



www.ilo.ru

Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Newsletter

ISSN 1811-1351

2 (21) JUNE 2005



International
Labour
Organization



93rd annual Conference of the ILO concludes its work

On June 16 Conference of the International Labour Organization concluded its 93rd annual session. The annual Conference of the ILO drew more than 3,000 delegates, including heads of State, labour ministers and leaders of workers' and employers' organizations from most of the ILO's 178 member states.

They discussed the need for urgently eliminating forced labour, creating jobs for youth, improving safety at work and tackling what ILO Director-General Juan Somavia called a "global jobs crisis".

The annual meeting also focused on the situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories, the state of labour standards in Belarus, Colombia and other countries and the on-going situation of efforts to stop the use of forced labour in Myanmar.

The 93rd International Labour Conference adopted a program and budget of US\$594.31 million for the 2006-07 biennium.

The new program and budget focuses on decent work as a global goal and action needed at the local, national, regional and international levels to make it happen, including Decent Work Country Programmes.

The Conference also selected new government, employer and worker members of the Governing Body.

The Conference marked the fourth World Day Against Child Labour by calling for the elimination of child labour in one of the world's most dangerous sectors – small-scale mining and quarrying – within five to 10 years.

Confronted with record levels of youth unemployment in recent years, delegates from more than 100 countries discussed pathways to decent work for youth and the role of the international community in advancing the youth employment agenda. The Committee also encouraged the ILO to continue playing a leading role in the UN Secretary General's Youth Employment Network (YEN) and to extend the YEN to other countries, both developing and developed.

In the absence of a quorum for the vote on a proposed Convention on work in the fishing sector, the Conference asked the Governing Body to place a corresponding item on the agenda of the Conference in 2007, and that the report submitted to the Conference plenary be used for further consideration.

The Committee on Safety and Health considered a promotional framework in the area of occupational safety and health. Delegates decided that the instrument establishing this framework should take the form of a Convention supplemented by a Recommendation.

The Committee on the Application of Standards noted with respect to freedom of association in Belarus that no real concrete and tangible measures had been taken by the Government to comply with the recommendations of the ILO Commission of Inquiry. As details of a government Plan of Action on freedom of association were not known yet, the Committee urged that an ILO mission be sent to Belarus, to assist the government and also to evaluate the measures that the government has taken to comply with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.

The General Survey discussed by the Conference Committee this year, was on working time. Delegates discussed the current state of working hours and how to balance the need for flexibility with protecting workers' security, health and family life.

During a special sitting of the plenary of the Conference, delegates held an in-depth discussion on the situation of the more than 12 million people around the world who are trapped in forced labour, including some 2.4 million who are victims of trafficking. They strongly condemned forced labour as a violation of human dignity and supported the ILO Director-General's call for a Global Alliance to address this global problem. ■



On the sidelines of the 93rd International Labour Conference we interviewed **Tajikistan's Labour and Social Welfare Minister Zokir Vazirov**:

- I arrived at the Conference with a special feeling. Firstly, this is the first conference I attend in my current capacity. Secondly, high on the Conference's agenda were forced labour and youth employment issues. Both are very important to Tajikistan.

Every year 400,000 people leave the country in search of a job. Over 90 percent head

for Russia. Only one in four labour migrants works legally there, while most are employed illegally. The authorities do their utmost to help migrants get legal employment. Tajikistan has already ratified an agreement on the social protection of Tajik citizens in Russia and of Russian citizens in Tajikistan.

Youth employment is one of the sharpest youth policy problems in my country, where the average age is 24 years. The government grants land plots to young residents of rural areas, who represent 75 percent of Tajiki-

stan's youth. For urban youth new jobs are created in the industrial, construction and trade sectors. In 2004, about 100,000 new vacancies emerged, and over the first five months of this year - another 50,000.

Tajikistan needs ILO's support for the professional training and retraining of young specialists, creating employers' associations and retraining staff of the country's Labour Ministry and the Trade Unions Federation and welcomes the idea of creating a global alliance against forced labour. ■



A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour

ILO released a major new study entitled "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour" that says at least 12.3 million people are trapped in forced labour around the world, including 210,000 people in transition countries.

