



International Labour Organization

Regional meeting of CIS Centres in the Arab States
21 –22 November 2007, Damascus, Syria

Concept Note

Introduction

CIS was founded in 1959 by a consortium of national and international occupational safety and health (OSH) bodies that sought the advantages of a centralized information service and housed it in the International Labour Office (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland. Since then, the ILO has taken over full control of CIS and incorporated it in its larger OSH programme, but national- and regional-level bodies remain important partners, and today constitute the CIS Centres Network. The CIS Centres Network consists of CIS itself, and its National Centres, Collaborating and Regional Centres around the world. The National Centres are institutions with information centres recognized by one or more of the national authorities empowered to ensure safe and healthy working conditions in the country. The **National Centre** is the preferred point to which questions on occupational safety and health in the country can be referred. A **Collaborating Centre** is an institution that does not have the same national mandate as a National Centre, but has a mandate that complements that of the National Centre and has the capacity to engage in the same information exchange with CIS and with its peers as does the National Centre. **Regional Centres** are institutions that have been set up by regional intergovernmental organizations and that have the same objectives as CIS.

Role of CIS

CIS plays an active role in increasing the effectiveness of OSH knowledge management in the world by pooling the experience and documentary resources of national OSH information centres. It collects and disseminates useful information relevant to the safety of workers in all

sectors of economic activity. It also contributes to the development of OSH documentation facilities and assists national bodies in carrying out such work.

Objectives of the Regional CIS Centres Meeting 21-22 November, 2007

The meeting aims to strengthen constituents' capacity in accessing, producing and disseminating/exchanging OSH information at the national and regional level. In addition, it will also place great emphasis on advocating a need for the creation and development of national CIS centres in those Arab countries that do not have one at present. Enlarging the CIS centres network and reinforcing national and regional capacities in efficiently producing and using OSH information are also among the meeting's main objectives.