

Regional Tripartite Workshop on Improving Safety and Health in Mining for Selected Asian Countries

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: 16-17 April 2009

Workshop Overview

With basis on discussions of the Sectoral and Technical Meetings Committee (STM), the Governing Body, at its March 2008 Session, decided that a tripartite workshop be held on improving safety and health in mining for selected Asian countries.

Rationale

The Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176), is central to achieving decent work in an industry, which has occupational safety and health as its main challenge. Convention No. 176 should be considered in the context of the framework provided not only by the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), but also the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161). Convention No. 176 provides the necessary basis for a sustainable mining industry that ensures that its workers return from their workplaces safe and healthy and that companies can attract and retain workers. Nevertheless, the number of ratifications of Convention No. 176 is still low (23). A number of countries¹ have ratified, but many other member States have not.

Despite an unprecedented mining boom and the industry's importance for a number of Asian countries, the only Asian member State that has ratified the Convention is the Philippines.

The Governing Body, therefore, decided that a two-day workshop be held in the Asian region that would provide an overview of good practices for safe mining, familiarize the participants with the principles of the Convention, allow tripartite delegations jointly to identify barriers to ratification and introduce them to solutions.² In preparation for the workshop, Governments would be asked to provide overviews of their national law and practice vis-à-vis the Convention.³

Participation

The Governing Body decided that a number of Asian countries be selected to participate, taking into consideration the importance of the mining industry for the economy, and their safety and health records and regulatory background. In its consultations, the sectoral advisory body on energy and mining suggested that participating countries should be chosen from the following list: China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, and Vietnam.

Each participating country will be represented by a tripartite delegation, comprising one Government, one Employer and one Worker representative, whose participation costs will be covered by the Office. Governments will nominate Government representatives; Worker and Employer participants will be nominated by their respective Groups.

The workshop will be open to representatives of governmental agencies or Ministries dealing with OSH in mining, who can participate as observers (at no cost to the Office). International participants from ICEM, ICMM, IOE, and IEMO are also welcome as observers.

The workshop will be held in English.

¹ Albania, Armenia, Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

² A provisional timetable is attached as Annex I.

³ Terms of reference for these reports are attached as Annex II.