible for the phenomenon of child labour to be almost entirely eradicated from our country.

In this connection, I would like to cite a few examples.

First, basic education up to the age of 16 has been compulsory since 1991. The law provides for sanctions against any guardian or parent who prevents her or his children from attending school or withdraws children from school before the legally established age of 16. Ninety-nine per cent of all children in Tunisia between the ages of 3 and 6 attend school. Furthermore, fewer children have been leaving school early since basic education became compulsory up to the age of 16.

Secondly, the regulations concerning the protection of the child enacted under Act No. 92 of 1995 give children the right to benefit from specific preventive social, educational and health measures intended to protect them from all forms of violence or physical, moral or sexual abuse, and from all forms of neglect involving abusive treatment or exploitation, such as economic exploitation.

Thirdly, we have adapted the provisions of the regulations on the minimum age for admission to employment in line with Convention No. 138. As a result of this, the legal minimum age for admission to employment has been set at 16 years instead of 15, in accordance with the Convention.

Fourthly, implementing provisions under the labour law have been adopted, to establish the hazardous forms of work in which the employment of children below the age of 18 years is prohibited. Provisions have also been adopted to regulate the involvement of children in public events and in films.

In keeping with its commitment to support international efforts to combat organized crime, whose principal victims are women and children, Tunisia has ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and has supported the additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. It has also acceded to the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, concerning the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. In accordance with international law, supervisory mechanisms have been established to enforce legislation on child labour. For example, inspection bodies are responsible for monitoring situations in which the health or physical or moral welfare of children is jeopardized, including situations of economic exploitation.

Apart from the legislative measures adopted in Tunisia to protect children's rights, a number of programmes and mechanisms have been set up under the aegis of President Ben Ali with the aim of eradicating poverty that is one of the main factors in

children beginning work prematurely. These mechanisms and programmes have helped to reduce the poverty level to 3.9 per cent.

Our country has also developed specific programmes to protect children at risk and bring them into special institutions.

Lastly, multidisciplinary teams have been formed to examine the situation of children involved in vagrancy. Psychological support is provided to help children become reconciled with themselves and with their families and social environment.

These are some of the measures adopted in Tunisia as part of our participation in international efforts to eliminate child labour.

Mr. FUNES DE RIOJA (*Employer, Argentina*)

I am very grateful for the opportunity to take the floor today. I know that the day is full with many speakers wishing to participate in today's important discussion in order to share their views and experiences, as well as challenges they face, in promoting the effective abolition of child labour. Mr. Tabani, as the spokesperson for the Employers' group in this debate, has perfectly reflected the views of the group in relation to this year's Global Report.

My intention in speaking to you today is to reaffirm the commitment of the Employers' group as a whole to promoting the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It is now a well-known fact that the Declaration arose out of the initiative of the Employers' group. Employers understood then, and strongly support now, the need to promote and protect fundamental principles and rights in the world of work, regardless of the level of economic development. The Declaration is a central tool to help us achieve this.

In making this point, we must make it clear that the commitment of the Employers' group to the Declaration is demonstrated by more than just words. This year, the General Council of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) adopted a policy on the Declaration. The purpose of the policy is to provide employers with a general overview of the key features of the Declaration and to highlight the areas in which employers' organizations and their members can become actively involved in its promotion.

The policy also highlights the importance of ensuring that employers become actively involved in every aspect of the Declaration and its follow-up. The specific details of the IOE policy were brought to the attention of the whole of the Employers' group at the beginning of this Conference in an effort to ensure that all members are aware and understand the continued relevance of the Declaration to them and their members.

In addition, those who were present at the ILO Regional Meeting in Brazil will recall that the IOE, in coordination with the Inter-American Regional Organisation of Workers (ORIT) and the Latin American Central of Workers (CLAT) have signed a Joint Declaration on immediate action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in the Americas. This Act highlights the role that governments, as well as the social partners, have to play in the elimination of child labour. It was drafted and signed in anticipation and in support of the discussion we are having today.

These are only a few of the concrete steps the Employers have taken to actively promote the Declaration and its principles in the very recent past.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation to all those who are participating today – Workers, Governments and Employers – since their participation is crucial to ensuring the continued relevance of the Declaration and its follow-up. These discussions represent a unique opportunity to share experiences, ideas, good practices, as well as any challenges in giving effect to the fundamental principles. Every opportunity to engage in such dialogue brings us closer to our goal of universal respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work.

For its part, the Employers' group will continue to look for ways to actively support and promote the Declaration and its follow-up, and, in particular, the eradication of the worst forms of child labour. That is our commitment, a commitment which we take as Employers.

Mr. MALIK (*Government, Pakistan*)

We have read the second Global Report on child labour, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, especially the statistics and conclusions contained in it. As stated by the Director-General, more girls and boys around the world are on the path from work-rooms to classrooms. Out of exploitation towards real opportunity, child labour, especially in its worst forms, is in decline for the first time across the globe.

Since we last met, the actual number of child workers worldwide has fallen by 11 per cent from 246 to 218 million, due to increased political will and awareness and concrete action, particularly in the field of poverty reduction and mass education. The ILO has effectively led this campaign since 1992 and has brought it to the centre of global political and social debate. This was acknowledged in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. It is heartening to note that the percentage of children in the world in hazardous work has decreased by 26 per cent, from 171 million in 2000 to 126 million in 2004. If we maintain the same pace, we can say that the worst forms of child labour can be eliminated.

Although significant progress has been made globally to end child labour, much more needs to be done. We firmly believe that progress should not lead us to complacency. Continued exploitation of children in informal sectors should be a matter of grave concern for all of us, and must be effectively addressed, both at national and international levels. The Report acknowledges the role that child labour plays in the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment, and recognizes that child labour elimination and economic growth do not have an automatic co-relation but must be supported by coherent national and international policies.

To ensure that these efforts to eradicate child labour are not undermined by policies advocated by other international institutions, effective policy coherence must be promoted and implemented among these institutions, especially those dealing with international trade and finance. We believe that all of us can play a role in this regard.

I would like to fully subscribe to President Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica's comment, during his address to the Conference yesterday, that "there is no greater obstacle to the creation of decent work than inadequate education". He said that education failure today means the failure of our economies tomorrow. Education is the most important factor distinguishing the poor from the non-poor. Poverty

declines as the education level of the head of household increases. This has a direct link with child labour. The strategy of eliminating child labour through education is very vital. Pakistan signed the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in 1994. A number of action programmes relating to areas of law and policy development and institutional capacity building have resulted in tangible progress, with the direct involvement of government, social partners and civil society.

The Government of Pakistan has adopted a policy of immediate withdrawal of children from the worst forms of child labour under a time-bound programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. A list of 29 occupations hazardous for children has been identified and the Government is taking measures to ensure strict compliance.

It is noteworthy that the Government of Pakistan has placed child labour on its development agenda and is pursuing it vigorously through a multi-dimensional approach. Besides the goal of universal primary education, immediate withdrawal of children from the worst forms of child labour, and related measures the Government has also established a poverty alleviation fund, and a microfinance bank to reinforce its efforts to achieve the targets.

The Global Report, on page 76, mentions the elimination of child labour in the soccer ball industry in Sialkot, Pakistan. In 1996, when an estimated 7,000 children were working in stitching soccer balls, the Government of Pakistan, with the active collaboration of social partners and IPEC, started addressing this problem. Since March 1999, IPEC monitors have found no instances of child labour at the soccer ball stitching centres. The district government, which already spends 70 per cent of its budget on education, has now passed a resolution declaring Sialkot a child labour-free zone. This initiative will be repeated in other parts of the country as well.

I am also pleased to announce at this forum that the Government of Pakistan has ratified ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), on 5 June 2006. The instrument of ratification will be submitted to the ILO before the end of this session. By doing so, Pakistan has become only the second country in South Asia and among a handful in Asia to ratify all eight ILO core Conventions. This step is reflective of the importance attached by the Government of Pakistan to upholding child rights in the country.

Finally, the Global Report rightly emphasizes the capacity limitations in a programme against child labour. It has rightly concluded that the technical and organizational aspects need to be strengthened by social partners, governments and other major stakeholders.

Ms. EASTMAN (*representative, Education International*)

Children are people; their rights are human rights; they cannot always, or indeed often, defend their rights. Thank you to the ILO, therefore, and to its tripartite partners, for making the space at this Conference to bring us together to bring momentum and political will, to commit to actions and to create strategies that will bring an end to child labour.

I speak to you today on behalf of Education International (EI), representing 29 million teachers and education workers. EI welcomes the Global Report, its message of hope and its call to action. My task

today though is to focus on the key role of education in the fight against child labour – and I quote the Report: “Perhaps the greatest progress has been made in recognizing the link between child labour elimination and Education for All.” However, we will not succeed in achieving education for all (EFA) if the objective is to eliminate only the worst forms of child labour. The data tell the story. If a steady increase of child labour results from eradicating its worst forms, does that mean more children in school? Unfortunately, no. We cannot congratulate ourselves if we simply allow this phenomenon to move, to hide, but to be used when it suits. For example, in Cameroon, only 20 per cent of the children freed from child labour in the agricultural sector have been registered in schools. If we believe children should have at least a basic education, we must commit the goal of eradicating all forms of child labour.

Donor countries and ourselves must not be in too much of a hurry to see good news – results that mask the real situation of not such good news. I concur with the United Nations Director-General, Kofi Annan, when he said, “Child labour has serious consequences that stay with the individual and with society for longer than the years of childhood.” Victims of child labour face an adulthood of illiteracy and unemployment, perpetuating poverty. Therefore, we say “well done” to those governments which have ratified Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 and legislated compulsory education. However, only 51 per cent have plans of action, while even fewer – at 17 per cent – have measures to ensure universal basic education, and an entirely dismal figure of less than 5 per cent pay special attention to girls. We call on governments everywhere to take seriously their responsibilities in policy-making and legislating conditions conducive to the elimination of child labour. We in turn will do our part, with the social partners, by advocating adequate budgetary allocations at national and global levels to enable unified action on education for all and child labour.

Education, a human right, a public good, the breath of life for children, must be non-negotiable. In every community the school is at the centre. Literacy is a gift, for livelihood, for democratic citizenship and for life itself.

Within the context of the right to education, quality public education must be free, universally accessible, child-friendly, relevant and compulsory, and must include secondary as well as primary education. We know parents will send their children to such schools.

Let me elaborate a little, starting with formal education. In a socially just world, education is the responsibility of the State. It is not a charity and it is not a business. Education is simply too important. Stop-gap measures and non-formal education, no matter how well intentioned, are in the long term ill-conceived and not sustainable. As paragraph 265 of the Report so aptly states, “the worst forms of education will never be the answer to the worst forms of child labour”.

Education must be of high quality. That means, first and foremost, well-qualified teachers who are licensed to teach. But even they cannot meet the needs of children in run-down schools with large classes and few, if any, resources. Teachers’ working conditions are, after all, students’ learning conditions.

Quality public education also must be free and accessible. Universal access must be guaranteed through public funding of public education under the jurisdiction of the State, without user fees or parental contributions.

It must be compulsory. Efforts to end child labour work best when measures to combat poverty and promote education are linked to increased regulation and enforcement of compulsory education for both boys and girls. Furthermore, it must be compulsory to at least the minimum working age. Work and school attendance are not compatible.

Schools must be child-friendly. While all children deserve quality education and qualified teachers able and available to give them full attention, children freed from workplaces need to be welcomed into child-friendly schools. They need a special environment: safe schools, lunch programmes, meaningful and relevant curricula and transition programmes that rehabilitate, increasing their chance of successful reintegration. Teachers know only too well that tired, hungry, sick children do not learn well.

And absolutely non-negotiable is the principle that education must be for all. Quality education includes the most vulnerable children, and, in particular, girls. It should reach out to the poor and disadvantaged groups: the illiterate, rural, indigenous and migrant communities, those with disabilities and HIV/AIDS-affected children. Discrimination and exclusion do not belong in a quality education system.

And what is our capacity to deliver? Prevention of child labour through education requires a huge commitment by the international community, especially the financial institutions, and governments everywhere. Education, especially in developing countries, is always in need of resources. Investment must be a priority. The resources do exist. It is a matter of political will as to how we choose to use them. Books for rifles, as President Oscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica said yesterday.

UNESCO tells us that, to further exacerbate the situation, the world will need over 18 million new teachers by 2015. Teacher recruitment is an urgent issue and crash training courses are not the answer. Neither is poaching qualified teachers, especially from the South by the North.

What can we do? Education International is ready to play a lead role – with our members, with others, with you. A multidimensional approach is warranted and we will continue to support the work of our sisters and brothers in the trade union movement, who are recognized in the Report as a driving force against child labour.

At the international level, EI is pleased, once again, to undertake joint efforts with IPEC in the fight to eradicate child labour. We also welcome the opportunity to contribute to the new Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All. And, of course, EI continues to work closely in the campaign for education with the Global March against Child Labour.

Within EI, we will build on the long-standing EI/WHO/EDC Programme on Education for All and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Schools (EFAIDS) programme, which has trained over 150,000 teachers to become fully involved in their national EFA plans in HIV/AIDS prevention in schools. Government officials and representatives of the donor communities have come to appreciate that the involvement of

teachers and their unions in shaping national policies contributes to their success. Because teacher unions are rooted in the local environment, they are vital in helping decision-makers create sound development policies.

Moreover, teachers' daily work with children in classrooms has given them a unique and critical role to play in the school and in the community, working closely with parents in the best interests of the child.

I must add that, while a gender theme runs through the Report, a synthesis and a more specific focus on gender and child labour including gender bias and girls' education is needed. We must not deceive girls again as we did with the failure of the Millennium Development Goals last year to bridge the gender gap in education.

Our joint responsibility, then – our job – is to work together as trade unionists, as employers, as governments, as people, to build the social fabric through demonstrable respect for human rights, Education for All, decent work and the elimination of all forms of child labour. Our children deserve to have a childhood, to play, to learn, to go to school, to be free of mind-deadening, body- and soul-destroying poverty, the hardships and terrors of unmitigated and forced labour, the fear of abuse, violence and exploitation.

Political will and commitment, strategic action, building on programmes that work and sheer hard work go a very long way. And the reward is great: dignity and hope for a worthwhile life in a more just and equal world.

El's hope for the future, then, is that we make quality education for all a reality. Let us, indeed, turn our efforts to really investing in the world's children and send them to school!

Mr. SAHU (Minister of State for Labour and Employment, India)

It is heartening to note the significant decline in the incidence of child labour in many areas of the world, as reflected in the second Global Report on child labour. While the decline is significant in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the countries in the Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world have also seen a decline. All this shows that if there is a will and if appropriate steps are taken, it is not impossible to achieve the goal of elimination of child labour. What we have seen happening in the Latin American and Caribbean countries can be achieved in other areas also if we move in a targeted manner. The Report has highlighted political will, right policy choices and basic education as important tools for the elimination of child labour. It has stressed the need for greater emphasis on poverty alleviation, coupled with educational expansion, to address the problems of child labour. The Report also emphasizes that we must first tackle the worst forms of child labour, while not losing sight of the ultimate goal of ending child labour in its entirety.

India is one of the six partner countries which signed the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in 1992 when it was launched, which reflects its high level of commitment to the cause. As per the National Policy on Child Labour enunciated in 1987, India is following a holistic and a multi-pronged approach to eliminate child labour from the country in a phased manner, beginning with children working in hazardous occupations and progressively covering the children working in other occupations also. As a follow-up to this policy, our Government launched the Na-

tional Child Labour Project Scheme in 1988, to rehabilitate working children in nine identified child labour endemic districts of the country. Since then, the coverage of the scheme has been progressively increased to cover 250 districts in the country. Apart from a major expansion in the coverage of the scheme, the priority of the Government in this direction is also evident in the quantum jump made in the budgetary allocation for this purpose. The Government has allocated US\$145 million for the scheme during the Tenth Plan, against an allocation of only US\$54.3 million in the Ninth Plan.

Under the National Child Labour Project scheme, children engaged in hazardous work are withdrawn from work and put into special bridge schools, where they are provided with education, vocational training, health-care facilities, stipends and midday meals. The objective is to prepare the children to join mainstream education by providing them with bridging education and an enabling environment.

Recently, the Government of India had passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill to ensure hazardous 100 days' employment to every household, which is a step into the right direction to eliminate child labour. As you all know poverty is one of the main reasons for child labour.

As mentioned in the Global Report, we in India are tackling the problem of child labour primarily through education. Here, I would like to mention a significant step taken by the Government of India, whereby the right to free and compulsory education for children between 5 and 14 years has been made a fundamental right under the Indian Constitution. Accordingly, the child labour elimination programmes in India have a very strong convergence with the national campaign on education entitled, "Education for All". In addition, the National Child Labour Project programme also envisages strong linkages with other ongoing government programmes on poverty alleviation and income generation.

Apart from the National Child Labour Project, the country is implementing three projects under the ILO-IPEC programme, namely the Indo-US Child Labour Project and the state-based child labour projects in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. All these projects are in line with the national programme, National Child Labour Project, with some additional components like vocational training for adolescents and greater tracking and monitoring of child labour.

The Government's utmost endeavour is to eliminate child labour in all its forms and to ensure education for all children up to the age of 14. However, prescribing the minimum age for employment in terms of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), would need to be preceded by the creation of suitable enforcement machinery and of conditions ensuring that children are not being compelled by circumstances to seek employment. The Government of India is moving in this direction.

India is examining the feasibility of ratifying the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), in consultation with the concerned central ministries, departments, state governments and other social partners in its well-established tripartite framework. India supported Convention No. 182 during its adoption, as we are in full agreement with the Convention in principle. However, we will ratify the Convention only when our national laws and practices are in full conformity with the provisions

of the Convention. As regards determining the hazardous forms which are detrimental to the safety and morals of children, the Government is progressively enlarging its list of occupations where employment of children is prohibited. It has recently initiated the process for inclusion of employment of children as domestic servants and in restaurants, road-side eateries and hotels as hazardous occupations.

India has stringent legislative provisions, a proactive National Human Rights Commission, a vibrant judiciary, an independent media and strong civil society organizations. With this set of institutions in place, the Government is moving ahead in a targeted manner towards achieving the goal of a child labour-free society.

(*Mr. Adyanthaya takes the Chair.*)

Mr. CARTER (*Government, United States*)

I would like now to say a few words about the new Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*. As the title of the Report suggests, the nations of the world have come a long way in the fight against exploitative child labour. IPEC is now operational in 86 countries, millions of children have been removed or prevented from exploitative child labour and countries have developed sustainable monitoring systems to ensure that children remain in school and out of exploitative work.

The United States is proud of the support it has provided to IPEC to carry out this work. We support the Report's conclusions concerning the important issues facing working children, such as political and social instability, HIV/AIDS and poverty, the inter-effectiveness of child labour with other development goals, such as promotion of education for all and the conclusion that efforts to eliminate child labour need to be mainstreamed into the countries' larger development and poverty-reduction strategies.