The report also provides the first global estimate of the profits generated by the exploitation of trafficked women, children and men – US\$ 32 billion each year (including US\$3.4 billion in transition countries), or an average of US\$ 13,000 from every single trafficked forced labourer.

We asked Elena Tyuryukanova to comment. Ms. Tyuryukanova is a leading research worker of the Institute for Socio-Economic Problems of Population at the Russian Academy of Sciences. She supervised the research entitled "Forced Labour in Modern Russia. Illegal Migrants and Human Trafficking," conducted by Russian experts at the request of the ILO in 2004.

Forced labour is a very acute problem in Russia. Although the GDP growth rates have been high for the past few years, poverty remains massive: the incomes of 27 percent of the population are below the subsistence level. Low incomes do not allow large groups of the population to get proper education and health-care.

The shadow economy accounting for 10 million employees and 22 percent of the GDP is a vast field for illegal human exploitation practices, including human trafficking and forced labour. It also creates and maintains a

steady demand for a cheap work force and denies it any social guarantees.

Russia is witnessing a growing influx of such labour migrants, mainly from neighboring countries – the CIS member-states, China, Vietnam and Korea. Flaws in migration legislation are many and the chances of getting legal employment slim. Illegal labor migration to Russia, mainly from the CIS and South-Eastern Asia, makes up about 4-5 million.

The ILO Report clarifies that forced labour certainly cannot be equated simply with low wages or poor working conditions. It comprises two basic elements: the work or service is exacted under the menace of a penalty, and it is undertaken involuntarily. This can take extreme forms such as physical violence, but also subtler forms such as confiscation of identity papers or threats of denunciation of irregular migrants to the police authorities, which leads to increased exploitation.

In this context forced labour in Russia has become a common occurrence. First and foremost, it concerns migrants, who are illegally employed in the shadow and informal economies. According to an ILO survey conducted in Russia, 47 percent of labour migrants have to work on uncertain wage conditions or without any wages at all, 71 percent have to work to exhaustion, and 51 percent are forced to do jobs they had not agreed to voluntarily. Around 30 percent of migrants are denied freedom of movement and are partially isolated from society, 20 percent have had their passports confiscated by the employer, and 12 per-

cent are indebted to their employers and cannot sever labour relations of their own free will.

At least 12.3 million people are trapped in forced labour around the world, including 210,000 people in transition countries.

On average, 22 percent of women-migrants say they are sexually exploited. These figures testify to existence of slave labour.

Russia has begun the struggle against human trafficking by complementing its Criminal Code with an article on human trafficking and slave labour at the beginning of 2004. However, this was only the first step.

A global alliance against forced labour strategy introduced in the ILO new report requires an active response from national governments and social forces.

At present, Russia is ready to become an active member of this alliance and continue cooperation in the eradication of forced labour, its roots and spread. ■

The report "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour" was published at 1300 on May 11 2005 by the ILO. For more information visit: <http://www.ilo.ru/news.htm> (June 2005)



ILO meeting on Global Compact

On May 26 the ILO hosted at the National Hotel in Moscow a Global Compact meeting for representatives of the all-Russia employers' unions, whose member enterprises employ foreign work-force. This meeting was organized within the framework of the ILO project on "Combating human trafficking and the forced labour outcomes in Central Asia and the Russian Federation".

The main issue discussed at the meeting was the development of a code of business ethics for employers. Russia is still witnessing illegal employment practices: without signing labour contracts and ensuring social guarantees. It particularly concerns foreign migrant workers, many of whom find themselves in conditions of forced

labor. To solve this problem and increase employers' responsibility, the enterprises employing foreign workforce decided to work out a code of business ethics.

The participants discussed the foreign experience of establishing such instruments as well as the Russian association of private employment agencies' initiative to develop a similar code of conduct.

The meeting concluded that such an initiative was very timely and useful. The ILO intends to continue its work in this area, having scheduled several follow-up activities on the issue. ■
For additional information, please contact Ms. Yekaterina Ustinova, Project Coordinator ustinova@ilo.org.

