

Launching ceremony of the ILO-DCC Action Program to Combat Hazardous Child Labour in the Urban Informal Economy

Speech
by
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20 August 2009

Mr. Nurul Haque, Chief Executive Officer, Dhaka City Corporation,

Ms. Doris Voorbraak, Head of Development Cooperation and Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of the Netherlands, Dhaka

Representatives from Dhaka City Corporation,

Distinguished guests,

Representatives of NGOs partners,

Members of the media.

Good Morning.

I am honored to be here with all of you on this occasion. Your presence reflects the strong commitment of the Government, civil society, workers and employers organizations to combat child labour in Bangladesh.

I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Dhaka City Corporation, and its NGOs partners, for launching this programme, to combat child labour in four zones of Dhaka City, today. The ILO's experience in many countries has convinced us that local governments, such as Dhaka City Corporation, play a very important role in combating child labour by providing the children and their families with relevant options.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Child labour is a big problem for a developing country like Bangladesh. Failing to transform our children into skilled human resources will hinder the short, medium and long-term social and economic development of the country. We need to ensure our children get a proper education and training opportunities, rather than forcing them to work from an early age.

From an ILO perspective, our primary goal is to ensure decent work for all people. When millions of children are working, and many are engaged in hazardous labour, we cannot achieve this goal.

Dear colleagues,

Today's event is very significant for us all. As you are aware, the Government of Bangladesh has ratified ILO Convention number 182 on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

Subsequently, the Government of Bangladesh, under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, formulated a National Time-Bound Programme. This was designed to prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labour in Bangladesh. We in the ILO and other members of the UN System such as UNICEF, were happy to provide technical support.

The Urban Informal Economy (UIE) Project is part of the ILO's technical support. Through this partnership with Dhaka City Corporation and its partner NGOs, within two years about 10,000 children will be helped, and protected from hazardous child labour. This will be achieved through the provision of non-formal education, the social and economic empowerment of their families, and regulation of informal economy workplaces.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are launching this Project at an historic moment. 2009 marks the 10th anniversary of ILO Convention 182, which was adopted in 1999. We need concerted, concrete action like this, at local, national and international level, to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention, so that soon, no child will be the victim of the worst forms of child labour.

I thank you all once again for giving me the opportunity to be here with you. The ILO will always work with you to combat child labour and ensure decent employment for all. I wish Dhaka City Corporation and its NGOs partners a great success in this project.

I would also like thank the Government of the Netherlands for their partnership and financial support, which has made this project possible.

Thank you.