The United States Department of Labor is also in agreement with the Report's assessment that, for the time-bound approach to succeed, Governments must take ownership of the process. The United States Department of Labor is very much in favour of national ownership of child labour eradication efforts and we wish to avoid any kind of efforts that duplicate others. However, it is important always to bear in mind that such efforts should be as transparent as possible.

In the light of these accomplishments, there are still some areas where challenges remain. We would like to highlight a few of these areas where more progress is needed. For example, we need to learn more about how to collect and verify data on the nature and incidence of child labour to better target our policy interventions and resources.

It is also important to examine more carefully the Report's findings on the proportion of girls among child labourers, given the tendency for many girls to be employed in more difficult to measure and invisible types of work, such as domestic work and commercial sexual exploitation. Because of multiple barriers to eliminating work commonly done by girls, it is essential that national and international efforts to combat girls' work, especially its worst forms, be closely coordinated with efforts to expand girls' access to education, an issue that has already been mainstreamed into the broader development agenda. This approach is especially important with

regard to Africa, where rapid population growth could be slowed by increasing the years of schooling obtained by girls. It is also imperative to focus more on the special situation of girls in the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) associated national child labour action plans, as this issue is currently given low priority according to the Report.

We also agree with the Report that efforts to identify, prevent and rehabilitate children involved in criminal activity, particularly in gangs involved in drug-trafficking and other crimes, need more focus.

The special status of agriculture is identified in this Report and it is a key sector where more efforts are needed to address child labour. Through its findings, and with these areas for future focus, the Report lays out important lessons learned in the fight against child labour. It is our belief that the Report is a useful tool for future action to combat this problem.

Original Portuguese: Mr. DA ROCHA PARANHOS (Alternate Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Brazil, Geneva)

The Brazilian Government congratulates the International Labour Organization on the Global Report on the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work which this year concentrated on the subject of child labour. We consider the matter of child labour to be extremely important, particularly with regard to the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

We would like to point out the fact that there are still 218 million children at work in the world. The ILO and the IPEC programme, however, demonstrate that we are headed in the right direction. The number of children involved in work, particularly the worst forms of child labour, is on the way down. We would like to encourage the ILO to increase its efforts in this area, so as to improve further the positive results already obtained to date.

We would like to welcome the Action Plan proposed by the Director-General for the elimination of child labour, and we hope that this will represent a significant contribution to the attainment of this objective.

In Brazil, the Government recognizes the existence of the problem and has undertaken courageous and innovative action to combat child labour, with the continuous support of the IPEC programme, which has been in our country since 1992.

These measures have had a positive effect and, in this regard, we would like to express our gratitude to the ILO for the recognition of our efforts in the text of the Report and also for having chosen Brazil on the occasion of the Sixteenth American Regional Meeting which was held in Brasilia from 2-5 May, as a platform to launch this very important document throughout the world.

May I take this opportunity to mention the commitment of the tripartite delegations who were present at that Sixteenth American Regional Meeting to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. In a joint declaration, governments, employers and workers appealed for increased efforts to eliminate child labour, while receiving an important contribution to this effort in the format proposed, *Decent work in the Americas: An agenda for the Hemisphere*, presented by the Director-General of the Organization.

In the case of Brazil all the elements required for the elimination of child labour in the near future are in place. There is a strong political will and awareness within wider society which are reflected in measures to support families financially to enable them to keep their children in school. This is the main precept of the Bolsa-Familia Programme which now benefits about 8 million families and some 15 million children.

It is a pleasure for me here to reaffirm Brazil's interest in participating in the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education which was launched in Beijing in November 2005 under the "Education for All" initiative.

At the same time, the Government has sought, because of the clear relationship between poverty and child labour, to apply policies to achieve sustainable quality economic growth. The Brazilian initiatives in this area, however, go back to 1994 when we established, with the support of IPEC, the quadripartite National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour. The most obvious result of the forum was the organization, in 1996, of the Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour (PETI). The action supported by IPEC time-bound programmes has had a significant impact in reducing the levels of child labour in the country. According to the Report of the Director-General, from 1992 to 2004, the number of children at work between the ages of 10 and 17 dropped from 7.5 million to 4.8 million, (a drop of 36.4 per cent). In the 5 to 9 age range, the reduction in the number of child workers was even more dramatic, about 60.9 per cent, with the figure falling from 630,000 in 1992 down to 248,000 in the year 2004.

The changes in Brazil society which made it possible to obtain the results I have just cited affect fields as diverse as legislation, with an explicit ban on child labour practices in the Constitution of 1988 and the adoption, in 1990, of the Statute of the Child and Adolescent, and the promotion of a significant involvement of civil society in discussions and initiatives regarding this subject.

These discussions were formalized in the context of the National Council for the Eradication of Child Labour (CONAETI), which was established in 2002. The work of the Council has led to the development of a national action plan, the implementation of which is supported by the IPEC time-bound programme.

The Brazilian Government has sufficient reason, therefore, to trust in the excellent work which has been undertaken by the ILO to eliminate child labour. This confidence was the basis for a decision taken by the Brazilian Government to donate US\$200,000 to the IPEC programme with the aim of developing and implementing a cooperation project to combat child labour in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. This is a pilot project which could replicate in other developing countries, possibly with the support of other donor countries, those good results which have been obtained in the Brazilian context. We hope that future initiatives will be as successful as those which have already been carried out, like, for example, the project on combating sexual exploitation in the tri-border region which had good results in 2005, together with other such initiatives undertaken by the Brazilian Government in the national territory, which are referred to in the Director-General's Report.

I would like to reiterate Brazil's commitment to combating child labour and our willingness to coordinate efforts on a permanent basis on both national and international levels, so we can achieve the goal referred to in the title of the Report, a world in which the serious problem of child labour has been banished.

Mr. RICHARDS (*Government, United Kingdom*)

The United Kingdom welcomes this Report. It is heartening to learn that global child labour figures are decreasing, and that is the key message coming from this Report, that we are, and I quote, "beginning to see an encouraging reduction in child labour – especially its worst forms – in many areas of the world."

It is impossible not to celebrate such a positive trend, and we certainly do celebrate it and acknowledge the ILO's contribution to getting into a position where a future without child labour is a real possibility.

The United Kingdom is proud to have been a long-time supporter of IPEC and of its involvement in other specific ILO projects to protect children from trafficking and labour exploitation.

We commend the many governments mentioned in this Report who, through policy choices, have managed to reach a critical threshold in achieving universal education and, with it, child labour elimination.

We should also acknowledge the role of the social partners. The Report points out that many individual enterprises have given high priority to addressing child labour issues. It shows that employers can be effective at both the local level, where they can ensure that their enterprises are free of child labour and also influence employers in the informal sector, and on the international stage.

Similarly, trade unions are recognized as having been a driving force in the global fight against child labour, they have also been particularly effective in tackling child labour at the local level by mobilizing workers in the informal economy.

The Employers' spokesperson this morning asked for more details on the role of the social partners, and we agree that it would be certainly a good suggestion for the next report.

But the picture is a mixed one. While the Report highlights significant falls in Latin America and Caribbean countries, it also shows that in sub-Saharan Africa the actual numbers of economically active children increased. As the Director-General said this morning, there are continuing challenges relating to children working in the agricultural sector and HIV/AIDS.

So, as the Report acknowledges, we cannot afford to be complacent if we are to have any hope of making a final breakthrough in eliminating the worst forms of child labour. I think that the analysis presented by the Workers' spokesperson will have dispelled any fears that there is a risk of complacency and raised some very pertinent questions about the interpretation of the statistics in this Report.

We think that the task before us over the next four years is to build on progress on the basis of the messages in this Report.

One of those key messages is that, in those countries that have been successful, there are coherent links between strong political commitment to the elimination of child labour and effective policies in

the areas of poverty reduction and the provision of basic education for all.

We support the ILO's efforts to include child labour indicators in the monitoring of poverty reduction strategies and welcome the Report's assessment that the picture, which has been negative, is now at least beginning to change, and that, as a direct result of the ILO's efforts, a growing number of countries are taking steps to incorporate child labour in their poverty reduction strategies. As the Report says, this trend needs reinforcing.

The United Kingdom also strongly supports the Millennium Development Goal of achieving universal primary education. Education is the key to effectively combating child labour, and its value goes far beyond childhood. Without education, opportunities for employment and decent work in adult life are severely restricted. That link between education and employment was again highlighted by the Director-General at the start of this discussion. By denying access to education, child labour has the potential for creating lifelong negative effects on employment chances and social mobility.

We agree with the conclusion reached at last year's session of the Conference that the elimination of child labour is inextricably linked to the challenge of youth employment. The United Kingdom is committed to tackling the global issue of youth employment, and we were the first industrialized nation to join the Youth Employment Network, as we announced at last year's session of the Conference.

Since then, we have become involved in a number of initiatives aimed at addressing youth employment, particularly in Africa. Our Minister talked about these in some detail when he spoke in the plenary on Tuesday. The aim of all these activities is to make a real difference to the lives of young people by helping them to combat disadvantage and realize their potential.

As I have said, we believe that the task is now to build on progress made, and we are pleased that the positive messages of the Report are backed up with specific proposals for future action. We welcome the fact that the ILO will, over the next four years, strengthen its efforts to develop coherent policies to abolish child labour.

We also welcome that IPEC will give special emphasis to the needs of Africa where the last progress has been made. The proposed approach through a draft action plan built around the three pillars of supporting national responses, strengthening the worldwide movement and promoting a more integrated approach within the ILO is a sensible one, although we would like to know more about how the draft plan integrates with other areas of the ILO's work and aligns with the decent work country programmes. Also, while we certainly agree with time-bound measures, we would want to know more about how the ILO plans to move forward on the 2016 target.

The action plan is, of course, aimed at assisting the Governing Body in determining priorities for future action, and we look forward to further discussion on taking forward the draft plan in the Governing Body. One initial reaction is that we would be interested in giving further consideration to the proposal to develop impact assessments on child labour policies, with a view to identifying those which produce more effective and more rapid results.

Mr. JIWARAJKA (*Employer, India*)

Let me at the outset congratulate the Director-General and the ILO for its effective, demonstrable and well-responded Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, which has yielded positive results.

A decline of 11 per cent in child labour incidence in a span of four years is not a small achievement, particularly when a sizeable population in the developing and underdeveloped countries continues to face grim poverty and high unemployment rates, forcing many undesired forms of labour, including child labour.

The Global Report itself mentions that every year 30,000 children die as a result of extreme poverty. Elimination of child labour is key to ensure a healthy future of work. A deeper prognosis of the causes and consequences and understanding of the issues involved is therefore necessary to work out appropriate strategies which may vary from country to country and from society to society, depending on the level of socio-economic development.

Poverty and lack of employment opportunities constitute the principal common grounds of all the mounting illiteracy, social injustice and, on account of inaccessibility of the rural areas, a large unorganized sector, and social infrastructure handicaps. Yet, India has been at the forefront of nations fighting the socio-economic menace of child labour.

India, in fact, was among the first countries to devise a policy on child labour, almost as soon as child labour was identified as a human rights issue, requiring international recognition and redress. India conducted the earliest in-depth investigation into child labour in the 1920s and established a framework of rules and regulations concerning the treatment and employment of children in groundbreaking legislations in 1933 and 1938.

While India took these initiatives before Independence, it proceeded to ratify and build on them, following Independence in 1947. The Indian Constitution of 1950 outlawed bonded labour and proscribed the employment of children under 14 in factories, mines and other hazardous workplaces.

India was the first country to join the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in 1992 when it signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ILO/IPEC. An Indo/US project aimed at eliminating child labour in ten hazardous sectors across 21 districts in five Indian states is currently under implementation.

The Government of India, with its social partners, is fully committed to eliminate child labour, as was elucidated by the Honourable Minister a little while ago.

The Indian experience over the years has shown that education can be a viable alternative to child labour, and quality education and its linkages with employment prospects is crucial. If formal education does not lead to employment opportunities, schooling will not emerge as a viable option to work, forcing the parents to decide otherwise. India has, therefore, made all major child labour elimination programmes education-centric.

The representative from the United Kingdom from the trade unions mentioned the importance of the trend concerning girls. India has taken a significant initiative in this regard, which was announced by the Government through the union budget last year. This is in addition to the various initiatives

mentioned by the union Minister in his address. The programme entails that every girl child in low income groups will be entitled to an amount of Rs3,000 which the Government will deposit in a bank account that she will be entitled to withdraw after she attains the age of 18 and has not dropped out of school. This policy initiative will play a significant role in enhancing substantially the education of girls in rural areas and, at the same time, reducing the incidence of child labour.

Although child labour is not present in the organized sector, the employers' organizations in India are keenly involved in building a child labour-free working environment even in the downstream operations and informal organizations which form part of the supply chain.

Following the adoption of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, (1999) (No. 182), covering child labour and hazardous employment, the Council of Indian Employers immediately supported its ratification by the Government of India. We are actively partnering with IPEC and in other programmes to release and rehabilitate working children.

Currently, the All-India Organization of Employers, which is one of the constituents of the Council of Indian Employers, is involved in drafting a voluntary code of conduct for enterprises to withdraw and rehabilitate child labour, not only in the central operations but also in the downstream operations. Some of the sectoral employers' associations, like the Carpet Manufacturers' Association, Hotels Association, Indian Tea Association, etc., have voluntarily adopted the resolution to not employ children below the age of 15 in their sectors.

The phenomenon of child labour is largely concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region and in sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for more than 60 per cent of the total working children. There is sufficient indication that child labour is dominantly poverty-driven. These regions should therefore continue to be on the ILO radar for effective and meaningful support.

Globalization is benefiting all countries but its negative fallouts like child labour and unemployment are severely borne by the poor and developing countries. Why should this social cost not be shared by all? I leave this thought with you. Child labour and its interplay of factors, like level of development, poverty, unemployment and cultural attitudes, is a complex issue. A single policy measure cannot produce effective results. What is required is a policy mix, addressing not only the children but also the parents of the working children. Employment generation is therefore a most viable tool, which requires to be strengthened with renewed efforts and multiplied resources. Only then the developing and under-developed countries will truly benefit. I thank you once again, Sir, for the excellent Global Report, which has highlighted this issue and thrown up challenges to be addressed and also for the stimulating debate that it has generated.

Mr. SYAUKANI (*Government, Indonesia*)

First of all, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, I would like to thank the ILO Director-General for his Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*.

The Indonesian Government is committed to the elimination of child labour and has ratified ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 as a first step to fol-

low up the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

A second step was the issuance of Indonesian Presidential Decree No. 12/2001, establishing a National Action Committee and Presidential Decree No. 59/2002, formulating an action plan for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour for implementation at national and regional local levels.

Since this effective decentralization of Indonesia in 2001, local governments have committed to and made considerable progress in the elimination of child labour. One of these is the local government of Kutai Kartanegara, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. In this regard, allow me, as head of the local government of Kutai Kartanegara, to report on our activities in the elimination of child labour in our region.

Under the guidance of the ILO, Indonesia and the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, on 4 November 2002, through the Kutai Kartanegara charter, we committed to: no child labour under the age of 15 in 2008; no worst forms of child labour in 2009; and no child labour under the age of 18 in 2012. We became the first model of a local government initiative to eliminate child labour within a specific time frame.

Kutai Kartanegara's commitment is based on the Indonesian Constitution of 1945, which states the rights to education and to a decent life for all human beings. It is also based on Indonesia's ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), as well as on Presidential Decrees No. 12/2001 and No. 59/2002. Our Parliament supported this commitment by the issuance of Local Regulation No. 9/2004, ruling that any adult proven to have stopped formal education of a child under the age of 15, or exploiting a child for economic reasons, is subject to a minimum fine of 5 million rupiah, or six months' minimum incarceration.

Our work today is based on Local Government Decree No. 180/2004 on the logical framework for the mainstreaming of child labour elimination in Kutai Kartanegara.

In 2002, out of fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, child labour in our region totalled 11,623 children. Motivated by these figures, strong political will and commitment from all stakeholders, we immediately carried out awareness programme and took action, within four years we decreased those figures by 88 per cent. This year only 1,605 children are left out of school. Next year *insha Allah*, God willing, we shall achieve zero child labour in Kutai Kartanegara.

The Grand Strategy for Development of Kutai Kartanegara incorporates a clear, simple and realistic, comprehensive and integrated strategy. It focuses on human resources development through education, with a 12-year free compulsory education programme, and development of the agricultural sector and rural areas thanks to a local banking system that routes working capital to small enterprises and cooperatives through microcredit.

Programmes addressing both sides, the child and the family, proved most effective because parents have no more excuses for exploiting their children and for not sending them back to school.

We know that we cannot succeed without a supportive multi-stakeholder environment, mainstreaming all actions into the same target. Child labour issues should not only be integrated to government

programmes, budgets and policies, but also into the private sector's corporate social responsibility strategies, NGOs' agendas and into each individual's daily life.

Being the first model of a local government initiative to eliminate child labour, we are eager to exchange information, experience and knowledge and to cooperate with international organizations, donor countries and all parties in finding innovative solutions that can speed up the process to eliminate child labour.

When Indonesia speaks of children, we do not speak of them as a race, as a nationality, or as an ideology. We speak of children with a sense of duty to protect their rights, to provide them with the childhood they deserve, and to prepare them for a world with a better future. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia and Kutai Kartanegara local government are committed to succeeding. May God Almighty bless our common endeavours.

Mr. TROTMAN (*Worker, Barbados*)

Earlier this morning Dr. Daniel Funes de Rioja used the occasion to reaffirm the support that the Employers' group gives to this effort, to make sure that our Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work remains constantly a factor before all members of the Governing Body.

We would wish to endorse his statement and to compliment the Employers again this morning for that work which they did with us, way back in 1988, and to indicate that the Workers' group stands with the Employers, fully behind that kind of an approach to fundamental principles and rights at work.

Regarding the matter of child labour itself, we have still some very strong concerns, but we would wish not to start with those concerns but with a word of congratulation to the Government and people of Pakistan for their information this morning that they have in fact ratified the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). If we did not applaud them then, we do so now.

(*Applause.*)

We note that some countries still argue that they have to bring their laws into compliance first and then go down the route of ratifying the Convention. We would beg to differ. I remember that, when we were trying to bring this particular Convention before the house and we were having some very beautiful exchanges, we were particularly conscious of that kind of view held by some governments, and we told them that it was our view (thereafter, we confirmed that it was the view of the ILO itself) that what one needs to do is to have the political will to have the Convention ratified and then, once we have ratified the Convention, we bring the law into compliance – not the other way around.

We now have 160 ratifications and I am sure that not all of them have gone the route of law first and Convention after.

So we would like to urge those countries which will in fact have to go through the process of talking to the various States that they should ratify the Convention and thereafter move towards enabling legislation.

We wish, as well, to compliment the spokesperson for the Government of Indonesia for his reference to the time-bound programme that they have and the kinds of penalties which they have written into their law that will give protection to children

who are otherwise forced into slavery. Wherever there are other such reports to come to us, we believe that we should compliment them.