Announced by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January 1999, and formally launched at the United Nations Headquarters in July 2000, the Compact calls on companies to embrace nine universal principles in the areas of human rights, labor standards and the environment. It brings companies together with United Nations organizations, international labor organizations, NGOs and other parties to foster partnerships and to build a more inclusive and equitable global marketplace.

ILO pilot projects in Volgograd

An ILO delegation led by the director of the ILO Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Mrs. Pauline Barrett-Reid visited Volgograd on March 14-18 to discuss the implementation of its pilot projects in the Volgograd region.

The ILO already has underway two pilot projects. One is entitled "Russia's Accession to the WTO and its Social Consequences." Within the framework of the project the Yuri Levada analytical centre polled 300 industrial managers in the Volgograd region in order to find out how Russia's WTO accession may affect their enterprises and the socio-economic situation in the region in general.



ILO Moscow Director at a news conference

"It is very good that this project will be implemented in our region, because we will know what WTO membership is all about, its advantages and disadvantages. This knowledge will make work easier for us, when other regions will be making their first steps on the way to this system," chairman of the Volgograd Region Trade Unions Council Vyacheslav Kobozev said.

The project was coordinated and approved by the Russian Tripartite Constituents, so it can be easily replicated in other regions. As for the Volgograd Region, it was chosen for a good reason. As Pauline Barrett-Reid explained,

the Volgograd Region is a vast territory, problems are many and diversified, and there are many areas where the ILO can offer its assistance.

Pauline Barrett-Reid confirmed that after Russia's WTO accession, many industries will face difficulties: "Agriculture and light industries will have big problems. As for Russia's automotive industry, it may simply vanish. But other sectors will surely benefit."

Trade unions are mostly concerned over employment and wages after accession. Pauline Barrett-Reid believes that these are very serious issues, to be resolved at the national level and within the framework of the Tripartite Commission.

"If today we fail to act to compare our requirements with those of the WTO, our products will be unable to compete in the foreign market. The ongoing project will help identify the negative trends that may spark a social explosion after Russia's WTO accession, a slump in the region's consolidated budget revenues, as well redundancies," the head of the regional administration Nikolai Maksyuta said.



At a college participating in the project on HIV/STI Prevention

The other ILO project is "Comprehensive Partnership Strategies for HIV/STI Prevention



Shaking hands with head of regional administration Nikolai Maksyuta

among Young People in the Russian Federation", which has been implemented in the Volgograd region and Altai territory since 2002. Regional partners together with six UN agencies, including ILO, are working out a mechanism for combating the HIV/STI spread among youth. The mechanism is aimed at training specialists for employment centers and colleges commissioned to prevent HIV/AIDS among students and provide young people with information and medical services. The ILO in cooperation with Volgograd region specialists published a manual "Your Health" for college students participating in the project.

"We hope that this manual will be later used not only in the Volgograd region and Altai territory, but elsewhere in Russia," Pauline Barrett-Reid said. She thanked regional authorities for their support and assistance in project implementation.

The subregional office director pointed out that ILO had also just launched a third project for studying labor migration problems. It is being implemented in Moscow, the Moscow region and now in the Volgograd region.

Maksyuta said for his part "ILO pilot projects are very important for us and we want to continue and expand our cooperation with this authoritative organization." ■

Appointments



On March 1, 2005 Ms. Alena Nesporova was appointed Deputy Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia.

Ms. Nesporova joined the ILO as a Senior Labour Market Policy Specialist in the Central and Eastern European Team in Buda-

pest in 1993. In 1998 she was transferred as a Senior Labour Economist to Geneva to the Employment and Training Department. In 2000 she joined the newly established Employment Strategy Department and provided advice and assistance on employment strategy and labour market policy in a number of transition countries. In March 2003 she was appointed Chief of the Employment Policy Unit.

Ms. Nesporova has a strong academic background and she is an author and co-author of numerous research works on labour market policy and employment strategy.

Ms. Nesporova graduated from the Prague School of Economics and holds a CSc. (equivalent of PhD.) degree in economics from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (1980).

