Resolutions
Adopted by the
International Labour Conference
at Its 60th Session
(Geneva, 1975)

Extract: pp. 6-9

Geneva
1975
Resolution concerning Future Action of the International Labour Organisation in the Field of Working Conditions and Environment

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Considering that the improvement of working conditions and the protection of the physical and mental health of workers constitute an essential and permanent mission of the International Labour Organisation,

Considering the slow and uneven progress realised concerning hours of work and associated problems concerning work safety and health primarily because of the absence of a general strategy relating to an improvement of working conditions and environment,

1 Adopted on 24 June 1975.
Noting that the utilisation of scientific research and technology, without taking into account considerations of a social nature, could not only create dangers at the workplace but could also have an adverse effect on the human environment generally,

Considering that changes in techniques, production methods and the importance of transfers of technology and the evolution of human society and of social aspirations place the improvement of working conditions and environment in a new and sometimes different context according to the countries, branches, occupations and categories of workers,

Referring to the resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1972 and 1974 relating to the working environment,

Having noted the activities anticipated in the ILO's Programme and Budget for 1976-77,

Having received with satisfaction the Report submitted by the Director-General of the International Labour Office to the 60th Session of the International Labour Conference and the determination indicated therein to reinforce and renew ILO action in the field of working conditions and environment,

Considering that ILO action concerning working conditions and environment should, in taking into account aspirations for a better quality of life, be closely joined with other activities relating to the protection of the human environment;

1. Solemnly reaffirms that the improvement of working conditions and environment and the well-being of workers remains the first and permanent mission of the ILO.

2. Earnestly invites member States—

(1) to promote the objectives of an improvement of working conditions and environment with all aspects of their economic, educational and social policy;

(2) to set periodically for themselves a number of definite objectives designed to reduce as far as possible certain industrial accidents and occupational diseases or the most unpleasant and tedious of jobs;

(3) to normalise the application of scientific research so that it is carried out for man, and not against him and against his environment.

3. Supports the world-wide action suggested by the Director-General of the International Labour Office in his Report with a view to reconsidering the current activities of the ILO and to launching an international programme for the improvement of working conditions and environment which is designed to promote or support activities of member States in this field.

4. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to instruct the Director-General, as soon as resources permit—

(1) to prepare and submit to it such a programme based on the general discussion of his Report to the 60th Session of the International Labour Conference and after consultation with the competent international organisations as well as with the national, regional and international bodies specialised in working conditions and environment, it being understood that, during the preparation of such a programme, the following should be taken into consideration:

(a) the intention announced by the Director-General during the 59th Session of the International Labour Conference of initiating a general inquiry into work whose purpose is to reinforce the effectiveness of action by the International Labour Organisation at all levels;
(b) the increase of ILO resources devoted to working conditions and environment and the improvement of its technical co-operation methods in this field, especially in rural areas and in small undertakings;

(c) the continuing examination of international labour standards relating to working conditions and environment with a view to revising existing standards which are no longer up to date and the adoption of basic standards designed to guide national policies concerning work safety and health and the pollution of the human environment caused by industrial and agricultural techniques;

(d) the systematic use of meetings of Industrial Committees and analogous bodies to carry out an evaluation of situations concerning working conditions and environment in different countries and industries and the formulation of all appropriate recommendations for their improvement; the full utilisation of the services, in particular through the convening of meetings at regular intervals, of the Panel of Consultants on Safety in Mines;

(e) the preparation and publication of guides, statute books and teaching materials in the field of safety and health, hours of work, organisation of work, job content and ergonomics;

(f) the preparation of guides which allow the best use of the workers' free time with a view to promoting their self-fulfilment and facilitating their access to culture and vocational training;

(g) the placement, in different regions, of multidisciplinary teams made up of specialists in working conditions and environment whose job should be—

(i) to assist governments, employers' and workers' organisations and research and training institutions and bodies in the preparation and carrying out of programmes for the improvement of working conditions and environment which correspond to their needs and potential;

(ii) to undertake studies on national and regional situations, gather and disseminate information and examine progress made in the application of relevant international labour standards;

(iii) to organise and conduct symposia, seminars and other specialised meetings, especially within the framework of industries or particular branches of activity;

(iv) to participate in United Nations Development Programme national and regional programming;

(h) the in-depth study of—

(i) the costs of industrial accidents and problems related to the harmonisation of relevant statistics, and of the definition of criteria and limits for exposure to dangerous substances;

(ii) methods for determining the costs and economic and social advantages of various measures referring to the improvement of working conditions;

(iii) experiences relating to work organisation and the effects of transfers of technology on working conditions and environment;

(2) to study the possibility of organising an international tripartite meeting which would treat various aspects of working conditions and environment and whose results would later be submitted to the International Labour Conference in order to allow it to take stock of ILO action and to decide on a future programme of activities;

(3) to undertake, in collaboration with and with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, a coherent programme of ILO action concerning the
environment which provides especially for educational and training activities in this field, as well as studies on the economic and social consequences of environmental policies.