It has been good and useful information that has been presented about the experience of many of the countries that we have. We think, however, that some speakers have properly and very correctly gone beyond that and they have used the occasion to give a critical analysis of the Director-General's Report. After all, this is the only occasion we get to look at what the Report says, and we would like to urge that, in the second half of the discussion this afternoon, there should be the possibility for a greater interactivity among the parties as we go to the heart of the Director-General's Report. I believe that, whereas governments might not be able to vary their government statements, we are able to comment in a meaningful way on the Report, and to make recommendations for how we can continue to do better, as in fact some governments have done.

One government – perhaps I should not call any more names because I may in fact cause a little jealousy and somebody may decide not to give me any wine at your parties in the evening – one government has very properly said that there is no point in our talking about children's education unless we talk about work for the children once they have been educated. The Workers' group supports that and we would therefore like to make the point that, when we speak of education, we want the governments to understand that we are not talking about tokenism but we are talking about functional education to prepare people for the equality of opportunity which every government should be bound to give to every one of its citizens.

We believe in the right to work, but we are also very conscious that not all people can provide work at the same time for everyone. What we believe is that everybody should provide a level of education which makes equality of opportunity meaningful, practicable and realizable for all those people that we are going to put through education, up to the stage where they are able to enter into decent work as we have been trying to define it.

We would like to support those governments and those views which aim towards building a community in which decent work becomes a reality. We want, at the same time, to point out that we have to be careful, given reports that people are moving out of some forms of child labour and being snatched into other forms of child labour by greed and corruption. So, whereas we can say that the level of child labour in, for instance, agriculture has fallen, and may even have fallen in domestic homes, there is a new form of child labour pushed by the job lords and by corrupt people who use child pornography. We must, as a Government representative said just a few minutes ago, have the right level of research networking to be able to identify these areas and to assist governments in moving away from them.

Some quick ideas, because we do not want you to feel that we are running out of views; rather, we are running out of time. We want to suggest that there is a need in the ILO to get across the message that this exercise today provides a very splendid opportunity for the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, as one Government representative said, and the World Trade Organization to use this Report on child labour and the follow-up to it as an important example that policy coherence is not a

dirty word. Policy coherence can and does work, and it makes a lot of sense for us to be examining what is happening in this field, using the limited resources there are across the world, to make sure that we do not find ourselves at cross purposes, ensuring instead, that we are working towards a common objective.

We also want to reaffirm that time-bound programmes must be presented to us. We must hear from governments that they want to eliminate child labour. They should be able to present to us time-bound programmes which show, as Indonesia has shown, what they will do and in what time frame. We also want to ensure that governments have policies which are conducive to the better framing of this particular exercise. We want to ask governments to recognize that child labour cannot be left to their ministries of youth affairs but that it must be seen as a cross-cutting measure between all the ministries, particularly ministry of finance. If we do not use ministries of finance to make sure that adequate funding is made available, then we are only going to talk about how beautiful it is to have child labour eliminated, but we shall not be able to present an arrangement that actually shows how it can work and what kinds of assistance, as another speaker said, we can give to people to make sure that they are not persuaded to re-enter some of form of child labour, bonded labour or other forced labour, as the case may be.

The point made by the leader of the Workers' group in these discussions, regarding the importance attached to girls at work and to the sometimes hidden ways in which they are brought in to child labour, must be researched adequately, and we have to find means of dealing with the issue in such a way that we protect this very vulnerable group, a group that is involved in domestic child labour.

By and large, we wish you to recognize the value of what Mr. Steyne said, and we wish to state that there are some very important things for us to bear in mind. One of them is that the Youth Employment Network is a beautiful partnering institution that can work with us and help us find ways to move from talking about child labour to moving children into productive kinds of employment, but the understanding we had when we agreed on the Youth Employment Network system was that we were going to have a tripartite structure. In fact, in the seminars we had 18 months ago, that was the objective. I regret to say that it is now an intergovernmental agency, and we would like to use this occasion to say that it must be made tripartite and that there are also some non-governmental organizations which will be able to assist in this very important exercise. We do not wish to claim that we alone can do it all. If we can find people to help in bringing humanity to the world of work, we are prepared to argue that it should be done.

I think I had better wrap up here. I have much more I would like to say, but I have to respect the fact that it would not be fair to the other people in the room. We thank you very much for what we have been able to do up to now, and this afternoon I hope I will get the chance to make a comment in the interactive session, which I am sure we are going to have.

Original French: Ms. AWASSI ATSIMADJA (Employer, Gabon)

After the presentation by our spokesperson, Mr. Tabani, with whose analysis I agree entirely, I

would like to thank you for giving me the floor and giving me the opportunity to speak as an employer and contribute some views from Africa, perhaps sharing the growing hope of the Confederation of Gabonese Employers with regard to citizenship and corporate social responsibility, which we hope will also apply to the elimination of child labour.

The Declaration adopted at the 1998 International Labour Conference calls on member States of the ILO to promote and apply the four fundamental principles, that is to say: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; the effective elimination of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.

To support what was said by Mr. Funes de Rioja in his statement this morning, and also taking up the words of Mr. Roy Trotman, the Employers are particularly pleased that the Declaration continues to be the focus of attention in our house. It is a very relevant instrument as a political tool, making it possible to highlight activities undertaken in these four fundamental areas.

The Global Report entitled, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, certainly gives rise to great hope and highlights the idea that this serious issue concerns us all: governments, workers and employers.

As the Director-General said in his introductory remarks this morning: it is a question of ethics. It is an honour for the employers of the world and the employers of Africa in particular, and especially the Confederation of Gabonese Employers which I represent, to be part of the struggle against this scourge, which casts a shadow over the economic and social horizon of our African continent. I would agree with the African proverb used by the Director-General of the ILO, Mr. Juan Samovia, in his welcome address to Her Excellency Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, whose presence at this session of the ILC we welcome. He said "... however dark the night, dawn will always break". The dark night is represented by the work of children. This dark night must be replaced by daylight, making it possible for children to be children, to benefit from normal school attendance in the company of children of their own age. Children who will remain children, playing and taking the time to grow up.

Children forced to work have not got the time to be children. They are adults before their time, since they are involved in working life and spend most of their time at work. Once they are adults in the full sense of the term, they will find that the doors of the private sector are closed to them, because they do not have the adequate and necessary educational skills. Often, they will be confined to the informal economy and grow old there.

Employers, in particular those in Africa, share the idea that it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of employers' organizations to adopt a comprehensive approach to child labour through appropriate means and relevant methods that are adapted to their national context in which they do their national business. This position must be upheld even when employers' associations and their members are not directly concerned by the direct or indirect use of child labour in their delivery of goods and services.

Do I have to remind you that the *raison d'être* of the private sector is the creation of goods and ser-

vices in the context of decent and productive work? Decent and productive work is incompatible with child labour.

As Mr. Roy Trotman indicated, we must stress the importance of access to appropriate education systems adapted to requirements of the labour market from the earliest possible age. Education should remain compulsory up to a clearly defined age, in accordance with the national realities in our respective African countries. This would enable local and multinational African enterprises to employ a well-educated labour force, whose employability could be enhanced over time. The Global Report very rightly emphasizes the importance of the problem of child labour in Africa. Employers' federations in Africa should therefore benefit in an ongoing manner from ILO bilateral or multilateral technical cooperation programmes. According to ILO reports, in 2005 the ILO undertook a certain number of multilateral activities in the context of technical cooperation in order to strengthen the capacities of employers' organizations in the area of eradicating child labour in Africa. One could mention the employers of Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Uganda, Zimbabwe and many others. The ILO must continue along this path and should maintain its efforts.

In 2004, the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Ouagadougou, on employment and poverty reduction was witness to a very strong mobilization of African employers. The employers of Africa do see very clearly the links between poverty, traditions and child labour. Development partners must therefore take on board the specific situation of some employers' organizations in Africa which find themselves in a situation in which there is a stand-off between the so-called originating countries of human trafficking and the so-called receiving countries, in which the children imported in this way – and "imported" is the right word to use – are the victims of child labour.

Specific programmes should make it possible for the employers' organizations of these two categories

of countries to work in symbiosis and harmonize their strategic and related programmes to make public opinion aware of these problems. Increasingly, employers' organizations in the CEMAC zone, for example, should cooperate with the employers' organizations in western African countries in order to work together as one to eradicate this scourge, with the assistance of their development partners.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that each employers' organization widely distribute the Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, when they go home to their respective countries.

I would like to conclude by saying that, in the context of these activities relating to corporate social responsibility, the Confederation of Gabonese Employers has just set up a foundation, and the President of the foundation is Mr. Henri Claude Oyima. The foundation, which wishes to play its full civic role, is ready to receive any technical cooperation assistance that will help us to carry out corporate social responsibility activities with members of the foundation focused on the abolition of child labour to the benefit of our local communities, and perhaps communities beyond our national and continental borders.

I would like to say that we are already working in this context with the Minister for the Family, the Protection of Children and the Advancement of Women in our country. We also hope to work together with the new department responsible for HIV/AIDS and children orphaned by AIDS.

In keeping with Mr. Roy Trotman's comments, we do need financing. The ministries of finance of the countries concerned will have to be involved, as well as other relevant ministries.

I would like to conclude by congratulating this Organization for the high quality of the 2006 Global Report.

(The Conference adjourned at 1.30 p.m.)

Fourteenth sitting

Friday, 9 June 2006, 3.45 a.m.

President: Mr. Sajda

GLOBAL REPORT UNDER THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE ILO DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK: INTERACTIVE SITTING (CONT.)

Original Arabic: Ms. ABDEL HADY (Minister of Manpower and Migration, Egypt)

We have noted with interest the Report by the Director-General of the International Labour Office on the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and this year, concerning combating child labour. There is no doubt that the abolition of child labour is one of the objectives of the ILO and one of the essential methods to achieve the decent work we all work for.

The Report submitted to us refers to the ratification by 158 States of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) as well as the decrease in the number of child workers worldwide at the rate of 11 per cent over the last four years and a reduction in the number of children who perform dangerous work by 26 per cent. Also, the Report refers to the close relationship between the progress in the combating of child labour and education.

All the aforementioned confirms the fact that abolishing child labour has become achievable provided that we invest the political will and technical assistance required for this.

We, in Egypt, agree completely with the conclusions of the Report, that economic development cannot alone lead to the abolition of child labour. In spite of its paramount importance the political choices are extremely important. Thus, policies with a social dimension which provide more opportunities for the poor are certainly an indispensable prerequisite in the efforts to abolish child labour.

We also agree with the other conclusion of the Report, that child labour is a result of poverty, which is one of the ways to maintain it, especially in the worst forms of child labour. It strips children of their human attributes and it transforms them into economic assets that, in turn, nourish demographic growth in many developing countries. This situation also reduces our capacity to face it and it leads to our overlooking the devastating effect that this may have on the human capital required for economic growth in the future.

In Egypt, the law is concerned with ensuring the protection of children, and the Constitution stresses the right of the child to basic education. Although legal protection for children has been implemented through a number of laws, which include Law No. 12 of the child of 1996 and the articles of the La-

bour code concerning child labour of 2003 and ministerial decrees relating to their implementation.

Egypt ratified the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). The Egyptian Government does not stop stressing the importance of defending the rights of the Egyptian child. The period of 1989 to 1999 was considered the national decade to protect the rights of the Egyptian child, and this trend was supported by the creation in 1988 of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood.

The Ministry of Manpower and Migration, through its executive bodies, as a whole, follows up the application of current legislation guaranteeing child rights and ensures them protection with full care. For this purpose, we have an inspection body that comprises more than 2,000 labour inspectors and occupational health and safety officers.

The Ministry also gives much importance to training and developing the skills of those who dropped out of school. Through professional training centres there is also a steering committee, which I have the honour to chair, which coordinates all efforts at the national level in order to abolish child labour. We deal with the problem objectively in a way that guarantees in the short and medium term the provision of protection and care for children, our objective being in the long term to eliminate child labour.

The wife of the President of the Republic has launched a number of national campaigns to protect the children of Egypt. She also recently called for the launch of the national strategy for the reduction of child labour within the institutional framework of the children's committee. Also, the result of that was the combating of child labour in the quarries. Their families were all awarded financial compensation so that the children were not compelled to go back to this dangerous work and the children went to professional training centres or followed basic education.

We, therefore encourage social participation in this field.

I would like to mention a particularly important issue regarding the children of Palestine and Iraq, those who are subjected to occupation. We call upon the ILO, through its programmes, to care for these children who do not have anyone to protect them.

In conclusion, I hope that our efforts to abolish child labour are successful.

We wish to thank the Director-General for his comprehensive, transparent Report, which contains an optimistic vision of the capacity to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by the year 2016.

The Director-General's Report is the second follow-up Report on the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which is based on Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.

The Report states that the notion of child labour is based on the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), which allows for the employment of children as of the age of 12 under certain conditions, namely that the work does not endanger the child's physical or moral health or development. The same Convention prohibits, subject to certain exceptions, the admission of children under the age of 18 to employment that is likely to jeopardize their health, safety or morals.

However, I wonder whether the many exceptions to the minimum age for admission to employment provided in the Convention do not undermine its fundamental goal: even supposing that certain types of work might be beneficial, is the best place for a child not school, where it can develop its physical, intellectual and psychological potential? Because childhood is a crucial phase in a person's life and lays the foundations for his or her future life.

The solution to child labour must be sought in the adoption of development policies and economic, social and educational policies aimed at the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty, thus ridding any arguments justifying child labour with poor families' need to supplement their income of substance.

Please allow me a few comments on the programmes and policies aimed at eliminating the worst forms of child labour and alleviating the harmful nature of other types of work carried out by children.

First of all, at the national level, it is imperative to draw up a list of light work that may be carried out by children. Another list must be prepared on those types of work that are harmful to the health, morals or security of young persons. Should such a list already exist, it should be updated.

The ILO should review all measures to combat child labour effectively that are related to poverty reduction, education programmes for children who were withdrawn from the worst forms of child labour and the promotion and protection of the health and security of child workers. All international organizations concerned must cooperate in such efforts.

The ILO should establish programmes to protect girl children in the framework of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190). Child labour inspection must be introduced.

The ILO must also address the issue of child labour in the informal sector, especially agriculture. Child labour in agriculture can fall into the category of worst forms of child labour and efforts must be made to improve incomes derived from family-owned businesses and to grant children working in agriculture free access to education.

Awareness campaigns on the elimination of child labour must not be limited to certain conditions either at the national or the international level. The decision of the ILO to declare 12 June as Interna-

tional Day Against Child Labour is an important step in that regard.

The goal to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016 raises the question of time-bound programmes. The ILO has a responsibility to create adequate mechanisms to attain this objective and strengthen its own capacities and that of its constituents. Another question is to what extent technical cooperation programmes can carry such projects through to successful conclusion.

In January 2006, Lebanon signed a Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC in the context of the time-bound programme on the worst forms of child labour. A national committee was established in December 2005 to formulate and ensure the implementation of programmes to combat child labour, in cooperation with IPEC, other relevant international and Arab organizations and national bodies and committees.

We intend to formulate a national action plan on decent work, in cooperation with the ILO, to eliminate child labour. Lebanon has also acceded the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

My final question is as follows: will the exceptions to the minimum age for admission to employment articulated in Convention No. 138 soon become superfluous, thanks to national and international efforts to eliminate poverty, make decent work a reality for all, and establish programmes to grant access to education for all. We trust that all of this will soon be achieved, thanks to national and international commitment.

Original Spanish: Mr. ECHAVARRIA SALDARRIAGA (Employer, Colombia)

Child labour affects the whole of society. Allowing children to work is tantamount to wasting their present and marketing their future. It limits the physical and psychological development of children, bringing an end to their dreams and perpetuating poverty in the countries in which they live.

Fortunately, according to data from the ILO Global Report, the number of boys and girls working worldwide has reduced from 246 to 218 million. This is an 11.3 per cent reduction over the last four years.

Nonetheless, this should not lead us to rest on our laurels. It is still necessary to act quickly to achieve even more satisfactory results.

We are happy to note that the Global Report indicates that 25 of the 35 countries who make up the Americas region have now ratified the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). Furthermore, in Latin America there has been a significant reduction in child labour, as was reported at the recent American Regional Meeting held in Brasilia.

Colombian employers fully support the agreement reached between employers and workers which we signed at this meeting with a view to eliminating child labour throughout the region. Recent studies carried out in Colombia indicate that over 1 million children are still being forced into the worst forms of child labour, including in the sex trade, armed conflict, the harvesting of illegal crops and, basically, activities which are incompatible with the provisions of Convention No. 182.

For over ten years, we Colombian employers have been involved in the Inter-institutional Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Working Minors which is coordinated by IPEC and has led to the undertaking of actions and activities to enhance the coordination and structuring of solidly grounded government policy, which leads to effective projects to reduce such child labour.

The direct activities which we have undertaken include the activities which were reflected in the first Report. Unfortunately, in the second Report, they are not reflected how we would have wished. There are some in particular which I would like to touch upon now.

A few years ago, we established social responsibility committees in each of the cities in Colombia where we have a presence. In addition to that, we have contributed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals through these committees; we are part of the Global Compact; and we have made direct commitments by encouraging our enterprises to be directly involved, particularly through the obligation to support activities to eliminate child labour, thereby creating regional and sectoral activities in the Colombian economy.

As employers, we have also run outreach programmes with other employers' organizations and businesses. We are currently implementing a direct intervention programme, which, as with previous similar programmes, is having very positive effects. Eighty-nine per cent of the children who have been reached by these programmes are now off the labour market. They are now in the education system; they enjoy good health and better nutrition; the income of their families has been increased; they have the opportunity to play; and, in general, can develop within their own families.

Over the last 12 months, we have been developing a new programme of action with the support of IPEC and funding from the ILO. This programme involves a campaign to disseminate information and educational material. Its objectives are basically twofold. First, ensuring that employers understand the problems associated with child labour.

Nevertheless, during the last survey conducted among employers, 79 per cent of employers supported and financed foundations undertaking social activities.

Secondly, we seek out child labour where it exists within the production chains found in the Colombian economy and try to develop programmes and undertake action to make child labour more visible, so that it can be eliminated.

For this purpose, we hold various events, workshops and seminars which are described in more detail in a document which I would like to give to the secretariat.

As part of this programme, we have also been holding discussions and lectures on child labour in schools and further education establishments so that children can understand the dangers of child labour. We have been tackling this issue with young people, in both universities and technical colleges, and in schools and further educational establishments throughout Colombia.

Lastly, under this programme we have established a database which would be very useful for anyone wishing to take specific action in a specific sector. As Colombian and Latin American employers, it is our aim to continue to inform this forum of the

substantial progress we have made in this area. We are strongly committed to making further progress on this issue. In order to do this, we shall be reporting on our activities. We also invite all employers, workers and governments to unite so that we can take action in our respective countries to save these children who, after all, represent the world's future.

Original German: Ms. PIFFL-PAVELEC (Government, Austria)

The Report on the end of child labour is encouraging and should be welcomed. It is particularly important to point out that child labour is a cross-cutting issue that encompasses several policy areas and requires a variety of measures. While we believe that the term "mainstreaming" should not be overused in connection with child labour in seems indeed appropriate.