In her address to colleagues and partners Ms. Nesporova wrote "I will rely very much on your kind support but I can assure you that I will do my best to be of assistance to you and to make our collaboration successful, enjoyable for all of us and fruitful for our constituents." ■



Moscow hosts UN-CIS ministerial meeting on Urgent Response to HIV/AIDS

On March 31-April 1, the UNAIDS co-sponsoring organizations met for their regular meeting this time in Moscow to call for a broad-based response to the HIV/AIDS epidemics in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) where it is rapidly spreading.

The meeting entitled "Urgent Response to the HIV/AIDS Epidemics in the Commonwealth of Independent States" was organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and cosponsors of the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in cooperation with the Russian Foreign Ministry.



Mr. Assane Diop, the ILO Executive Director took part in the ministerial meeting
Photo: UNODC

Taking part in the meeting were UNAIDS Executive Director Peter Piot, UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa, who is the current Chair of UNAIDS' Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO), Russian Minister of Health and Social Development Mikhail Zurabov, Director of the Federal Drug Control Service Victor Cherkosov, Head of the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumers Rights and Human Well-being Gennady Onishchenko, Executive Secretary of the CIS Executive Committee Vladimir Rushailo, First Lady of Georgia Sandra Roelofs, who is a stalwart advocate for vulnerable populations around the world, other officials from the UN and CIS governments and representatives of NGOs. The International Labor Organization was represented by its Executive Director Assane Diop.

"The presence today of so many ministers and representatives from the Commonwealth of Independent States tells me that this is the right meeting, at the right time, in the right place, for the right reason," said Antonio

Maria Costa. "Roughly 1.4 million in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region are estimated to be living with HIV and AIDS. In some countries of the region, up to 80 percent of HIV cases are attributable to drug abuse," the UNODC Executive Director added.

"The epidemic is growing fast and moving from the injecting drug users (who predominantly are young people) and commercial sex workers into the heterosexual community. However, there is a window of opportunity in which if action is taken, the transmission and prevalence of the infection can be slowed down," said Assane Diop in his summary notes to Session 2.

Participants talked about the need for political commitment, and for creating the legislative infrastructure and health systems, which CIS governments need to address this crisis in comprehensive ways. "HIV/AIDS needs to be at the top of the political agenda with good, strong leadership at all levels – presidents, heads of state, community and religious leaders, business and trade unions and other NGOs," Mr. Diop said.

At present, "Eastern Europe and Central Asia are experiencing one of the world's fastest growing HIV/AIDS epidemics with more than 80% of the reported infections found among people below the age of 30 years. About 1.7% of all young men in the region aged 15-24 years are infected, and 0.8% of all young women. This will affect the region's socio-economic development and security if action is not taken now," Peter Piot said.

In particular, in Russia the growth rate of identifiable HIV cases is now one of the world's fastest: in 2003 the HIV incidence increased almost 40 times as compared to 1997. If such growth continues, the country's working population may decrease by 1.1 million in 2015, and by 2.1 million in 2050. It is estimated that under any possible scenario of demographic development, Russia could not avoid a considerable decrease and ageing of the workforce, even without taking into account the epidemics of socially harmful diseases.

Mr. Diop pointed out that "HIV/AIDS is a human rights issue as well as an economic, social and political issue," which requires a systematic and complex response.

The main results of the meeting in the Russian capital were the signing of Moscow Declaration on "Urgent Response to the HIV/AIDS Epidemics in the Commonwealth of Independent States" and an agreement to hold here in December a large-scale meeting on the problems of the HIV/AIDS spread. ■

The ILO has launched several projects in Russia, in particular a three-year project in Murmansk and Moscow. It is aimed at contributing to the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the world of work, the enhancement of workplace protection and the reduction of its adverse consequences on social, labour and economic development. It is financed by the US Department of Labour and implemented by the International Labour Organization in collaboration with the Russian Ministry of Health and Social Development and the social partners: the Coordinating Council of the Employers Unions of Russia, Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia, All-Russian Labour Confederation and the Russian Labour Confederation.

