



International Conference

“Decent Work and Fair Globalization – A dialogue between industrialized and emerging economies”

Berlin, May 5, 2008

at the dbb Forum Berlin, Friedrichstraße 169/170, D-10117 Berlin

At their Heiligendamm summit in June 2007, the G8 member states underlined the important role of the ILO in shaping a fair globalization. In particular, they committed to “support the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Decent Work Agenda with its four pillars of equal importance: the effective implementation of labour standards, especially the ILO core labour standards, the creation of more productive employment, further development of inclusive social protection systems and the support of social dialogue between the different stakeholders” (quote taken from the final documents of the Heiligendamm summit).

Moreover, in order to strengthen policy coherence on the international level the G8 invited the WTO and members of other international organizations, in close collaboration with the ILO, to promote the observance of internationally recognized core labour standards as reflected in the ILO declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel emphasized in Heiligendamm the importance of common values such as the ILO’s standards and the Decent Work Agenda for ensuring a fair globalization. At their meeting in Dresden a month prior to the Heiligendamm summit, the G8 labour ministers, together with representatives from the ILO, the WTO and the OECD, had also discussed the social dimension of globalization. They focussed on three areas of action: firstly, creating more and better work in the developed countries; secondly, widening the scope of social protection in developing and transition countries; and thirdly, strengthening corporate social responsibility.

The conference will discuss the nexus of decent work and a fair globalization in the light of the Dresden and Heiligendamm resolutions. Based on the well-founded assumption that open markets require social protection, the adherence to social standards and the availability of decent work in order to avoid the spread of protectionist tendencies, the conference will take up the call by the G8 members to develop strategies to put the Decent Work Agenda into practice.

Decent work means opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. It is central to efforts to reduce poverty and achieve a sustainable development.

The conference will provide a forum for interested parties from the German development community, from politics and the social partners – not only from Germany as a G8 member, but also from Brazil, China, India, South Africa and Mexico as countries included in the High-Level Dialogue embarked at the G8 Summit in



Heiligendamm – to discuss their policies with regards to creating decent work and implementing the core labour standards. Special emphasis will be given to experiences with Decent Work Country Programmes or the necessity and requirements of such programmes, respectively.

With a view to the G8's commitment to promoting decent work and respect for the core labour standards in bilateral trade agreements and international trade fora, the conference should also reflect upon the potential of an enhanced collaboration between the ILO and the WTO to achieve these objectives.

The conference will cover all pillars of the Decent Work Agenda:

- the creation of productive employment,
- the strengthening of social protection systems and
- the promotion of the core labour standards.

Social dialogue, the fourth pillar of the Decent Work Agenda, will serve as an overarching theme over the entire conference, as representatives from the social partners will participate in and contribute to the discussion of the other three pillars.

Programme

- 09.30h Welcome
Dr. Ernst Kerbusch, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Head, Division for International Development Cooperation
- 09.45h Keynote Speeches:
Kari Tapiola, International Labour Organization (ILO), Executive Director
Klaus Brandner, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Short discussion
- chair:** Wolfgang Heller, ILO, Director, Office Berlin
- 10.45h *Coffee Break*
- 11.15h Session I: **Creation of Productive Employment**
- What are the policies to translate economic growth into the creation of decent work?
 - What are the experiences made with different employment creation policies?



- How do employment creation policies have to be designed to benefit all parts of society and to support the fight against poverty?
- How can the social partners contribute to policies aimed at the creation of decent work?

speaker: Qiao Jian, Associate Professor, Institute of Industrial Relations, Beijing, China

comments: Sharit Bhowmik, Professor, School of Management and Labour Studies, Mumbai, India
Jean-Paul Tricart, Head of Department International Affairs, EU Commission, Brussels

chair: Thomas Manz, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

13.00h *Lunch*

14.00h Session II: **Strengthening of Social Protection**

- Is there a need for a minimum protection? How can social protection help to foster economic development and job creation?
- What are the appropriate strategies to strengthen social protection systems, and what are the impediments?
- What are the policies to integrate the informal sector in social protection systems?
- How can the social partners contribute to achieving this goal?

speaker: Michael Cichon, ILO Geneva

comments: Helmut Schwarzer, Secretario de Previdencia Social, Brazil
Vic van Vuuren, Business Association South Africa

chair: Bob Deacon, Professor of International Social Policy, University of Sheffield

15.45h *Coffee Break*

16.15h Session III: **Promotion of Core Labour Standards**

- What is necessary to increase ratification of core labour standards? And how can governments ensure that the standards are effectively implemented?
- Can international trade policy help to promote the adherence to standards and if so how? And can one prevent standards from being used for protectionist purposes?
- Can the Decent Work Agenda contribute to a stronger consideration of standards in world trade?
- What is the role of the social partners in this?



- speaker:** Michael Sommer; Chairman of the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB)
- comments:** Graciela Bensusán, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, México
Marion Jansen, Economic Research and Statistics Division, World Trade Organization, Geneva
- chair:** Manfred Weiss, Professor, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University, Frankfurt

- 18.00h Final Comment
Christoph Scherrer, Professor, University of Kassel
- 18.15h Concluding Remarks
Olaf Scholz, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany
- 18.45h *Reception*

The conference will be interpreted German-English/English-German

Planning and Organization:

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