Combating child labour requires the involvement of a range of actors, especially employers, who are in a position to ensure that no child is employed in their company. Employers cannot, however, shoulder this responsibility alone. It is a multi-faceted problem, and governments and workers' and employers' organizations must work together. The steady growth of the social responsibility movement has led to corporate self-regulation in this field also, and its contribution should not be underestimated. We have to pursue these efforts.

Let us not forget the important role of non-governmental organizations which, alongside trade unions, can draw attention to cases of child labour and conduct specific programmes to contribute to its elimination. Consumers can also play their part by boycotting goods produced by children. There are several successful examples for this. There are many forms of child labour, and the phenomenon must be combated in all its manifestations, including exploitation within family companies, in domestic work or in agriculture. It is further important to bear in mind that children are not just children; they differ by gender, ethnic origin, and so on. These criteria must also be taken into account.

The Report shows that the majority of European States have ratified the core ILO Conventions. However, this does not mean that child labour in Europe has been eliminated; the statistics tell a different tale, unfortunately. Even in Austria there are, albeit few, cases of child labour. While the progress made is gratifying, we must continue to pursue this path and persist in our efforts in Europe as well, until child labour is finally consigned to history.

Mr. SALMENPERÄ (Government, Finland)

I wish to congratulate the Office for the Report. In many ways it is exceptional. First, it is encouraging as it clearly shows that a positive change is possible and now well under way. Secondly, it makes exciting reading, as it analyses in an illustrating manner, the history of child labour and the critical factors behind success stories, as well as the destructive self-reinforcing vicious cycles of poverty and cheap labour. It seems that only a thin line separates these paths.

The problem is that to jump over this thin line one seems to need a well-coordinated conscious effort on many fronts. The Report shows that such a leap is possible and that the most important driver of such coordinated effort is simply political commitment to eliminate child labour. In the heart of these efforts is, of course, education. A wide variety of measures are needed, however, to create prerequisi-

tes for education, such as improvements in the adult labour market, decreasing fertility rates, changing cultural patterns, changing technology, and much else. The crux of the matter remains. It is education.

The history of now-developed countries clearly demonstrates this point. So what most of all is needed, and I have to repeat this, is the creation of necessary infrastructure for education. This is, of course, easier to say than to accomplish. It is clear that, without the support of the international community, this might prove extremely difficult. Technical cooperation and international aid must be maintained and reinforced to this end.

I already referred to the vicious cycle of poverty and child labour. In the Report it is rightly pointed out that child labour is a disincentive to employers to invest in technology as it creates a source of cheap labour. In those circumstances, there is little demand for education.

I wish to underline that there are even more dramatic problems hidden in this vicious cycle. In the present environment of knowledge-based economy, the decisive players of success are no more only capital and labour. What is more important even is knowledge and creative potential to put it into use. Without education, young people are deprived of this possibility and, at the same time, the same potential which would be essential for any nation's productive growth, is lost. By letting children work, any nation thus eats away its own future. But, as we have seen, it has now been proven that there is a way out of this dead end.

Original French: Mr. SIEBER (Government, Switzerland)

The Global Report *The end of child labour: Within reach?* contains a message of hope for all those children caught in child labour, for all countries – both donors and recipients – and for the ILO.

However, a number of challenges remain to be met – firstly, policy coherence. At Copenhagen and then through the Millennium Development Goals, we have committed to meeting the global goal of eliminating poverty.

We have also chosen our instruments: decent work and sustainable development, both based on an integrated approach to economic and social policy.

Economic growth, good governance, access to education and training, balanced development of social protection systems and access to decent work for young people make up the framework conditions for countries to draw up programmes and measures for the elimination of child labour.

The ILO's global, coherent approach thus makes it possible to strengthen the implementation of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

Secondly, mobilization at all levels. The effective abolition of child labour requires increased awareness throughout the world and concerted action on the part of all actors at all levels. The priority for achieving this is effective, universal application of the relevant ILO fundamental labour standards, namely the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), along with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, which Switzerland has ratified.

ILO's awareness-raising work has enabled attitudes to move from denial, through indifference and resignation, to the mobilization of a genuine politi-

cal will to confront the issue of child labour without trying to downgrade it.

Donors, beneficiaries, governments and social partners are working together in a spirit of social dialogue, while other players in civil society and children themselves also have the privilege of partnering with the ILO.

In this area, the private sector plays a vital role: voluntary initiatives that, for instance, favour product traceability, the Red Card Campaign in conjunction with FIFA and the label systems in force in the sporting goods industry are all examples of effective practical commitments.

The ILO has succeeded in mobilizing its actors to implement wise strategies and programme fit the needs that exist. These strategies and programmes are the mortar that binds together the global movement to fight child labour.

Thirdly, continued action by the ILO: Switzerland wants to see the ILO's targeted activities strengthened – in particular, integrating the challenge of child labour into its programme priorities.

Action by the ILO requires the mobilization of extra-budgetary resources. Through its Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Switzerland intends to continue its support for IPEC in Pakistan, on the basis of the conditions established following an evaluation of the programme in 2005 carried out jointly by the SDC and the ILO.

The second phase of SDC/ILO collaboration, which was to finish in February 2006, has now been extended to December.

During this extension period, a number of studies are to be carried out in preparation for the third phase, which is to begin on 1 January 2007. The primary emphasis in this second phase of collaboration is to be on greater commitment on the part of state authorities to this joint struggle against child labour.

The goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 is a noble objective, which expresses our common political will. Nevertheless, we are mistrustful of making grand statements of targets that can sometimes be thwarted by events, crises or disasters. This is why a gradual approach, concentrating first on abolishing the worst forms of child labour and only then on all its forms, is more realistic.

As part of this gradual approach, the ILO should aim to offer training in school alongside a decent job in cases where children are still forced to work to provide for their families' basic needs (food, for example).

The ILO should also promote the option of dual system apprenticeships, so that children can obtain a technical knowledge of the work they are to perform.

It should also strengthen its work to reach small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal sector.

It should promote country programmes, which should be targeted particularly at girl children and should include effective implementation deadlines that accord with the common priorities of both donor and beneficiary countries, particularly in agriculture.

Within this gradual approach, the ILO should also give priority to sub-Saharan Africa.

It should continue to carry out coordinated work with other key actors – particularly UNICEF.

Lastly, within this gradual approach, the ILO should strengthen the integration of follow-up work on child labour within the context of its policies.

Original French: Ms. ZAHI (representative, Democratic Labour Confederation of Morocco)

First, I would like to thank all of those who helped me, even if it was somewhat delayed, to take the floor at this meeting.

The Global Report has the title *The end of child labour: Within reach*. However, this should not lead us to error. The phenomenon of child labour is not something which remains static; it is dynamic. It will not stop in time. It is not simply a well from which we will remove water until it runs dry, when children no longer work. For this reason, I think it is absolutely crucial that the strategies to combat child labour meet the challenges of these new situations that lead to child labour.

We cannot stress enough the importance of effective compulsory education in the struggle against child labour. However, the current economic policies followed by the majority of developing countries, where child labour is a daily reality, are increasingly pursuing privatization and the withdrawal of the State from social sectors, with education being at the top of the list. Privatizing education simply cancels out any strategy to eliminate child labour. Therefore, we need to continue campaigning for high-quality public education for all.

Since child labour is a widespread phenomenon, particularly in developing countries which face increasing pauperization, and given that we are also seeing a much greater concentration of wealth in the hands of multinational enterprises from the industrialized countries, only a fairer distribution of wealth at the international and national level can give developing countries the resources they need to effectively eliminate child labour, and not only its worst forms.

Having said this, no budgetary constraints or other constraints can justify a tolerance of child labour. Our combat against child labour has to be in the framework of fundamental rights and not influenced by what is politically acceptable or economically correct.

The problems encountered by children have to be addressed by society, not just by families. This is why an effective social security system should be established and implemented by all countries concerned, in order to assist all children who are, or could be, the victims of this phenomenon.

If we look for a moment at the characteristics of vulnerable populations, we will certainly find the problem of parents who are unemployed or who lack decent work. Of course, children with parents who are unemployed or in a precarious employment situation are not all victims of child labour. But, all working children come from families which are in an insecure situation, or have no family at all. By creating decent work for adults, at least the same number of children will avoid a miserable fate: that of having to work before they reach the minimum age.

Child labour increasingly occurs in the informal sector, which is characterized by the lack of trade unions or any form of organization. So, it is essential to use respect of freedom of association and the right to organize, along with various incentives, to enable trade unions and associations to become in-

involved in the effort to organize workers in the informal sector.

Other efforts need to be made to enhance the role of women in society. This will prevent divorced single mothers from having to expose their children to the world of work and from seeking work themselves in the world of prostitution.

We need to pay particular attention to the situation of the girl child in domestic work. Their situation is very similar to that of forced labour.

Another risk is that of export processing zones, which often have no form of labour inspection. They are known for being rife with all types of violations of fundamental workers' rights, including the violation of the minimum age.

In closing, please allow me to recall that there is no culture or religion in the world which tolerates child labour. Child labour is driven by economic interests and anti-social policies which prevent its elimination. To put an end to this atrocity, we need financial resources and political determination. Once we have done this, we could call the Global Report "The end of child labour: Mission accomplished".

Original French: Ms. FAHEM (Government, Morocco)

Child labour is a widespread phenomenon worldwide. However, its form, cause and features vary from country to country. It is an extremely complex challenge but currently mobilizing the international community around that phenomenon has enabled us to rise to that challenge. The Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 2006, which the ILO has presented to us is very interesting indeed. I would congratulate the Office for the clarity and quality of the Report.

The Report clearly showed that on a world scale child labour has been reduced by 11 per cent, and 26 per cent for those who work in dangerous jobs. If these results were achieved, it is, of course, thanks to the political commitment of the different member States and their efforts made in this field.

As far as my country is concerned, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco pays special attention to this category of children. The goodwill shown by the Government is within the scope of a national strategy that enabled the adoption of important measures in combating child labour.

Major progress has been achieved both in terms of legislation and also, of course, by ratifying the core Conventions, the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) as well as harmonizing national legislation in line with the principles of those two Conventions, particularly raising the minimum age for admission to employment from 12 to 15 for working, banning dangerous work, establishing a list of dangerous work and strengthening sanctions.

In terms of control, six campaigns to monitor child labour have been organized. Multilateral cooperation with the ILO has also been increased through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), to which our country acceded in 2000. Such cooperation has led to major pilot programmes to combat child labour, supported by finance from certain friendly countries: France, Belgium and the United States of America. I would like to take this opportunity to

thank most warmly, the ILO and donors for their sincere support.

Today, and following a joint initiative with the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium, I have the pleasure of announcing to you that we have been able to obtain excellent results in the field of combating child labour, especially as regards dangerous work, to which children are exposed. This achievement particularly concerns projects to make aware the national population, to improve working conditions and to withdraw children under 15 from such work, providing alternatives for them and their families.

The most important event achieved by Morocco this year was the adopting of a national action plan for childhood with a major part in its chapters on combating child labour. National units within the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training have also recently been created, that will be in charge of generalizing pilot programmes at national level, and to capitalize on experience gained and good practice obtained in the technical cooperation.

We should also mention that Morocco prepared a bill regulating domestic labour by setting at 15 the minimum age for starting work. This bill will be adopted shortly.

Progress achieved by my country in this field can lead us to state now that the end of child labour is an objective within the reach of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Original French: Mr. VANDAMME (Government, Belgium)

The Belgium delegation takes this opportunity to participate in the discussion of the Global Report, we thank you for giving us an opportunity to speak after the delegation of Morocco, and I will tell you why.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the ILO on behalf of my delegation for the quality of the Report, which is indeed most interesting, because it offers a dynamic picture of the situation and the policies applied. Furthermore, unlike many other reports on labour, this picture is tinged with optimism, an optimism that seems acceptable and realistic. As the title of the Report indicates, major progress has been achieved, and what is striking is that this progress concerns the abolition of the worst forms of child labour.

Of course, one must not forget that enormous challenges remain and to address them, the clarity and lack of ambiguity of this Report is also of interest. The global action plan proposed for the next four years sets out clear objectives, and future progress will clearly depend on good governance, both at national and at international level.

If I may, let me comment briefly on those two aspects. As far as government policies are concerned, we are convinced that the success of any policy combating child labour depends on the political will of governments based on the conviction that the worst form of child labour are violations of children's right to integrity. A previous Report described the components of an adequate national policy. Several speakers have referred to it today.

It is necessary to recall poverty reduction policies, access to work for parents, universal access to quality education and social protection measures, measures to protect workers and, this is crucial, measures to support families affected by their children's withdrawal from the labour market.

One will thus be pleased to see a high rate of ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973, (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) showing how many governments are willing to make relevant commitments. In Belgium, an industrialized country, by implementing Convention No. 182, we have also tried to identify cases of the worst forms of labour in our country, and it has transpired that certain groups of children are indeed particularly vulnerable in our society and are more likely to be subjected to child labour, even in its worst forms. I shall mention two: on the one hand, unaccompanied foreign minors who came to Belgium through different migration mechanisms or trafficking, and for whom a special system of representation and support guardians was set up. Another category are Roma children who are forced by adults to beg in our cities. A differentiated approach involving repression, prevention and alleviation was developed recently, to address this phenomenon, which is well known in our big cities.

I would like to mention certain aspects of the international approach, because the issue at stake is also related to the question of good governance. The discussions within the Committee on Technical Cooperation, as well as paragraph 218 of the Global Report have shown the importance of the notion of decent work in the ILO's international technical assistance programmes.

Since decent work country programmes will become the most important tool in ILO technical cooperation, the way in which IPEC will be integrated in such programmes is fundamental, on the one hand to guarantee continued pressure on those involved in combating child labour because, as stated in paragraph 215 of the Report, IPEC projects have good practice components. On the other hand, child labour must be part and parcel of political priorities. This is a key factor in the next action plan, and paragraphs 220 to 222 show the importance of this.

From the outset, Belgium was convinced of the intrinsic value of the IPEC programme and, after having supported first the core fund, the Belgian Government thereafter supported the IPEC programme in Morocco.

Let me conclude by making some comments on what is happening in Morocco. The programme in that country is compelling for five reasons: firstly, there is the political will of the Government. IPEC has worked well in that country because there was a favourable national environment which is mainly based on the ratification of the core Conventions, legislative reforms, and the promotion and broad participation of NGOs in the field – my Moroccan colleague mentioned those a moment ago. This favourable environment means that the projects of the programme have had a major impact beyond the number of children that have benefited from it directly. Thus, the political environment can function as a multiplier.

Second observation: there were well-defined target sectors. The projects financed by Belgium first carried out awareness-building campaigns. Subsequently, we focused on children in hazardous employment by raising awareness among labour inspectors of this twofold risk. The programme was developed and implemented in rural arts, crafts and agricultural sectors, where this problem is particularly common.

Thirdly, other parties concerned apart from the ILO and the Government got involved and launched useful initiatives, such as the project of the chambers of commerce, in the arts and crafts sector. Furthermore, both Belgian and Moroccan trade unions discussed and cooperated very freely on these questions.

Fourthly, we were particularly struck by the fact that the Government of Morocco wants to build on IPEC good practice initiatives with a view to attaining sustainability, it created a unit on child labour in the Ministry of Employment, in addition to the national steering committee. This is an excellent measure, which ensures the sustainability of IPEC projects through labour policy. This is also a requirement of Belgian cooperation.

We have noted a certain complementarity between the IPEC programme in that country and the components of Morocco's decent work programme. Morocco is one of the five countries where pilot programmes are being conducted. Such complementarity is also a reason for the political success of the two measures.

I would like to stress that the excellent experience of triangular cooperation between the ILO, the beneficiary country and the donor country has enabled each partner to have a say in the local management of this international programme, therefore, we were able to follow development of IPEC and ILO technical cooperation. We therefore stress the importance of coherence between the ILO's programmes and follow this closely, and we believe that at the next meeting of the Governing Body in November will again provide a valuable opportunity to ensure the integration of IPEC into the ILO technical assistance.

Mr. AHMED (*Worker, Pakistan*)

On behalf of the Workers' delegation of Pakistan, it is my privilege to welcome the ILO Global Report entitled *The end of child labour: Within reach*. I should also like to convey my appreciation for the positive developments contained in the Report, including the fact that the number of child labourers in both age groups of 5-14 and 5-17 has fallen by 11 per cent, while the number of children in hazardous work has decreased overall by 26 per cent, and by 33 per cent in the 5-14 age group.

We believe that child labour is a legacy of poverty and unemployment, particularly in the developing world. In the rural sector, children are born to parents afflicted by poverty and are denied equal opportunities with regard to development. To paraphrase the Philadelphia Declaration, all human beings require equal opportunities for spiritual, physical and mental development.

We fully support the ILO follow-up to the Declaration which addresses the elimination of forced and bonded labour. Such practices persist in rural areas owing to the existence of the feudal system, which can only be eliminated with the cooperation of nations and the mobilization of public opinion. Only once free of this scourge will poor children gain access to meaningful development, both mental and physical, and education.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank IPEC for its work, as well as the social partners and I thank the donor countries for their generous contributions to the IPEC Programme. Furthermore, we fully support the remarks made by the Chairperson of the Workers' group, Mr. Trotman and my

other colleagues from the Workers' bench, including my fellow countryman, Mr. Tabani.

The Director-General of the ILO has announced the good news that, in his view, the worst forms of child labour could be eliminated by the year 2016. I fully support the remarkable efforts being made to eliminate such labour. Following prior consultations with the social partners, Pakistan adopted a national plan of action for the elimination of child labour, alongside a national plan for the elimination of bonded labour and we appreciate the assistance afforded by the ILO with regard to implementation.

I invite you all to look at box 3.12 on page 76 of the Global Report on the elimination of child labour, which contains an account of how the ILO, in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan, together with trade unions and manufacturers, has implemented a successful project in the soccer ball industry, freeing children from the curse of child labour and providing them with an education.

UNICEF and the industry itself also contributed to the ILO effort to make the soccer ball industry child labour free. The children have been provided with education and liberated from child labour. This is one example of how the problem can be successfully tackled if there is political will at a national level, backed up by international cooperation.

Support was provided by the soccer ball industry, the social partners, the trade unions and parliamentarians with regard to the implementation of the project, which is now in its second phase. We hope that, with the cooperation of the abovementioned parties, this phase will be completed.

We offer our thanks for the assistance lent in the protection of children forced into camps by natural disasters, such as the tsunami and the earthquake which struck Pakistan. We are also grateful to the ILO for its cooperation regarding the opening of a training centre in our country and the provision education to children of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan. Moreover, we received a visit from the ILO Executive Director, Mr. Kari Tapiola, who met with our Prime Minister. During the course of the meeting, it was declared that Pakistan was preparing to ratify the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (182), as well as a number of other Conventions. This was achieved through pressure applied by the social partners, in particular the workers' organizations. Unfortunately, paragraph 69 on page 16 of the Report points out that, out of 29 countries in Asia, only 14 have ratified both ILO child labour Conventions and more than half the population of children aged under 18 in Asia are not yet covered by Convention No. 138. We therefore urge the remaining member States, in particular those in Asia, to ratify these two fundamental Conventions in order to demonstrate their commitment to the elimination of child labour.