Another joint project on Comprehensive Partnership Strategies for HIV/STI Prevention



The heads of delegations visited the Moscow city municipal orphanage for children living with HIV

among Young People in the Russian Federation will be completed by December 2005. It is implemented by 6 UN agencies: ILO, UNDP (Lead Agency), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, WHO in two Russia's regions – the Altai Territory and the Volgograd region.



SafeWork – Labour Inspection

Unity beyond Differences: The Need for an Integrated Labour Inspection System

Globalization and changing working conditions are linked to various risks as well as opportunities to merge traditional technical and medical focuses with social, psycho-social, economic and legal areas. For this reason the tripartite partnership is needed to achieve and to preserve decent working conditions and environment, to prevent health and safety risks and to ensure the well-being of workers.

New approaches in which labour inspectors play a central role, by means of enforcing and controlling compliance with tripartite legislation as well as promoting social dialogue, were worked out at the tripartite conference in March. The conference discussed current priorities for labour inspectorates within a global economy and considered how to make best use of their enforcement, monitoring and advisory powers.

In the invitation letter to the tripartite conference, Assane Diop, Executive Director for the Social Protection Sector, pointed out that in its 'Decent Work, Safe Work' program, the ILO entrusts labour inspection with new roles and responsibilities.



From left to right: Gerd Albracht, Development of Inspection Systems, ILO/SafeWork; François Biltgen, Minister of Labour and Employment, Luxembourg; Paul Weber, Director, Labour and Mines Inspectorate, Luxembourg

The conference was jointly organized by the current presidency of the Council of the European Union, held by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, together with the ILO on Integrated Labour Inspection Systems worldwide from March 9 to March 11 in Luxembourg. More than 200 workers, employers and government representatives from 75 countries covering all regions of the world and labour ministers from Mauritius, Jordan and Albania, as well as Vice-Ministers from Vietnam

and Ukraine along with other high-level representatives from International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and International Organization for Entrepreneurs (IOE) came together for this occasion.

ILO principles for labour inspection

- Approach based on prevention, not compensation for health impairment;
- Control and enforcement of OSH legislation – sole task of government inspectors (not trade unions);
- Effective improvement of working conditions only be achieved through worker-employer cooperation; social dialogue in safety committees
- Labour inspection primarily advisory approach, necessary powers of sanctions back-up option

"The effective prevention of occupational accidents and diseases involves a broad participation from governments, workers' and employers' organizations", Prof. Buttler, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, said in his opening speech, adding "that the governments regulatory functions are essential for public peace, for health and safety and for determining our quality of life. In the area of work, labour inspection is the key element ensuring social protection for all."

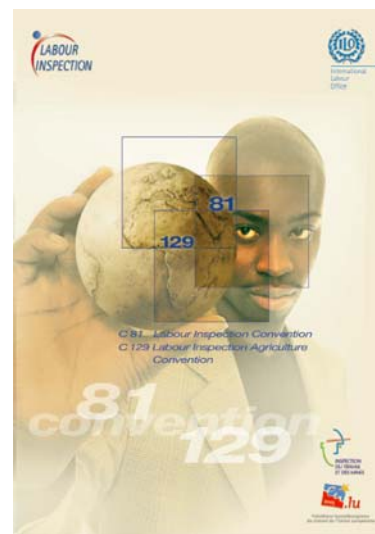
Training was identified as a decisive element for enhancing the competences of inspectors and investing in a preventative culture. For the efficient implementation of labour inspection the participants demanded the purposeful investment of resources for updating the methodology and contents of training materials and the application of active training methods.

The Conference participants further called on the ILO to create an internet-based service for labour inspection to support ILO constituents. This should comprise a labour inspection training system and include policy tools and strategies for labour inspection, and the sharing of best practices.

"The rights and duties of labour inspectors deserve broad political support from governments, employers and workers. The ILO supports and welcomes the initiative of the French Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour

and Solidarity to develop a practical guide on the rights and duties of labour inspectors", says Mr. Takala, Director of the InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment (SafeWork).