We fully support the global action plan outlined in Part IV, both at national and international level. Political will is needed to allocate resources to tackle poverty, especially in the rural and informal sector, through decent work programmes and work opportunities, as well as though the provision of meaningful education and training for children.

We fully support the goals and targets mentioned, including capacity building for the social partners. As the representative of the Government of Belgium pointed out, there is also a need to address

issues affecting the children of migrant workers. Of course, IPEC is involved in this regard.

As to the rural sector, much remains to be done because the majority of children in developing countries are subjected to child labour at an early age. We hope that in the future we can count on the support of IPEC and the social partners. With international cooperation, we will continue to work to bring about a better, more prosperous future for our children, who are the best gift one could receive from the Almighty.

Original Spanish: Mr. FAESLER (Government, Mexico)

The Government delegation of Mexico would like to congratulate the International Labour Organization on what is an excellent Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*. It is a great pleasure for Mexico to be part of a region of the world where there has been a reduction in the worst forms of child labour, carried out by children between the ages of 5 and 14. Within the framework of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), the Mexican Secretariat of Labour and Social Security, together with other Government bodies and agencies, has been implementing a support programme to prevent and eradicate commercial sexual exploitation of children and to improve protection for victims of exploitation, with the support of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

The Secretariat of Labour also has a programme to prevent and combat the exploitation of minors for labour. In this way, we are fighting child labour. Eradicating the worst forms of child labour requires coordinated efforts between various Mexican government departments and ministries which are now working together.

We agree with the proposal made by the Director-General that an action plan should be implemented to help us achieve the objective of eradicating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. This would be done on a gradual basis, taking as a starting point the provisions of Convention No. 182 and based also on the points contained in the action plan. I would also like to mention in this regard that we are increasing national coordination in Mexico so as to prevent and eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and this is another area of activity which requires coordination between the various private and non-governmental organizations, as well as official organizations, of course.

We feel that the worst forms of child labour are not only a product of poverty or of necessity, but are also the result of demand because it is that, in the end, which leads to girls and boys getting involved in prostitution, or pornography, or drug trafficking. These heinous activities are not activities in which children become involved of their own volition; it is because there is a demand for these deplorable "services".

In discussing these issues, we must highlight the importance of the mass media in fighting the worst forms of child labour. The mass media – television, radio and the press – have a central responsibility and they must shoulder that responsibility. They need to contribute to cleansing the environment which surrounds the world's children and young people. If we continue to see the mass media broadcasting programmes and series which involve violence and even acting as apologists for drug-taking and pornography, then it is hardly surprising if we

come to the conclusion that they are not supporting the tripartite effort which we are making to eradicate child labour but are actually undermining these efforts instead.

I would like to echo the words of a previous speaker and mention the fact that many children have to work in appalling conditions because their parents have emigrated to other countries in the search of work.

The impetus to combat and eradicate the worst forms of child labour must come from governments who must devise and implement programmes. Employers and enterprises must respect and fulfil their responsibilities and, in particular, carry out their work in a more effective way to rehabilitate many of the child labourers that they themselves employ. There is also work to be done by trade unions, particularly teachers' unions, which have a special responsibility.

At the Sixteenth American Regional Meeting, which was held in Brasilia in May 2006, we made a commitment, which the Mexican Government is finding ways to implement to contribute to eradicating the worst forms of child labour. I would like to recall the lucid words of President Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica, when he spoke of the need for all our work to be influenced and guided by an ethical approach.

Original Russian: Mr. IVANKEVICH (Government, Ukraine)

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on what is a very important issue.

In the last few years in Ukraine, the issue of implementing the provisions of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) is one to which the Government, social partners and NGOs have given great attention. Their activities have been directed towards eradicating child labour, with the direct support of the ILO-IPEC programme in Ukraine.

We have also been taking measures to eradicate the sexual exploitation of children in Ukraine and Eastern Europe. I would like to dwell on one or two aspects of what we have been doing.

After the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the issues of ensuring children's rights, providing state support for young families and addressing the problem of orphaned and abandoned children have been given the highest priority. President Yushchenko, has attached very considerable importance to these issues.

Over the last year, several laws and government initiatives have been adopted on simplifying the procedures for adopting orphans, supporting young and foster families, and protecting the rights of minors. The President has held several national meetings to tackle the problem of abandoned children and reform the social protection system for children, especially orphaned and abandoned children. We are also examining the issue of improving the education system so as to make it accessible to all, wherever they live and whatever their economic circumstances.

In order to raise awareness among the population to the problems of children and ensuring their rights and legal interests, along with their physical, intellectual and social development, particularly with regard to children in difficult conditions, the President issued a decree declaring 2006 to be the "Year of Defending Children's Rights".

All this shows the unprecedented interest the Ukrainian Government has taken in solving these problems. These measures, the attention being given to them by society and the social investment in the future of our young people will have great economic and moral benefits in the decades to come. The Government has acted very openly in developing and implementing its policy, setting it apart from previous administrations.

I would like to express my thanks for the support given to my country by various organizations in identifying measures to prevent human trafficking. They include the ILO, the International Organization for Migration, the International Women's Rights Centre, "La Strada Ukraine", ECPAT International, whose network includes more than 30 organizations in Ukraine.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is now looking actively at the possibility of setting up an inter-departmental coordination council to eradicate the worst forms of child labour. This will be represented at territorial and regional levels.

In August of last year, the Ministry of Internal Affairs set up a department to deal with trafficking in people and this also has regional offices now. They have already put an end to the activities of 37 organized criminal groups trading in people, 14 of which operated in other countries as well as in Ukraine.

I said that we were adopting laws to tackle the problem of child exploitation in Ukraine and that includes a child protection law which, inter alia, prohibits the worst forms of child labour on the basis of the provisions of the relevant ILO Conventions.

In January this year, a new Ukrainian Penal Code was adopted to increase the responsibilities of parents and others who are forcing children into prostitution or trafficking in human beings.

As part of ensuring children's right to be protected against violence and force of all kinds, we have now included a provision in the Family Code which stipulates that any child over the age of 14 may independently go to court.

In order to implement the IPEC programme in 12 pilot regions of south-eastern Ukraine, a permanent system to monitor the use of child labour has been established. The state labour inspectorate is involved, as are local authorities, employers' and workers' organizations, public organizations and NGOs, whose activities are aimed at eradicating the worst forms of child labour.

The combined efforts of labour inspectorates and the authorities have resulted in cases of children working in illegal mines underground and on sorting and loading coal above ground becoming much more localized.

Ukraine is now setting up an integrated labour inspectorate. At the moment, monitoring the implementation of labour law is handled by three separate state bodies, and that means that it is very difficult to react quickly and in a coordinated way to violations of the law.

We must improve our mechanisms for investigating cases of child labour in the informal sector, which is growing and spreading beyond our borders.

Ukraine has a lot of other unsolved problems to deal with in this respect, which makes it difficult to tackle the worst forms of child labour, both interna-

tionally and in Ukraine, which often involve family members of Ukrainian economic migrants.

We are grateful for the efforts of various European Union countries to help us deal with this by legalizing economic migration, and we hope that soon we will be able to tackle what is a very complicated problem. The development of the Ukrainian economy and the creation of more jobs should, over the next few years, help us to reduce the incentive for Ukrainians to emigrate in search of a job abroad.

The International Labour Organization has shown us great support and understanding and we are grateful for that.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that very soon, within the deadline stipulated in the Global Report, Ukraine will be able to eradicate child labour, and that its example will help solve the problem in the rest of Eastern Europe.

Ms. EDWARDS (*Government, Jamaica*)

The Child Labour Project in Jamaica started in 2002 through the ILO-IPEC project. Despite the limited nature of research and surveys carried out, we found a number of situations with which we were not comfortable.

These included, but is not confined to, findings that of the 722,000 children in the 5-17 age group, 17,000 or 2.4 per cent were engaged in economic activities. We found that children in the 10-17 age group, in particular, were exposed to prostitution, pornographic performances and other activities adverse to their health, safety and morals. We found that a number of these acts took place in the home and in public spaces, therefore our children were not safe anywhere.

We also found a large number of children working in the agriculture, fishing, construction, vending, restaurant and retail sectors and in scavenging, all of this being extremely dangerous and hazardous work for children. The survey found that there was a direct relationship between child labour, education and poverty, and that children in schools worked 14 hours or less, while those who were not in school were likely to work between 14 and 44 hours each week. We found that it was children in low-income households who were not in school and therefore more likely to be at work, and that in fact more children living in households headed by unemployed women were engaged in economic activities.

Of course, child labour was found to have a gender bias, with more girls involved in domestic work, childcare, prostitution and pornography, while the boys are engaged in agricultural, fishing, construction and scavenging work.

The Government of Jamaica took quick action and we established a national steering committee and a technical committee consisting of representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Education, Health, National Security, the Employers' Federation, the Confederation of Trade Unions and the associations of persons with disabilities, as well as NGOs. We ratified the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). We ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we passed the Child Care and Protection Act which, among other things, provided for imprisonment of up to ten years and a fine of Jamaican \$10 million for anyone found guilty of engaging children in prostitution, pornography and drug trafficking. A minimum of

ten years was also set for perpetrators of trafficking in children.

The Government of Jamaica established the Child Development Agency; created the post of Children's Advocate; reviewed workforce inspection forms; and undertook sensitization programmes among labour inspectors, police, employers, trade unions, the employment sector, the media and, of course, the general public.

A child labour unit has been established in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and three projects to sensitize, withdraw and prevent children from entering into child labour were undertaken in the tourism, fishing and commercial areas of the country.

Jamaica's public awareness song was adopted by the ILO as its theme song, and we have developed a music video, a documentary, brochures, mobile displays and have held seminars and workshops and utilized the performing arts in our public education and public awareness programme.

Jamaica has a few challenges, however, which include getting widespread acceptance of the notion that household chores and domestic work can be hazardous and constitute, in fact, child labour. We are also challenged to identify the perpetrators of sexual offences against child victims; their parents are often ashamed or too afraid to talk and, of course, we are limited by our financial resources to undertake the nature and scope of the work necessary to eliminate and prevent child labour.

We, in Jamaica, have learnt a few lessons and we encourage the ILO to take cognizance of the fact that survey instruments must be culturally appropriate if the decided outcomes are to be achieved. We learnt that, while allowing for interventions, we do not necessarily always address the issues which are sometimes culture-bound and that a time-bound programme is more appropriate.

We learnt that, in order to eliminate and reduce child labour, two critical considerations are necessary and they have been spoken about by many before me: providing adequate quality and relevant education opportunities for children and providing economic opportunities to the parents. These must go hand in hand with public education, a legislative framework and, of course, increased job creation to prevent those children who have not yet entered into child labour from entering and to place those who have been withdrawn.

We have learnt that many existing government interventions are often inappropriate for children involved in child labour, as they target the household and many of these children have no households. Having withdrawn 660 of the 17,000 children identified and taken steps to prevent another 600 from entering, Jamaica is anxious to be rid of any link of the atrocities of child prostitution and child trafficking. The Government has set itself objectives geared towards the development of a comprehensive and integrated policy and implementation of programmes to ensure the safety and protection of our children. Among these, we have decided that we must enhance our knowledge through research, prepare a comprehensive list of activities considered hazardous to the Jamaican children, activate a tracking mechanism which we have established, and continue capacity building among the respective stakeholders. To eliminate child labour, we need to continue and intensify the public awareness programme, seek economic support and training for

parents of children engaged in child labour and seek support for the education and training of our children, while implementing an aggressive prevention programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

The Jamaican Government has made a start through the various measures highlighted, but if we are to eliminate child labour, the implementation of our time-bound programme is urgent. We seek the support of the ILO and its partners in the United Nations family, and we are concerned that at the pace of 5 per cent, which is the percentage by which the Caribbean has reduced child labour so far, without further decisive intervention, it will take us another 25 years to make Jamaica child labour-free, too long, much too long, for those involved in this phenomenon.

I congratulate the ILO on bringing this disgraceful practice to world attention. I thank the ILO and its partners for their support to Jamaica so far. I encourage the ILO to keep the issue of child labour on the agenda of the countries of the ILO and the United Nations family. I commend the employers and trade unions in Jamaica and those who have spoken at this forum for their continued support and cooperation in the fight to eliminate child labour.

We encourage those who know better to do better, to ensure that the process of leading the world into a child labour-free situation is ensured at the earliest possible time. We ask that opportunities to share experiences, challenges and best practices continue to be afforded so that mechanisms are formed and utilised to make the world a safe place for the next generation.

Original French: Mr. BOISNEL (Government, France)

The impact of our policies can be measured against the true chances of development they provide to all, starting with the least favoured. Combating inequality is to take up the challenge of education, knowledge know-how throughout the world and to offer access to decent work to a whole generation.

Child labour is still a present-day reality. The figures in the Report before us today, despite positive developments, do show us how much is still to be done.

Thanks to the action of the ILO, this challenge is now clearly perceived by the international community and we need to stress the positive and intense involvement alongside the States that are committed, the employers' and trade union organizations.

Since it is entered in the world agenda, this matter calls for an effort, but an intense effort to achieve in ten years, a long period, the eradication of the worst forms of child labour, and we subscribe fully to the commitment the Director-General has made in this regard. The ILO has the legitimacy to take such action and also has the capacity to act on all the plans affecting the efficiency of this policy.

In order to strengthen the efficiency and efficacy of such action, we call for coherence worldwide, which takes account of the multiplicity of international players, which has been mentioned already today and, which, of course, needs enhanced cooperation with UNICEF.

France, therefore, considers it might be appropriate to contemplate a world conference on the subject.

Applying such a policy must be part and parcel of an overall vision involving appropriate social and

economic policies including support to the families. It must be based on authentic social dialogue and lead to a genuine development model fully including the question of child labour, whilst assuring an efficient transition through the appropriate mechanisms.

Such a model has to be based on standard-setting action and implementation of a strategy of decent work, respecting cultural diversity while enhancing the good practice developed in the pilot programmes. This action calls for an evaluation policy based, and I quote the Report again, on “the time-bound programme”. It is essential to relate child labour to youth employment.

France has committed itself. It would hope, over and above its support to this Report and to the goodwill expressed by the Director-General, to make a positive contribution to this priority objective.

This is one of the challenges of our voluntary cooperation with the ILO and it is also one of the major aspects of our international cooperation, which seeks to obtain universal schooling. It is also one of our national priorities achieved by the creation of a child-defending ombudsman and the fight against all forms of exploitation, especially of young girls in the context of domestic slavery.

Our collective responsibility has been taken, not only to preserve human rights, but also in the context of our vision of a fairer globalization, which will be progress for all.

Ms. BRIGHI (*Worker, Italy*)

I would like to go back to what brother Khursheed Ahmed said before on the issues of the experience of Pakistan in fighting child labour, and on the experience that we had in implementing initiatives with the Italian social partners. I would also like to mention briefly the new programme that the Italian Government is financing through IPEC in Kanataka in India, because I think these are crucial initiatives that stress the necessity – the need – to have a link between industrialized countries and developing countries in the reconstruction of the so-called value chain, or in the reconstruction of the subcontracting chain.

The experience we had at the beginning of the project in Pakistan, which was in the surgical instruments sector in one of the most important industrial areas of Pakistan was that, at the beginning we had really very huge political problems in designing the programme and in relations both with the Pakistani Government and with the Pakistani employers, and I think that at the end of the programme I can say that there has been a lot of change. Even though I cannot say that child labour has been eliminated with that programme (because that would not be realistic), I think what has been successful is that, with this programme, we succeeded in changing the culture of the local employers in Sialkot, working with the Chamber of Commerce, and achieving really good cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and the local institutions.

The issue of political will to end child labour is therefore crucial. It is crucial because bringing together the different institutions at local level means that there is not only political willingness but also the commitment to invest financially and thus to change the structure of the budget nationally and locally to support children’s education as well as a commitment to try to open up a discussion with the

employers on decent work and income-generation activities which enhance workers’ quality of life and quality of work, and on the key issues of workers’ rights.

At the beginning in Sialkot it was really a very difficult life for the workers. Now the workers are organized in the companies and those companies did not close because the workers were organized. On the contrary, I hope and believe that, through the workers’ organizations – through the empowerment of the workers and the creation of trade unions – there is better dialogue and better working conditions, as well as better results in production.

What is so important for us is empowerment: how workers change the culture of employers and start to build a social dialogue which is constructive for both sides. The key point is to reconstruct the subcontracting chain. What we saw in Pakistan was that one of the key problems of child labour was the fact that subcontracting and piece work had been given out for very little money for many years.

The key point with this programme was, and is even now, and not only in Pakistan, that it reconstructs the different steps of the production to bring together producers, trade unions and exporters to rediscuss the price of products as well as to change the remuneration paid to workers involved.

When we talk about a subcontracting chain, we talk very often about reaching the informal economy, and when we reach the informal economy, the trade unions are not there. So, the solution is not to substitute trade unions with NGOs when we have a programme, but to bring trade unions there to create capacity in trade unions to work in that situation. In the case of making surgical instruments and that of the Kanataka programme in India which is starting now it is to create and empower the workers, to bring them together, and train them, and that is a new challenge for everyone.

This is how to organize the informal economy in agriculture where the silk worms are grown up to the production of the silk. When we arrive to where the raw silk is produced for export, we have to find a new link between those who produce raw silk and the exporters, particularly those bringing the silk into Italy, where we make all those very nice, fine, “made in Italy” silk products. When we put together the production, we will find at the end of the chain of the Italian producers who are selling high-priced final products. Maybe they do not even know; they need to go back to the silk worm and see the child labour. So it’s up to us in the ILO to envisage the old chain and to see where we can introduce, for instance, technological changes, new technologies to increase productivity and to free children from work.

I will give you an example on that. If you go to Sialkot from Islamabad or Lahore, there are plenty of big mills. Children are there in a sort of bonded labour or bondage. One of the possible solutions is to bring those employers from industrialized countries like mine that can together understand which are the best new technologies that would enable the employers to get more profit from their production and this would eliminate the need for children to work. In this way it would also give a better remuneration to the workers, who would not be further exploited as bonded labourers.

I would like to give the message to empower the workers, make the trade unions become implementing partners – not just formally, but taking a chance

on them and on the employers, putting them together and getting them to work together so that at the end of the project, things are changing.

The other important points are training – training using the Turin Centre. I am Italian. The Turin Centre for us is important because of the value of the work they do. Let's put together the trade unions, the employers and the labour inspectors who have to be trained on how to tackle the issues of child labour and create an integrated approach with them.

One last point for me is important. When we talk about a political link and coherence, I think that it is up to the ILO to bring coherence of approach in policies when other international organizations are involved. I am talking about the ECOSOC high-level segment on employment. It's very important that the issue of child labour be intrinsically connected with this appointment, as well as the United Nations reforms. It is very important in the discussion of the United Nations reforms that the role of the ILO on child labour, decent work and cross-cutting programmes that include all these activities (including workers' rights), is clearly underlined in the discussion with other United Nations organizations, so as to define the respective roles of the ILO and UNICEF, for instance, or the World Bank.

I think this is a challenge for us to find a new place for the ILO to meet these new international challenges.

Ms. INDER (*Government, New Zealand*)

I am speaking on behalf of the New Zealand head of delegation Mr. A. Annakin. New Zealand's Minister of Labour, Worth Dyson, offers her regrets that she could not be here for this session. I know she would have been particularly keen to participate in the discussion today.

The Global Report on *The end of child labour: Within reach* makes both heartening and sobering reading. It is heartening that progress seems to have been made since the last Global Report on this issue, with an apparent 11 per cent decline in the number of child labourers worldwide. This is particularly so for those engaged in the most hazardous types of work, where the Report notes a decline of some 33 per cent.

It is, however, sobering to note that here in the twenty-first century we must acknowledge the existence of a virtual continent of lost children – some 200 million souls robbed of their youth and trapped in the world of work through no choice of their own.

If we are to deal with this situation conclusively, committed global cooperation and action is required. The Global Report gives us the information and demonstrates the means of achieving that end.

We wholeheartedly agree with the Report's observation that: "responding to child labour requires making the right policy choices, and not simply having the right technical tools".

New Zealand therefore supports the Report's findings that real progress on the elimination of all the worst forms of child labour can only be made by taking a comprehensive and integrated approach which includes: economic and employment policies which alleviate poverty; education to lift people's capabilities; and the political commitment to active engagement on this issue.

In particular, we support promoting further integration of child labour concerns within the Decent

Work Agenda and the proposal for introducing appropriate time-bound measures aimed at assisting countries to implement the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). In ratifying Convention No. 182 in 2001, New Zealand heralded its international commitment to the effective abolition of child labour.

New Zealand has also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children and armed conflicts and the Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime. We are working towards ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and are considering the implications of ratifying the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).

Domestically, New Zealand continues to carry out a work programme designed to improve knowledge of existing protection of children at work and to promote the rights of children generally. The Government's youth development strategy *Arteroa* of February 2002 and the 2002 Agenda for Children, both take a responsive approach to the needs of children and young people in the development of policy and services affecting them.

Regionally, New Zealand was proud to fund the first IPEC programme in the Pacific in 2003, and through its development assistance programme continues to support initiatives that focus on children's education, health and rights, including funding to prevent child trafficking and support children affected by HIV/AIDS. We fully realize that if we do not comprehensively address the rights of children and do not eradicate poverty, it is unlikely we will be able to end child labour.

However, while New Zealand is actively working to eliminate harmful forms of child labour, we do not believe that exposure to appropriate types of work is necessarily harmful to children. As the Report notes on page 23, work falling within legal limits that does not interfere with a child's health, development and education cannot be seen as child labour. But that said, there are limits, and the world of work cannot be allowed to become a substitute for the world of childhood itself. This is the key issue facing us.

I conclude by noting that the ILO has set an ambitious target for the eradication of child labour by 2016. While progress has been made, much remains to be done, and a strong, sustained and coherent effort is required.

About a century ago, the extensive use of child labour ended in the first industrial nation due to a similar mix of interventions as proposed by the Report. We can do the same again. After all, what better gifts can we give to the next generation than assuring them of a childhood free from want. Surely, above all, children must be truly seen as our future, not just the fodder for a Faustian poverty trap. We know what is needed and we know what works, all we need now is the will to carry through, so that this blight on our humanity can be eradicated for good.

Mr. LAMBERT (*Employer, United Kingdom*)

The Report attributes the reduction in child labour to increased political will and awareness and concrete action, particularly in the field of poverty re-

duction and mass education, that has led to a “worldwide movement against child labour”.

Despite considerable progress in the fight against child labour, the Report also highlights important challenges, particularly in agriculture, where seven out of ten child labourers work. Other challenges include addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS on child labour and building stronger links between child labour and youth employment concerns.

The Report calls on all member States that have not yet done so, to put in place time-bound measures by 2008. The Report also calls for greater national efforts involving the social partners and for the strengthening of the worldwide movement against child labour.

United Kingdom business welcomes the publication of the Global Report on child labour. Business is encouraged by the progress that has been made over the past four years. It shows that political will is strengthening, awareness has been raised and that the hard work of all those involved is beginning to pay off. We have a long way to go though.

Child labour must be eradicated. The ILO, as the agency responsible for promoting minimum labour standards, is playing, and must continue to play, a major role in this eradication. Every child has the right to an education. Although there are exceptions, such as apprenticeships, which can be beneficial for the development of young people, generally the place of children is not at work.

In a global economy, companies are becoming more inter-linked. More organizations are part of a complex network of suppliers. United Kingdom business is active in addressing child labour wherever it occurs. United Kingdom companies are investing in supply chains to ensure child labour issues are addressed, guided by the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (and other principles such as the OECD Guidelines and the United Nations Global Compact).

Child labour issues are never simple. Complex issues require tailored responses. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Removing children from work requires cooperation with others to ensure that education and opportunity become the child’s future and not poverty and destitution. One of the many examples of United Kingdom employer action can be found in the cocoa and chocolate industry. The industry is determined to ensure that no children are subject to abusive or unsafe labour practices on the cocoa farms of West Africa. The scale of the task is daunting. The region is vast and remote, with 1.5 million cocoa farms. The industry is working closely with NGOs, governments and farming networks and the ILO, through the International Cocoa Initiative, to raise the standard of living of cocoa farmers and their families. The industry is deeply committed to the roll-out of a certification system (including monitoring, data analysis, reporting and activities to address the worst forms of child labour) in Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, with the goal of covering 50 per cent of the two countries’ cocoa producing areas by July 2008. The role of West African governments is crucial, as they support monitoring and reporting and government action to enforce international labour standards is critical.

As this example illustrates, business cannot operate in isolation; governments around the world have signed-up to the ILO Declaration but some are not fulfilling their commitments. We urge governments

to do much more to address this. The ILO remains the only United Nations body which has a tripartite system of decision-making, where the views of the unions and business can be taken into account, along with those governments. It must continue to play a major role in developing labour standards which address the real problems facing the international community. Through economic development and technical assistance, the ILO is able to provide a mechanism to build the capacity of governments to fulfil their key labour obligations.

I would like to say a few words about the elimination of child labour not being linked to trade agreements. It is not an option to link the elimination of child labour to trade agreements and trade sanctions. Business is greatly concerned about the potential for any formal linkages between trade and labour standards in international forums to be misused for trade protectionist purposes. Apart from distorting the market, they undermine the ability of a country to generate wealth and reduce poverty in the first place. Trade sanctions are a blunt instrument and the poorest will suffer. Often it is not the export sectors but the domestic ones which sustain the abuses. A key question is how to tackle companies which do not respect children’s rights and how to drill down to the domestic sectors which are not exposed to international competition. And finally, a very personal point of view, child labour is a stain on the conscience of my country and this world. We must never, never give up our determined efforts to eradicate it.

Ms. GRILK (*Government, Netherlands*)

The Government of the Netherlands would like to express its firm commitment to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The Declaration and its follow-up are key instruments in the promotion of the eight core Conventions of the ILO. The Netherlands attaches particular importance to combating child labour, as is demonstrated by the fact that our Government is one of the major donors to IPEC.

Before us lies a comprehensive Report with, compared to the Global Report in 2002, very positive figures especially the decline in the number of children trapped in hazardous work. We therefore commend the ILO and all the actors involved who made this possible. Although the results of the efforts to combat child labour are encouraging, we do think that the title of the Report is quite daring, maybe even too daring for the down-to-earth Dutch. The same Report shows us that there is still a lot to tackle, which is a challenge for the ILO. Nevertheless, my Government is utterly dedicated to taking up this challenge with you.

The figures show that the three-pillar approach in the current action plan to strengthen the ILO’s support for national stakeholders in their efforts to eliminate child labour has worked.

We therefore strongly support the newly proposed action plan to build on the same framework in a more focused way.

Let us also focus on the steps taken towards full implementation of the two child labour Conventions worldwide. Let us try to reduce the huge number of child labourers in agriculture and bonded and forced labour.

We support the intention of the Office to increase its focus on Africa in order to reduce their figures for child labour. Let us call upon those countries

that have not yet adopted the time-bound programmes to do so, not only with respect to the worst forms of child labour, but to all forms of child labour. To reach these targets it is necessary for the ILO to cooperate with all the actors involved.

We also believe in raising awareness, through the ILO, of the fact that poverty is one of the main underlying factors that pushes children into child labour. Likewise, it is mainly education and training that pull them out of child labour.

We therefore support the link between IPEC, the Decent Work Agenda, the Millennium Development Goals and the PRSPs with the decent work country programmes as the main vehicle for delivery. This provides a suitable policy framework for the effective elimination of child labour.

In our renewed cooperation programme with the ILO, the Netherlands will continue to make a concrete contribution, amounting to 32 million euros, to the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda. A substantial component of this programme will be aimed at supporting the ILO's action to eliminate child labour. The programme is to be continued for a further four years, until 2010.

We also support the use of the Youth Employment Network for a better connection between youth employment and child labour concerns.

As I said before, my Government will join in the challenge that lies ahead, to rally a broader, deeper and more dynamic global alliance against child labour and to consolidate and build on the gains made so far on the ground, while expanding them to a growing number of countries.

Let me finish by congratulating IPEC. The programme reaches some 5 million children. Their initiatives have played an instrumental role, both in mobilizing action and in demonstrating how child labour can be eliminated.

The Netherlands has been committed from the start to supporting the ILO in its efforts to abolish child labour through donor support and has actively participated by organizing several major child labour conferences, one of which contributed to the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). We intend to stay committed in the future. Let's make child labour history!

Original Spanish: Mr. FANEGO SEA (Government, Cuba)

All of the social, economic and legal objectives to eliminate child labour constitute one of the aspirations which deserves the greatest support and commitment of all countries in the world.

Child labour can be eliminated, and it is not a result of poverty. It does have solutions which can be applied through commitment and the acknowledgement that this phenomenon endangers the future of societies throughout the world.

Cuba is a poor country which is subjected to enormous international pressures. However, we achieved these goals many years ago as a result of the political will of the Government, which also involved society as a whole, to improve living standards and ensure the dignity of its citizens.

Because of the set of measures gradually implemented by the Government for decades, in Cuba, unlike sometimes in other countries, we have not had to justify child labour by stating that it is impossible to eliminate and a result of poverty. In Cuba, we adopted measures to improve the level of education of the entire population; to create employment for parents which provides them with the

necessary income to prevent their children from having to work; to create the necessary infrastructure so that the education system reaches all regions of our country and is free – even at the highest levels of education; and to establish a comprehensive social protection system which covers the main problems being faced by families.

These measures, together with the determination to implement an effective policy for the comprehensive protection and development of children and young people, have enabled us to eliminate from our social landscape the saddening image of begging or homeless children in the street.

The enhancement of the education system and the implementation of various social programmes on, among others, the protection of mothers with severely handicapped children, the holding of a course for the rehabilitation of young people, along with legislative provisions establishing the minimum working age at 17 for all sectors of activity, plus the protection, restrictions and regulations established in existing legislation, guarantee the elimination of child labour.

As we have heard many times at this Conference, the elimination of child labour can be achieved by each and every one of us. Furthermore, for many countries, development assistance and technical cooperation from the ILO are vital elements which complement and facilitate the political will of governments and activities of the social partners.

Original Spanish: Ms. TRIANA (Worker, Colombia)

The Global Report shows that international institutions, in this case the ILO, continue to play a leading role in the area of child labour. This is something we welcome.

However, some figures are still worrying. For example, in the majority of Latin American countries, as adult unemployment increases, so does the number of child workers and street children. Furthermore, the Report contains many references to decent work. We are concerned about the lack of clarity about the link between action taken on child labour and other fundamental standards. To attack the problem of child labour, we need a more global focus, increased incomes per adults and the application of 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), as a means of fighting discrimination.

Furthermore, although the Report refers to the work done by the trade unions in paragraph 378, it fails to give details of the situation or the work being conducted. It should have described the focus and commitment of trade unions, IPEC and employers' organizations.

The ILO and IPEC have played an extremely important role, but they should work more and better with the three constituents that make up this Organization and channel fewer resources to NGOs.

Just let me touch briefly on Colombia and child labour. Since 1996, the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) has been seeking alternative solutions for boys and girls who work with their parents in the informal sector of the Colombian economy. We work with groups of girls and boys with whom we establish dialogue. We work alongside them and involve them in recreational activities; we have tried to make this a fundamental part of their lives – something they were unable to do before because

work did not give them the opportunity. This enables us to establish dialogue with their parents who have realized that they must send their children to school.

When we started this work, we only had the help of organizations which are part of the CGT.

In 2002, when the ILO/IPEC programme began, we requested and received support to raise awareness among parents and trade union activists so that they did not remain indifferent to the work we were doing for children. This awareness-raising campaign included the preparation of booklets and posters and the holding of many workshops and activities for children, their parents and trade union activists.

At the moment, more than 100 children, as well as their families, are benefiting from these direct activities. We have received IPEC support. We are conducting technical training on systems and other activities which not only help children to find and receive another form of training, but also help their parents to understand that education and training is a means for their children to leave the labour market and get back into education. The direct action that we have been taking with parents includes training courses on self-awareness, rights and duties. Those who participate may also learn to value their family unity. In all this we have had IPEC support, for which we are grateful. With this support we have taken specific actions with children so that those who continue to work can also participate in seminars and the work we are doing, called task and recreation assistance. These activities involving training and recreational activities are carried out not only with children, but also with their parents. It is hard work, but it may bear considerable fruit.

We cannot rest on our laurels, despite our achievements. We know that we still have to make a lot more effort and undertake more activities if we are going to eliminate child labour entirely. That means attacking and denouncing its real root causes. Of course, adult unemployment is one of these causes.

Mr. JAMASEVI (*Government, Thailand*)

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, we welcome the ILO Global Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*. We greatly appreciate the advice and technical support of the ILO in helping Thailand to achieve important developmental goals in our Kingdom. One of the most outstanding successes of the country, with the technical and financial support of the ILO, is the decline in child labour rate since Thailand joined the ILO/IPEC programme in 1992.

One of the fundamental principles and rights at work, specified by the strategic objectives to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, is one of the priorities of the Government. From our point of view, the idea that the end of child labour is within our grasp is a noble and groundbreaking one. We hope to share our progress and our aspirations with our colleagues to battle against the exploitation of children, especially in respect of being forced into hazardous work.

As mentioned in the Report concerning the decline of participation rate of child labour, around 1 per cent by the year 2000 in Thailand, we would like to affirm here that such a rate has declined progressively, as proved by our annual labour inspection statistics.

Thailand was a participating member of the ILO/IPEC programme, and we have been working continuously to eliminate worst forms of child labour, wherever it may be found. Besides its ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), progress has been made by the Thai Government, including the extension of the scope of labour laws covering maximum wage for young workers and minimum age in home-based work and in agricultural sectors; the provision of the compulsory nine years of education to help raise school-leaving age to 15 years; the revision of laws on prostitution and the creation and implementation of policies on combating trafficking of children within Thailand and across our borders.

Not only is the Government concerned about protection for Thai children but it is also actively determined to protect vulnerable children of migrants. These children are subjected to various forms of abuse and have been employed in the manufacturing, services, fishing and domestic labour sectors of the Thai economy. We, in cooperation with the Regional Office of the ILO, have organized a research project which continues in a number of strategically important provinces within Thailand to identify how many children are subject to abuse in these categories and how such abuse should be tackled. Improving the technical capacity of research organizations is another important goal of the Government.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the ILO Regional Office in the past twelve months in assisting the Thai Government and others in the struggle to find decent work for all. We have gladly taken the opportunity to seek advice from the ILO in such areas as support for enterprise development. Our Government has long realized the benefits of regional development in reducing internal migration and its social pressures and, also, promoting the equal distribution of wealth. The provision of technical advice and cooperation, meaningful information and expert support is of considerable assistance in promoting our labour market, especially for young people.

Thailand has made solid progress in the attempt to achieve Millennium Development Goals. Many of the goals have already been achieved, and most of the remainder should be achieved within an agreed time schedule. We believe that this success bodes well for the attempt to eliminate child labour throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. We, along with our social partners, are resolved to play our part in ending child labour and the exploitation of young workers. Much still remains to be done, and we hope to continue to work with the ILO in achieving this goal.

Mr. ZOUNNADJALA (*Worker, Togo*)

First and foremost, my thanks to the Director-General of the ILO and his team for their efforts regarding the elimination of child labour. As the Report of the Director-General of the ILO points out with regard to the African continent, Togo has suffered from political instability which has led to increasing poverty for most of its population and an exodus of children towards neighbouring countries, where they can be found on coffee and cocoa plantations, even though life is not so easy for workers in those countries.

Faced with this situation, the trade union organizations have grabbed the bull by the horns. Therefore, a number of NGOs combating these scourges have set up joint awareness-building programmes, seminars and campaigns targeting children and their parents. Poverty having struck most families, the projects were set up mainly with the help of the Belgian Survival Fund in the informal sector and in rural areas. Literacy programmes have been established as well as programmes for social reintegration. The agreement protocol concluded last May takes account of the problems of workers in the informal sector, as well as in the world of work.

In conclusion, let us invite the ILO to step up lobbying, so as to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy and in rural areas. As the trade union organizations said during the ILO Regional Director's recent visit to Togo, we would like the IPEC programme of the ILO to involve social partners more in the fight against child labour.

Mr. KORIPAMO-AGARY (*Government, Nigeria*)

Mr. President, please accept the congratulations of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on your election to office to pilot the affairs of the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference.

In the same manner, I wish to congratulate the Director-General of the ILO for the detailed Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*. It is gratifying to note that 42 out of 53 African countries have ratified both the main ILO child labour Conventions, with only five having as yet ratified neither.

Nigeria is proud to be among the countries that have ratified the main ILO child labour Conventions.

Four years ago, the ILO provided the first Global Report, providing a reliable assessment of the child labour situation and calling for the creation of an effective strategy to stop child labour.

At this 95th Session of the International Labour Conference, we have been presented with a new global agenda, building on lessons learned over the years to achieve further progress in the elimination of child labour.

This Report gives a vivid and more dynamic picture of the steps taken by the ILO in a global effort to end child labour, with concrete evidence in the decline by 26 per cent of the number of children between the ages of 5 and 14 years engaged in child labour.

The Government of Nigeria responded to the numerous problems presented by the various forms of child labour, especially its worst forms, by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in the year 2000.

Through this programme, the Government ratified two core ILO Conventions on the elimination of child labour, the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

The ratification of these core Conventions was followed by concrete actions, such as withdrawing and rehabilitating 3,000 children engaged in child labour in the period 2000-02. This figure has increased dramatically in the last couple of years. Although progress has been made, much remains to be done regarding children engaged in child labour in Nigeria.

However, it is gratifying to state that the Government, in collaboration with key stakeholders at the

federal, state and local government levels with the support of the ILO, has put in place several measures to deal decisively with this problem.