Closing the conference, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Mr. François Biltgen has reconfirmed Luxembourg's intention to ratify more than 20 ILO Conventions related to occupational safety and health, as a follow-up to the ILO tripartite audit. This should serve as a good example for other countries. Further commitment to the importance of labour inspection was indicated by the proposed funding of a new labour inspection project in Vietnam. ■



Brochure on Labour Inspection: Conventions 81, 129
Available in English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Final Conclusions of the Luxembourg Conference
Available in English, Russian, French and Spanish.

Download from:
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/labinsp>
<http://www.safework.ru>



June 12 - World Day Against Child Labour

The World Day Against Child Labour was marked on June 12. On that day all ILO workers and partner organizations summed up the results of what had been done and thought over what had to be done in the future to eliminate such abnormal social phenomena as child labor.

This article will tell you about the IPEC Leningrad region project financed by the Finnish government. The project “*Working Street Children in the Leningrad Region – Initial Action to Combat the Worst Forms of Child Labour*” was implemented in 2003-2004 in the two border districts of the Leningrad Region – Vsevolozhsk and Priozersk. The idea of the project was to work out preventive and rehabilitative models of social work.

The project brought together the Govern-



Girls in the Rehabilitation Centre in Priozersk

ment of the Leningrad Region, the REGION-EXPO, a regional project development and analytical centre, municipal authorities, and the Trade Union Federation of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region. Supported by IPEC, the regional government adopted its policy against child labour and its worst forms. Three action programs were implemented in the region targeting the practical needs of working street children, their families, social workers and teachers:

Diet Support to Working Street Girls in Priozersk was based on the Policy Against the Sexual Exploitation of Underage Girls developed by the Priozersk administration. Ten girls permanently lived in the centre, located in the Kommunar village. Another 10 girls attended day-time creativity development programs in the Smena extra-curricular centre located in Priozersk. Psy-

chologists lent their hand to the girls organizing individual and group rehabilitation sessions. All girls were trained in different folk crafts and took a computer literacy course.

Comprehensive Rehabilitative and Preventative Model for Working Street Children and Their Families in the Vsevolozhsk District of the Leningrad Region - Four modules were operational in the socio-rehabilitation centre: street social service (140 children), comprehensive rehabilitation of working street girls (30 girls), self-help groups (27 families), and medical services (150 children).

School-Based Child Labour Monitoring System Established in Selected Territories of the Vsevolozhsk District, the Leningrad Region - The Action Program provided direct support to children who combined school and work, and those at risk of giving up school. The preventative approach was implemented in four selected schools of the Vsevolozhsk District, located in the communities of Vartemagi, Bugry, Rahja, and Sverdlova. The schools were selected on the basis of dropout rates. In total, 55 girls and 65 boys at risk (30 children in each school) were identified and provided with various social assistance.

Behind the lines of the project report there are real lives of real children. Here is a success story of one of them:

Petya V., 15 years old, lived in St. Petersburg with his parents and sister. In 2002 he dropped out from school and started to work and live on the street and was registered as an unattended child. In January 2004 the parents sent the boy to the village of Vartemyagi to his aunt.

In February 2004 the IPEC Action Programme “School-Based Child Labour Monitoring System Established in Selected Territories” was launched in the Vsevolozhsk District of the Leningrad Region. Petya was identified as an at-risk child to be involved in the Programme. Due to the individual psychological, medical and educational programs developed by the school staff the boy was reintegrated in the school and fin-



The library of the Vsevolozhsk Rehabilitation Centre where IPEC has implemented the rehabilitation action program for working street children.

ished the 7th form.

As soon as the Programme started Petya was invited to the child environmental organization “Friends of the Okhta River”. He became an active member of the organization and soon showed immense creative talents. Petya entered a cartoon studio and press centre of the Child

Environmental Centre at the governmental unitary enterprise “Vodocanal SPb”. His article about municipal solid wastes was published in the newspaper issued by the Centre. At the moment Petya lives with his aunt and successfully studies in the Vartemyagi school.



The children with new school items in the Rahja school.