The Nigerian Government, through the ILO LUTRENA programme, facilitated the repatriation of over 360 Nigerian children who were both externally and internally trafficked in the year 2005. This was done in collaboration with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), the agency charged with the enforcement of the law on prosecution of traffickers.

This is in addition to the establishment of a child labour monitoring system, a mechanism for tracking, withdrawing and rehabilitating child workers in the cocoa-producing state of Ondo under the West African Cocoa Agriculture Project (WACAP).

Furthermore, Nigeria has taken steps to formulate a National Plan of Action on Child Labour which is currently awaiting the approval of the Federal Executive Council. This is a fundamental point in IPEC advocacy, as well as the requirements under the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

The capacity of specialist core labour officers and inspectors has been designed for the purpose of the enforcement of labour laws, particularly as they relate to the protection of children at work.

Nigeria wishes to point out that the clause on combating child labour has been added to its new Labour Standard Bill, which is presently awaiting action by the National Assembly. This is an improvement on the old Labour Act, which did not take into consideration the realities of child labour and was limited to the protection of the young.

The introduction of the Universal Physical Education Programme, among others, further supports the political will of the Nigerian Government to combat child labour. This programme is aimed at providing physical education and skills for every young Nigerian of school age, up to junior secondary school level.

This is in addition to the enactment of the Child Rights Act of 2004, which further underscores my Government's determination to promote and protect the rights of all children from inhumane and degrading treatment and to allow them to reach their maximum potential.

Nigeria appreciates all the concerns raised by many of the previous speakers about child labour in sub-Saharan Africa and hopes that the ILO will step up its efforts to address appropriately this issue, in order to meet its target year of 2016 for abolishing child labour.

This is why the Nigerian delegation wishes to emphasize the need for increased ILO technical assistance to the member States of the African region, to deal decisively with the effect of these important social problems.

The Nigerian Government wishes to thank the ILO and the donor countries, while hoping that all member States will continue to pursue the goal of achieving the abolition of child labour by the target year 2016.

Finally, on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria, please accept our warm congratulations on this auspicious occasion of presenting the second Global Report on child labour.

This annual debate on the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, when it was conceived, was supposed to be interactive. It is because of this interactive nature that I have remained sitting here, because when the Global Report *The end of child labour: Within reach* came I had a mixed reaction, positive and surprised both.

Is the end of child labour really in sight? I have sat through the debate only with a view to convince myself that, if the end is in sight, then the Declaration has properly served its purpose.

The debate today convinces me that we are hardly yet midstream. There is a lot more to be done. Therefore, the Declaration itself needs much more aggressive work and follow-up action throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries.

I have three points to add in support of my comments.

First, developments in child labour in the last ten years have been gratifying. The Report should, however, also take note of what is likely to happen in the next ten years. The transition of children from childhood to adolescence presents a much bigger challenge to the InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration in respect of its focus on youth.

We are far behind in skills development – particularly transferable skills development – which is very necessary if the Declaration is to serve its purpose for the transition of these people from childhood to adulthood. Much more vigorous follow-up action to the Declaration on an integrated basis is yet called for. Therefore, unless that is done, I do not think the abolition of child labour can be deemed to be in sight; child labour is only being transferred and is becoming more aggressive.

Therefore, there is need for further thought, both within and outside this forum and by governments and the social partners, with a view to make our work more aggressive as well.

My second point is that some suggestions have been very wisely made by the President of Costa Rica yesterday. “Every time a soldier takes off his army tunic”, he said, “he makes it possible for many children to put on their school uniforms.” There are ideas now which have been placed before the ILO and this forum and I believe that some of the ideas brought across by the Costa Rican President, should be taken on board and further acted upon into programme action and proposals and passed on to whatever may be the appropriate authorities. That is very necessary.

Finally, debt cancellation and other ideas which have been set up all need further action programmes if, ultimately, the Declaration is to serve its purpose of economic growth, as evidenced by the eight points of the Preamble of the Declaration (if you go into the six or seven points of the Preamble, they relate to economic growth and employment and eradication of poverty). Unless this integrated approach is taken, the action on child labour alone will not help.

I think, therefore, the action as a whole on the Declaration pursuit is that we have a long way to go and much more vigorous action must be taken.

Having been in the background in 1998 as Vice-President of the session, and having some sort of emotional involvement in the evolution of the Declaration, I think I felt called upon to make these

observations. I think that we yet have a long way to go if the Decent Work Agenda is to find a permanent place, an immovable place, in the eradication of poverty.

Original Russian: Mr. AKIMOCHKIN (Worker, Ukraine)

Thank you very much, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to speak on this very important issue. The Global Report prepared by the ILO Director-General gives hope but it shows that the issue of child labour is still a problem even though it is a priority for this Organization. It proposes to continue to eradicate child labour in its worst and most offensive forms.

I would briefly like to dwell upon the problem of child labour as we have it now in Ukraine. I have listened to the representative of the Ukrainian Government speaking in this room this afternoon but, unfortunately, I did not actually hear him refer in any detail to the very serious problems which we have in Ukraine in this respect at the moment.

To look at a few figures: there are over 456,000 children today in Ukraine who are forced to work, many of them in some of the worst forms of child labour. Many of them are at the most vulnerable of ages of between 7 and 12. The official figures are not that frightening but they do not show the real facts, which paint a much bleaker picture of the situation in Ukraine. Estimates indicate that most working children are involved in unqualified and very badly paid labour. For example, 46 per cent of all working children work in agriculture, forestry or fishing, 26 per cent in trade, 19 per cent in the service industries, 5 per cent in industry and 4 per cent in construction.

However, this picture is incomplete. There are children working throughout the whole economy. They work on the street, washing cars, collecting and trading in scrap metal, bottles and so on, and even going through bins. They work in the agricultural industries; they work in slaughterhouses and in unregistered mines. They also engage in theft, swindling and begging. They are subject to commercial and sexual exploitation – in other words, participating in pornographic filmmaking and the provision of sexual services.

Virtually none of these areas, obviously, are subject to official labour agreements. You can hardly officially have children working on scrap heaps or in mines because officially child labour there is categorically banned. You do not usually officially authorize swindling, begging or theft either. These are activities which fall under the Criminal Code, not the Labour Code.

Turning to mines, not a single legal mine in the land – neither ones that are part of companies nor independent ones that form their own companies – would ever risk employing children. These mines do and obviously there is no strict monitoring of working conditions in unofficial mines as there would be by the Government in registered ones.

There are some international projects under way in Ukraine which we are hoping will somehow help to alleviate the problem of child labour. The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour is carrying out a series of activities in the most highly industrialized regions of Ukraine. This has helped us to get some children out of the worst forms of child labour in the sex industry, agriculture and street trade. We are helping to get them back into society and back into the education

system. Approximately 1,200 children have been pulled off the labour market as a result of this programme and given education, medical care and social assistance.

We have been working to seek out children who are working in areas where there are no official labour relations – for example, in these unofficial mines I was talking about. However, there needs to be concerted, organized work by both Government and NGOs. Without that, even the broadest and most humane of individual actions will have no effect. First and foremost, the legislative basis needs to be improved. We need a new law to deal with the problem of street children, for example, making parents administratively and criminally liable for violating the rights and personal interests of their children.

Overall the State has no full, focused, comprehensive programme on the rights of children or on dealing with the problem of child labour. If we are to deal with it, we have to have the appropriate laws on the statute books.

A list of hazardous jobs prohibited to children under 18 because of the moral and mental harm done to them must be drawn up. We also need regulations on what types of “light work” school children can be employed in and regulations on working times and conditions and minimum ages for these jobs. Laws are also needed to monitor compliance with legislation regarding the work children do at enterprises organizations and institutions of all forms of ownership and in family-run enterprises and on farms.

In conclusion, let me say that we fully share the conclusions of the Global Report and its projections for the future. We hope and believe that the measures outlined in the Global Report will help us to eradicate child labour within the ten-year period stipulated and we hope that this will be possible in Ukraine as well.

Ms. NORDENMARK-SEVERINSSON (*representative, UNICEF*)

UNICEF’s work on child labour is guided by our mandate under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in supporting the implementation of the ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182.

UNICEF, as the ILO, recognizes that eradication of child labour is imperative to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In this context, UNICEF assists governments in implementing programmes aiming at preventing child labour, addressing child labour where it exists and protecting the rights of child victims of the worst forms of child labour.

Last year, the UNICEF Executive Board approved UNICEF’s second medium-term strategic plan for the period 2006-10. It has five specific focus areas, out of which three are of particular importance in tackling child labour. The first area to address child labour is the programme called “Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse”. The second programme is “Basic education and gender equality”, and the third programme of importance to address child labour is “Policy advocacy and partnerships for children’s rights”.

UNICEF recognizes the importance of monitoring the situation of child labour, and in this context we appreciate the new ILO Report and its positive message. We are happy that the ILO has made use of data of the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey designed by UNICEF that is used in virtually all the regions

of the world. It includes specific modules on child labour, including on employment of children in domestic work.

UNICEF is engaged with partners in developing the United Nations mechanisms to monitor and report violations of children affected by armed conflict in the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005). With other agencies, we are working on interagency guidelines for the prevention of recruitment and the release of children associated with fighting forces, as well as on guidelines on the protection of the rights of child victims of trafficking.

UNICEF recognizes the importance of strong partnerships with other organizations and civil society in combating child labour, among which the ILO is a very important partner.

At the Round Table on Child Labour and Education in Beijing in November 2005, and within the framework of the launch of the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education, UNICEF proposed a bold initiative on child domestic labour to address the challenge of reaching child domestic workers to bring them into mainstream education.

In addition, the School Fee Abolition Initiative launched by UNICEF and the World Bank is paying particular attention to the case of excluded and vulnerable children.

UNICEF, along with the World Bank and the ILO, are partners in the Understanding Children’s Work project that has expanded to country-level cooperation in research activities on child labour in Senegal, Yemen, Mali and Cambodia this year.

Ms. HANGA (*Government, Zimbabwe*)

The Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare offers his apologies for being unable to be here right now. We, however, would like to join our fellow African brothers and sisters in congratulating you on your appointment as the President of this 95th Session.

On behalf of the Government of Zimbabwe, I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the Director-General and the entire ILO team for coming up with a very comprehensive and highly enlightening Global Report on child labour. From the Report it is quite encouraging to note that the statistics show a significant decline in child labour trends throughout the world. Furthermore, it is also very gratifying to note that the total eradication of child labour is within the reach of all ILO member States. As such, I would like to agree with the Director-General and reiterate the need for all member States to make concerted efforts in ensuring the total eradication of child labour.

It is therefore imperative that, as member States, we should guard against complacency because the war against child labour is not yet won.

While the Report highlights the fact that Africa is the continent least likely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, on page 64, may I draw your attention to the fact that this is not by choice.

Rather, poverty and HIV/AIDS in Africa at large and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, have come together to make it very difficult for Africa to work at a par with other continents in the total eradication of child labour and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

In Zimbabwe, the Government, together with the social partners, carried out a child labour survey in 1999, with the assistance of the ILO. The survey

showed that child labour was mostly found in the States of the eastern highlands. Since then, other studies have been carried out by the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe and more recently, by the Central Statistics Office, which published its report in March this year.

From all studies on child labour in Zimbabwe it has emerged that the major causes of child labour relate to poverty and HIV/AIDS. In essence, the emergence of child-headed households as a result of having lost parents to HIV/AIDS means the eldest child is forced to fend for younger siblings and this exposes the children to child labour.

In light of the findings of the studies carried out in Zimbabwe, the Government has introduced measures aimed at addressing the root causes of child labour, that is poverty and HIV/AIDS. These measures are, firstly, the allocation of resources to the Basic Education Assistance Module, which is aimed at paying school fees for children who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

The Government also gives grants to children in difficult circumstances, to cater for other needs besides school fees.

Secondly, allocation of resources to the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Development and also the Ministry of Youth Development and Employment Creation is aimed at encouraging self-employment with a view to eradicating poverty.

Thirdly, in view of HIV/AIDS, the Government has put in place a number of programmes which include awareness campaigns, voluntary testing and counselling and provision of anti-retroviral drugs. In light of the strategies put in place by the Government of Zimbabwe, there is a need for increased effort from all social partners to work together towards the total eradication of child labour. It is very encouraging and commendable that the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe has carried out its own study and I would like to point out, in conclusion, that there is a general consensus among the Government, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions and the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe that we should put an end to child labour in Zimbabwe. Therefore, on behalf of Zimbabwe, I would like to appeal to the ILO for further technical assistance and would like to end by once again thanking the Director-General and his team for coming up with a very comprehensive Global Report.

Mr. RAMAN (*Worker, India*)

Coming from India and speaking on behalf of the workers, I congratulate the ILO for its excellent Report. And, yes, "within reach" the term used in the title motivates all of us across the globe to move forward. Although the Report shows that much is being done worldwide, child labour still remains a pressing social, economic and human rights issue.

As many as 250 million children worldwide are thought to be working, deprived of adequate education, good health and basic freedom. Of those, almost three-quarters work in hazardous situations or conditions, such as working in mines, working with chemicals, pesticides, working in agriculture or using dangerous machinery. They are everywhere, but invisible, toiling as domestic servants, behind the walls of workshops, hidden from the views of plantations, etc.

Estimates of the number of child labourers vary widely, are provisional and vary by 1 or 2 per cent: Asia and Pacific 25 per cent; sub-Saharan Africa 30

per cent; Latin America and the Caribbean 15 per cent; Middle East and North Africa 15 per cent and approximately 2.5 million children are working in industrialized countries and transition economies.

In short, no country can boast with having eradicated child labour as of today. Like other countries, India too has a large number of child workers. They are employed in many industries, including garments, footwear, brick laying, etc. For example, the commercial capital of India, Mumbai, there are thousands of small factories, where boys aged 6-14 years work 15 hours a day, seven days a week, leaning at low tables sewing beads and coloured threads to vast lengths of fabric. Most of the boys are migrants from poor districts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in northern India. There are no schools in their villages or even close by. Their parents have no land for cultivation and work for a pittance like 10 or 20 rupees, say 20-40 cents a day. That is, if they can find work. Parents send their children to work in Mumbai, mistakenly believing that they will escape misery. Regardless of various pieces of legislation and court orders to abolish child labour, this has been continuing for more than half a century since Independence.

Human and civil rights organizations insist that child labour violates the fundamental rights of children and the Indian Constitution. Despite this, India has yet to ratify ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182. Indian laws, such as the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, do not prohibit child labour, but ban it in certain sectors such as hazardous industries only. Even if tougher laws were to be introduced, they would substantially not reduce child labour because the root cause lies even deeper in the policy of their families.

Child labour thrives in situations where adults are unemployed, families are large and there is a lack of arable land and resources and backwardness in terms of literacy and skills. Children of migrant workers are also more likely to be engaged in child labour.

Cost-cutting issues of the globalized era is also a major reason. Since a child needs to be paid only half the wages of that of an adult, many employers resort to child labour. The stipulation that children are supposed to work for only half the time as an adult is invariably not followed and, as a result, the child labourer ends up displacing an adult from the workforce. Migrant workers in the big sugar and textile agro-based industries have huge debts and their children often become involved in bonded labour, sometimes even for their entire life.

The United People's Alliance Government in its common minimum programme promised to put an end to this practice. Instead, this barbaric exploitation of child labour is intensifying. Even in the recent elections, various political parties promised a number of welfare measures, but none of them speak about child labour. The first step to ensure that tens of millions of children are able to continue their education is to guarantee a decent income to their parents. But there is a ray of hope. Instead of finding fault with each other and preaching to others, let us introspect on the efforts and achievements in our own place.

The budget allocated for the elimination of child labour in the Tenth Plan has been increased to 602 crores as compared to 250 crores with a view to eliminating child labour by the end of the Tenth Plan in India. In addition to the National Child La-

bour Project and the India/US project, the child labour divisions of the various ministries provide financial and other support to non-governmental organizations. All social partners are working in unison.

We find child labour in the domestic service, quarrying of gem stones and others. A large number of actors in India are concerned with child labour and cooperation and convergence on this cross-cutting issue are not forthcoming.

To conclude, let me say that ending child labour is a goal in itself, but it is also a powerful way of promoting economic and human development. Eliminating child labour will build human capability, promote the ideas of decent and dignified work and help alleviate poverty. Also, development increases household incomes, promotes better access to education and creates decent work for the adult family members to help eliminate child labour.

The journey to end child labour is long, but let us not forget that this is not a job of one person, one union, one organization, but an orchestrated reform of all socially responsible souls working in unison. I look forward to the day when a discussion on the elimination of child labour becomes absolutely redundant across the globe.

Mr. NADAF (*representative, Federation of Commerce of the State of Mato Grosso, Brazil*)

The contribution of Brazilian employers to the fight against child labour has also been carried out through business entities such as the SESC (the Social Service of Commerce) which is involved in programmes to combat poverty, such as one called MESA Brazil which assists millions of Brazilian families every day by distributing food in the fight against hunger and poverty. Then there is another organization, the National Commercial Training Service (SENAC) which runs a training programme for young people, qualifying young people who are 14 or over. It also assists millions of young people annually.

According to the surveys, child labour is mainly caused by domestic attitudes and is seen as a complement to the household income. Therefore, it is the family itself which is the major employer of child labour. The problem is that we have to combat this with awareness-raising actions among the public. Brazil has been a member of IPEC since 1992 and has endeavoured to make people aware of the problem of child labour. This has to be done both by the Government and by the workers.

Mr. DAHAL (*representative, Confederation of Nepalese Trade Unions*)

I would like to congratulate the ILO for the Global Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*. According to the Report, child labour is declining around the globe. Nepal is a country which introduced IPEC at its inception and we have a record number of child labourers – 2.6 million. The childhood of these children is absolutely denied. Their day begins with work, their recreation is also work and they end their day with work. It is not surprising that if, by chance, a child is actually at home, she/he will have to share responsibility of taking care of junior siblings. They grow up with cattle-herding and rag-picking.

Many in the developed world have a myth that child labour is a mere result of poverty. Thus, there is child labour in Nepal because it is a poor society.

We, trade unionists, hardly accept the statement that child labour is only the outcome of poverty. If it is that simple, a question comes: why are there such high underemployment and unemployment levels? Our argument is very simple: there is a vicious circle of unemployment, poverty and child labour which ultimately leads to extreme exploitation with extremely low pay.

Citing and agreeing with these facts, the Nepalese trade union movement, along with my own national centre, GEFCONT, has joined the global campaign to eliminate child labour. We are proud to say we have some excellent examples and record success as well. Thanks to the democratic atmosphere before 2002, the State recognized trade unions as inseparable social partners and the unions took up the responsibility of progressive elimination of child labour. I would hereby like to note that it was the trade unions that stated their intention to be successful in declaring Nepalese tea estates child labour free estates by 2000. We achieved it and it has been confirmed by a UNICEF survey. It was the trade union that was involved with Kathmandu's Metropolitan Garbage Company to ensure that none of their children would be out of work but at school. We are proud to say that in 1996 and 1998, an intervention achieved it.