We want to wish Petya and other children who suffer hardship a happier future and meetings with such kind and self-sacrificing people as those from the IPEC project. ■

For more information visit <http://www.ilo.ru/elc/index.htm> or contact Mr. Alexei Boukharov, Programme Officer (with special responsibility for IPEC St. Petersburg) boukharov@ilo.org



International conference on Guarantees of Citizens' Labour and Social Security by Kantemir Gusov

The Moscow State Law Academy (MSLA) on January 19-21 hosted an international conference on Guarantees of Citizens' Labour and Social Security Rights. Labour and Social Security Legislation Application Practices. It was convened by the Russian Association of Labor and Social Security Law, the MSLA, the ILO Subregional Office in Moscow and the Law Department of the Russian Academy of Education.

Taking part in the conference were over 300 delegates – science and education workers, employers, representatives of Russia's national trade union associations, State Duma deputies, as well as representatives of executive bodies of power from Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Lithuania.

The conference heard two main reports. Dr. Sc. (Law) Irina Dmitriyeva, of the Moscow State University, delivered a report entitled "Guarantees of Labor Rights of Citizens. Labour Legislation Application Practices."

State Duma deputy, Cand. Sc. (Law) Valentina Sevastyanova spoke on The

Role of the State in the Realization of Citizens' Right to Pension Insurance and Fringe Social Benefits.

The ILO Subregional Office in Moscow took an active part in the conference. The director of the ILO Moscow Office, Pauline Barrett-Reid addressed the conference with a report entitled "The ILO and the Russian Federation."

Over 70 participants took the floor to present their vision of the subjects raised in the main reports to highlight advantages and successes in labour legislation perfection, as well as weak points some provisions of the current labour and social security legislation still contain.

The delegates formulated a number of concrete recommendations aimed at strengthening the role of legal guarantees in the field of labour relations regulation and other related issues.

Firstly, the speakers unanimously pointed to the need for strict adherence to the norms of the Russian Constitution, generally acknowledged principles and norms of international law and interna-



Dr. Sc. (Law), Professor Kantemir Gusov
President of the Russian Association of Labour and Social Security Law, honored science worker of Russia.

tional treaties to which Russia is a signatory.

Secondly, they warned against any reduction in the level of labor rights and guarantees in the newly approved by-laws, which would constitute a violation of the Russian Constitution's Article 55 (Part 3). ■

Calendar of events of the ILO Subregional Office in Moscow

JUNE

May 31-June 16 - International Labour Conference, Geneva, Switzerland

12 - World Day Against Child Labour

13-17 - Finland-Norway-Russia OSH project consultations with the constituents in Karelia on future cooperation, Kostamuksa, Finland

15 - a roundtable meeting entitled "The role of youth organizations in the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour" at Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Russia

16-17 - International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)/ILO/Federation of Trade Unions of Kazakhstan (FPK) hold conference "Labour Migration as a Poverty Outcome", Almaty, Kazakhstan

13-24 - Start and Improve Your Business Master Trainers' Competency Reinforcement Workshop, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

27-28 - IPEC Strategic Planning Impact Framework (SPIF) Workshop, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

27-30 - Visit to Armenia by Friedrich Buttler, Director of the ILO Regional Bureau for Europe and Central Asia.

28-29 - Seminar "Problems of women labour and health at the present stage and the role of trade unions in their solution", Baku, Azerbaijan

JULY

1 - National Union of Crisis Centers to hold a roundtable meeting on Worst Forms of Child Labour, Almaty, Kazakhstan

4-7 - International Organization for Standardization holds "Safety of Forest Machinery" seminar, Rome, Italy

7-8 - National Workshop on IPEC Strategic Planning Impact Framework (SPIF) and Capacity Building Project on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Central Asian Republics (CAR), Astana, Kazakhstan

11-15 - Staff Training, IPEC CAR Project, Almaty, Kazakhstan

25 - ILO Senior Specialist for Employment Ms. Martina Lubyova will visit Baku, Azerbaijan, and discuss the ongoing the School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS)

- A local economic development (LED) project: a seminar on "Introduction of modern agricultural cooperative principles" to discuss establishment of Farmers' Association, Taldykorgan region, Kazakhstan

AUGUST

12 - International Youth Day (IYD)

23-25 - Subregional practical seminar "Main problems of OSH and social partnership and their solutions", Murmansk, Russia

- LED project: field seminars under the first and third project components and SIYB courses for 12 districts of the Taldykorgan region, Kazakhstan



April 28 - World Day for Safety and Health at Work Armenia: safe work at every enterprise

In 2001, April 28 was proclaimed as the World Day for Safety and Health at Work. The international labor movement on the same day observes Worker Memorial Day to remember all those who have died of occupational injuries.