Similar records we can underline in the fields of transportation, the bonded agricultural sector, carpet production and so on. We also designed a master plan and a time-bound programme in 2002 to eliminate child labour. According to the time-bound programme we will eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2009 and all forms of child labour by 2014. The trade unions have also developed a code of conduct for the elimination of child labour. We can raise awareness in all stakeholders against the use of child labour. Thanks to the ILO/IPEC time-bound programme and the various donor communities, it has happened because of our coordinated efforts.

However, I must indicate here some gloomy pictures as well. We desperately missed an opportunity to be one of the first-cycle countries of the ILO/IPEC time-bound programme despite our commitment and enthusiasm. The decade-long violent insurgency and defamed royal coup of 1 February 2005 has seriously disrupted our peace and blocked us from catching up with the set target. Moreover, sadly we saw a new phenomenon of child soldiers and a new trend of forced domestic child labour which is, of course, one of the negative impacts of displacement caused by political turmoil.

I hereby would like to make a submission that if Nepal were in more normal circumstances, certainly the average progress of Nepal recorded in the Global Report would be greater.

In conclusion, while congratulating the achieved results mentioned in the Global Report, I would equally like to draw attention to the fact that we should develop a new package to stop child labour in countries like Nepal – a package which would definitively address the challenges that have emerged as the fall-out of conflict.

Ms. TURNER (*representative, Anti-Slavery International*)

Anti-Slavery International and Trôcaire congratulate the ILO on their Report and, though encouraged by the overall reduction in the level of child labour worldwide, this is testimony in great part to the efforts of the ILO International Programme on the

Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and its social partners along with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other members of the worldwide movement.

Going forward, the Report also highlights various important issues, which must be tackled and which we too are keen to promote, including poverty reduction, access to good-quality education, provision of youth employment and the need for emphasis on child labour to be included in country Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Particularly as children and youth make up 50 per cent of the population in many PRSP countries. However, the number of children in slavery and forced labour remains of serious concern. These are where the worst human rights violations occur and must be the priority of us all to address. For this reason we would particularly welcome greater emphasis on the unconditional worst forms of child labour, including an update of the figures provided in the 2002 Report, *A future without child labour*.

Our concern is that figures, along with our understanding in this area, may not have improved so much. The Report itself notes that tackling unconditional worst forms of child labour, aside from some forms of trafficking, have by and large been neglected. For example, although it reports that legislative prohibitions on prostitution and trafficking are among the most common action that States have taken under the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), few have paid much attention to children most at risk and prohibiting slavery, illicit activities, forced labour, child bonded labour and child soldiers, many of which also involve trafficking. This is despite the fact that last year's Global Report, *A global alliance against forced labour* estimated that children account for 40 to 50 per cent of the 12.3 million total of people in forced labour situations.

International advocacy on child labour has been hugely successful in gaining ratifications of both Conventions Nos. 138 and 182, and we would certainly agree that advocacy must be continued. However, the key now is for implementation of these Conventions on the ground. We would urge more joint work between the ILO, its social partners and other concerned groups, notably NGOs, community groups, families and children themselves. These groups are more likely to be present where less visible or illicit cases of worst forms of child labour occur, and at local levels where these initiatives need to reach to be truly effective in tackling child labour. Children, above all, must be made aware of their rights under child labour Conventions and consulted on finding effective solutions to become true holders of these rights.

Like everyone, we are concerned by the lack of progress in Africa, although there are great dangers in any suggestion that there is a "one-size-fits-all" solution for child labour in Africa. The Report recognizes this and also the need for balance between removing young children from work and regulating working conditions for older children, as well as the results of child labour monitoring to be used for legal enforcement and promoting awareness and attitudinal change. The emphasis for achieving this must be on supporting regional, subregional, national and local initiatives. This includes recognizing local realities and the vulnerabilities of the children

themselves, and strengthening technical expertise and capacity within Africa, combined with targeted and sustained funding.

In conclusion, Anti-Slavery International and Trócaire are pleased at the progress already being made to eliminate child labour, but we recognize that serious challenges lie ahead. We welcome the opportunity to highlight the need for these to be tackled in a more integrated and unified movement.

In summary, our recommendations are that we call upon governments, employers, trade unions and ILO/IPEC to increase through research, legislation, policies and funding, the emphasis on the unconditional worst forms of child labour; to pay attention to child labour and associated issues, such as youth employment and quality education, in PRSPs, the achievement of the MDGs and donor approaches; to increase collaboration with other concerned groups, especially at national and local levels for more effective implementation of ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 on the ground; and to support the strengthening of an Africa-wide movement, including regional, subregional and national institutions, ongoing initiatives against child labour and alternatives for children and their families.

Ms. REALE (*representative, International Save the Children Alliance*)

Save the Children welcomes the ILO Report *The end of child labour: Within reach*. We congratulate the ILO on its analysis of child labour today. This Report, in our opinion, represents a laudable effort which advances the debate on child labour worldwide.

We welcome the emphasis on children's participation, the need for mainstreaming labour concerns in national policies and human rights frameworks and on strengthening and widening a worldwide movement by improving collaboration between ILO, other agencies and civil society. We recognize however, that there are still many challenges that need to be addressed and I will focus on these in turn.

Of course, we are very pleased to see that the Report recognizes the importance of adopting a rights-based approach in both the analysis of the causes of child labour and in identifying interventions and possible solutions. We do believe that a rights-based approach allows us to respond to child labour as a multi-faceted phenomenon produced by a variety of causes.

We commend the Report for referring to children's participation as a universal concept and right and the recognition that children should be seen as active partners in a worldwide movement against child labour. The right of children to participate in decisions that affect their lives is one of the pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Save the Children, as recognized in the Global Report, has a long and wide-ranging experience in consulting with children and enabling them to make valuable contributions to the development of child labour policies. We therefore strongly endorse the view that sharing learning and knowledge on best practice on child participation through regular dialogue between agencies would allow for the adoption of comprehensive and sustainable approaches to child labour. Similarly, we think that reaching out to organizations of working children is an extremely important way to include and mobilize children and communities on child labour issues.

We also welcome the emphasis in the Report on strengthening the worldwide movement to address child labour. We think that we need to regain momentum and we need new commitments at all levels to position child labour within major contemporary social and economic debates.

We also believe that mainstreaming child labour is the way to go, and it is a key strategy if we want to ensure a sustainable impact on child labour.

It is important that all actors involved are therefore equipped with the knowledge and the resources to contribute to this debate and that a child rights perspective is adopted in the development of strategies. We believe that the ILO can play an important role in building local capacity, as well as in ensuring that its advocacy efforts are addressed towards the inclusion of child labour concerns in human rights mechanisms and development frameworks, particularly the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) framework and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

We would like to underline the importance of agriculture, of addressing child labour within the agriculture sector. Almost 70 per cent of child labour is found in this sector and we noticed that the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) focus on it had traditionally been underdeveloped and we strongly believe that this is an area where action needs to be intensified. Focusing on agriculture should be a priority and we believe that more resources should be put in place to improve knowledge, advocacy and collaboration in addressing child labour in this sector.

Because of the unregulated nature of agricultural work and the often interlinked issues of migration and exploitation, this is again one key area where collaborative work with civil society is crucial.

The expertise and experience of NGOs in exploring less visible forms of work and in finding appropriate ways to end the exploitation of working children in the informal economy can be determinant in reinforcing the role of IPEC and other international agencies on the ground.

We strongly welcome the priority given by the Report to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and surely the data on the ratification of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) is certainly encouraging, but we are still a long way away from eliminating it.

Approximately 5.7 million children are victims of forced or bonded labour, yet little attention has been given to this problem at the international and national levels, or to measures to combat the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities. It is important that the ILO places itself as a catalyst for action against these forms of exploitation of children, and it is paramount that these issues are addressed as a violation of children's rights.

We note with concern, however, that the Report did not provide updated data on the incidence of the conditions and forms of child labour, and we think it is absolutely crucial that such data is collected to learn from interventions that are in place on the ground.

And this brings me to the final point we would like to make about statistics. We think that the ILO has made a laudable effort to improve statistics, which are traditionally weak and lacking on child labour. The recent data published in the Report seems encouraging, but we would say that it needs

to be treated with caution, precisely because, traditionally, it has not been particularly good.

Estimating global trends is still very difficult and, as the Report shows, hazardous child labour remains a problem on a massive scale. We believe that only if the actors involved renew their commitment and prioritize child labour can we hope to have a real and measurable impact on child labour in the future.

Overall, we welcome this Report and we commend its efforts to expand the knowledge base on child labour and widen and strengthen the commitment of a global movement. Child labour can be addressed only through a collaborative effort between international agencies, civil society and local communities, which is based on the principles of inclusion and participation. For this reason, we look forward to expanding our partnership with the ILO and identifying key strategies to address child labour and promote the protection of children.

Mr. ROYE (*Worker, India*)

I extend my warm greetings and strong support to the ILO for providing leadership to the campaign and fight against child labour – a daunting challenge to humanity. However, there is no room for complacency. The task is vast and long drawn.

The core questions around this vital issue need to be spoken out with courage and conviction. Such formulation is, indeed, a precondition for realizing the final goal – the complete elimination of child labour.

Two major dimensions need to be repeatedly mentioned: that child labour is cheap labour to the profiteers, and that child labour is a means of earnings for hungry families. Therefore, three major angles must constitute the basic tasks for the fight against child labour.

The never-endingly profit-hungry class must be dealt with firmly in order that they will stop engaging child labour to fulfil their profit lust. The Director-General's Report rightly said, and I quote, that: "without some form of sanction at the international level", the ambitious goal cannot be achieved. However, it is of utmost importance that such punitive measures be driven by honesty of purpose. Our experience is that commercial advantage becomes the sole motive under the cover of humanitarian sensitivity regarding the child labour issue. It is shocking that this most inhuman practice attracts questions of commercial advantage and disadvantage.

There is mention of foreign direct investment in the Director-General's Report. Such investors impose preconditions and extract huge concessions from the nation States at the cost of the countries and their people before making investment. Why cannot these investors insist on "No child labour"?

It is a matter of shame and condemnation that still there are a number of countries who have yet to ratify the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182), and these countries include some of the most industrialized countries as well. Why cannot we unanimously resolve at this session to set a time-bound target to ensure the ratification of both the instruments by the remaining States as well?

The other vital question is the fight against poverty. The goal of the elimination of child labour shall continue to be a mere slogan unless it is totally integrated with effective steps directed at the elimina-

tion of hunger from the world. The Report of the Director-General has very aptly noted, and I quote, that “child labour elimination and poverty reduction ... go hand in hand.” Poverty-stricken families will continue to send their children to even the most hazardous work in order to augment their family income, howsoever paltry the earnings may be, and surely without bothering with the future impact on the child and the family, until such families are at least lifted above the poverty line.

In this connection, it would be pertinent to quote from the conclusions of the symposium conducted by the ILO under the title *The role of trade unions in the global economy and the fight against poverty*. I quote: “According to ILO estimates, 1.39 billion workers worldwide – almost half of the total workforce – ... do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US\$2 a day poverty line.” Thus, it is abundantly clear that the fight against child labour and the fight against poverty must be carried out in conjunction.

Finally, the role of the trade union movement in the fight against child labour has been very rightly highlighted by the ILO. We expect that trade unions should be included with priority in the various programmes and actions of the ILO.

Programmes for poverty alleviation and campaigns to create awareness are interrelated and so too is a universal literacy campaign. No doubt, education has a very important role.

We extend our full support to the action plan drawn by the Report of the Director-General and the ILO.

Mr. TABANI (*Employer, Pakistan; speaking on behalf of the Employers' group*)

In my opening statement I already discussed Part IV of the Report entitled “Towards a global action plan”. I do therefore, not want to repeat what has already been said or what is in the Report itself, except to reiterate just two short points, namely that in terms of regional priorities, we would seek greater IPEC involvement in Africa, and in terms of sectoral priorities, emphasis should be placed on agriculture and mining.

Of course, the other priorities of youth employment and HIV/AIDS, continue as they are.

In my statement, I had also mentioned that we cannot expect the donor countries to do everything for us. It is for national governments to really act, make a political commitment, and allocate enough resources to the time-bound programmes or other national programmes for the elimination of child labour. This morning and afternoon, I have heard many governments make the same type of statement, particularly governments which have been donating a considerable amount of money to IPEC.

As I see it, IPEC uses technical assistance with the generous donations that are received from many countries. We are thankful to them for their generosity, what we have done up to now for the eradication of child labour might not have been possible, had these generous donations not come in. It is then up to, again, the national governments to really work hard. For the last three or four years, every developing country has been getting sufficient funding for their poverty reduction programmes. Therefore governments should allocate a specific sum for the eradication of child labour in the framework of these programmes, not just a minor, but a substantial allocation. Otherwise, the target we laid

down to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016 cannot be met.

We also have to bear in mind the advice given by the President of Costa Rica and Kofi Annan, one soldier less means six uniforms for children. I think developing countries which are spending more on their defence and conflicts should see how they can divert that money towards more constructive purposes.

Finally, I said that there should be greater exchange of information: the good work that is being done by some countries should be used as good examples to be emulated so that others come to know about it. In one of the meetings I mentioned that many countries have now, by tripartite consensus, drawn up a list of the worst hazardous forms of child labour. ILO or IPEC should get that list and put it as a compendium or as an annex to a report like this, so that we can all learn from what the tripartite partners are thinking in other parts of the world. Today I have also heard many countries, many governments, talk about legislation in their country, about prohibition of child labour and punishment or fines, imprisonment, whatever, if they are caught and prosecuted. Maybe the ILO can compile legislation of this type from the different countries that have special legislation on child labour and put it in a compendium or annex, so that the other countries can emulate and receive some information on this.

Finally, from what I have heard this morning and also this afternoon, it seems apparent that the ILO is on the right track, the target that we have set for 2016 is acceptable to all. Although everybody says that we should talk of elimination of child labour, there is general consensus that the target is to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016.

Mr. STEYNE (*Worker, United Kingdom; speaking on behalf of the Workers' group*)

I should like first of all, to thank Mr. Tabani for his intervention, and as usual I agreed with almost all of it. I wanted to thank all the speakers from all sides, though unfortunately very few of them are still here.

Several points arise. Like Mr. Tabani, I do not want to repeat what we said this morning, and indeed I did touch this morning on some of the targets of the global action plan, as did Mr. Trotman, but I do want to say a few words about today's debate and about future action.

As the Director-General said, we seem to have moved to a situation of new awareness. We have moved from the old denial to acceptance, to understanding and now to action. But I have to say that some governments are still painting pictures which are rather more beautiful than the reality reflected, for example, in experts' reports, and there are still serious gaps in ratification. We have raised those issues today. We do feel that we must continue the campaign for universal ratification of the eight core Conventions. While of course we welcome legislation, as Mr. Tabani says, too few governments are prepared to come here and talk frankly about enforcement and about implementation and its practical effect. To those who were prepared to be open and frank, I say thank you very, very, very much. That is exactly what we need if we are to be able to have a real exchange of views, experience and good practice. Many governments from both the industrialized world and the developing world, reflected exac-

tly the sort of commitment to policy coherence that we seek. Among others – perhaps I should not do this but I shall – but I was particularly impressed with the contributions from the Governments of Finland, Lebanon, Portugal, Tunisia and Mexico, but I must, above all, congratulate our colleague from the Jamaican Government on what I thought was the most frank, and therefore one of the most useful, Government contributions of the day.

On policy coherence, many reflected on the need to pursue greater international institutional coherence, including with the international financial institutions and the World Trade Organization and international coherence in policies on multinational enterprises, as well as greater national coherence with the political will that Mr. Tabani referred to, including in economic and social policy, in education policy, in quality labour inspection, in effective tripartism and in decent work for adults. So, I can only strongly support Mr. Tabani's plea for swords to be made into ploughshares.

That links, of course, to the repeated interventions that we have made today about the indivisibility of the core Conventions. We heard issues of bondage raised; of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, and migration status, freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, including of teachers, which relates directly to the challenge that has been raised time and time again of how we deal with the informal economy, where most of the child labour we seek to eliminate is to be found; the need to support organization of workers in the informal economy, and the related need to support protection of workers in the informal economy, and the need to stop greater informalization and, again, work with policy coherence for formalization of work.

I think that, above all, from today, what stands out for me is the huge consensus on the link with education for all. I think it is the key point of the day. I do not think there was a single speaker that did not refer to the absolute coherence between the campaign for education for all and the elimination of child labour, and many spoke specifically about the need for coherence between minimum school leaving ages and minimum age for entry into employment. They stressed, therefore, precisely the interrelationship of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which links to the 16 million children that we referred to who have shifted from worst forms to non-worst forms. I think that was, for me, the key additional glue that we poured into our alliance today, to hold us even more strongly together.

I have to say that we do take exception to this frankly Philistine view that education is there purely to serve the needs of enterprises and the market, because markets can be devoid of culture and notions of public service. Education certainly is there to serve the smooth functioning of the economy, but it is also there to serve the whole human being, in both working life and culture.

Many speakers mention not only the informal economy but also the need to pay more attention to

HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and, above all, the needs of children in agriculture and of girls, especially those in domestic service; this was mentioned and increasingly understood very clearly by speakers as one of the worst forms of child labour.

We need to build an alliance, and we set out the parameters we think are required for that alliance this morning, including greater ILO support for the social partners, involvement of the social partners with IPEC, and the requirement that those NGOs in the alliance support both Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 and understand the difference between representivity and advocacy.

My colleague, Mr. Raman, referred to lack of coherence in the coalition. He is absolutely right. I did once describe it, in a seminar in India, as a world class cricket team bowling blindfold at the same wicket. He listed those sectors where multiple organizations are doing work in the same sector but not even talking to one another. That's what the global alliance must do; bring all those forces together by coherence, cooperation, and the avoidance of wasteful duplication and the waste of valuable resources. All this needs to feed into implementation with real and measurable benefits.

Finally, I just want to say a few words on today's format, and this is no criticism of anybody in this room at all. It was hugely interesting, although we have been here now for ten hours. I have enjoyed every minute of the debate, but it was not very interactive, was it? That is not least because, to have an interactive discussion, even if speakers come with wholly or partly prepared statements, they do need to be present for the whole debate and not just speak and then disappear before anyone has the chance to respond.

We do think that, in the Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, the proposal for an international review conference is a very good idea and we should ensure that such a conference provides for a much more real exchange of views, experience and good practice. My plea is, yes, let's meet again, not in four years' time in a special session but before then, perhaps in more conducive circumstances that will encourage greater debate and exchange, with both policy-makers and practitioners and in which we can look at the practical application of all those matters we have so valuably and richly broached today.

The PRESIDENT

Thank you Mr. Steyne for your comments and contributions. May I now consider that all those who wished to participate have, in fact, done so?

In that case, I thank all speakers for their valuable contributions. This debate will form the basis for proposals for a plan of action which the Director-General will present to the Governing Body in November.

The debate on this year's Global Report, *The end of child labour: Within reach*, is thus concluded, and I declare the fourteenth sitting of this session of the International Labour Conference closed.

(*The Conference adjourned at 7.25 p.m.*)

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