In 2005 the World Day for Safety and Health at Work was devoted to the prevention of accidents and harm to health at work, especially in the construction industry, which is part of a larger issue of preventive measures to promote health protection and safety culture at work.



Bi-partite safety committee agreement signed by Almaz executive director Sergey Mkrtchyan and trade union chairman Albert Sargsian

According to the ILO's estimates, 2 million people die at the workplace a year, which makes up one fatality every 15 seconds. Every day industrial accidents take a death toll as heavy as the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. The number of occupational injuries is also increasing. Currently it stands at 250 million a year. Over 160 million men and women suffer from occupational diseases.

The ILO has estimated that compensations for workplace accidents and paid sick leaves

equal four per cent of the world's GDP.

This year the World Day events were held in over 100 countries worldwide, including eight out of the ten countries covered by the ILO Moscow Office.

Our article is devoted to Armenia, because this country marked the World Day for the first time. The event has acquired special importance, as the working conditions in the Republic have been deteriorating since the Soviet Union's collapse. However, due to joint efforts by the Government, social partners and the ILO, a new Labour Code and a Law on Labour Inspection were adopted. Therefore the time was ripe to begin work at the enterprise level.

The Almaz joint stock became the first enterprise in the Republic to create a bi-partite safety committee. Almaz is a manufacturer of unique equipment for processing hard surfaces, including diamonds.

On the eve of the World Day the Almaz joint stock gathered at lunch time (work schedule is very intensive at the enterprise) in its conference hall workers, representatives from the government, employers' association, trade unions, ILO representatives, and the media.

"It is a great honor for us to be chosen as the venue of this event. When our social partners proposed to Almaz to create a bi-partite safety committee, both the administration and workers unanimously supported the idea," said Almaz Executive Director Sergei Mkrtchyan in his opening speech. "The thing is that all our workers are trade union members, and social dialogue between the administration and the trade union is working effectively. The signing of the annual collective agreements testifies to this. This year we shall sign a fifth such agreement," he said.

Armenian Minister of Labour and Social Issues Aghvan Vardanyan pointed out that "for the past 15 years labor relations in the Republic

remained neglected. At present, with the ILO's assistance Armenia has managed to make the transition from Soviet-era labor relations to the new ones, based on market economy principles. We have a newly-adopted Labor Code focused on social partnership, and the Law on Labor Inspections".

The Minister disagreed with the prevailing opinion that "the employer wants to put his employee through the wringer." "This is not really so. A good employer cares for the employees' health and safety, as it promotes the enterprise's efficiency."

The ILO Moscow Office's Senior OSH Specialist Wiking Husberg spoke on the importance of social partnership in labor safety.

"To ensure efficiency and sustainability, it is important to maintain social dialogue at an enterprise level. All three partners will see the benefit of this work," he said.

The Labor Minister said in conclusion: "We know of Luxembourg's initiative to formally declare the 28th of April as World Day for Health and Safety at Work. Taking into account the importance of safety at work for our country, we'll seriously think of official observance of the World Day in Armenia as well." ■



In front of the conference hall the ILO displayed a collection of its publications

World Day in the Subregion



Russia: dissemination of printed material to all regional OSH centres; two-day meetings of regional OSH centres and WD conferences in Kazan, St. Petersburg, Bryansk, Kaliningrad, Voronezh, Kemerov, Lipetsk, Novosibirsk, Pskov and Perm, the Leningrad, Orenburg, Ryazan regions, as well as in the Republics of Kabardino-Balkaria and Mari El.



Belarus: OSH contests for enterprises; printed publications; round-table discussions "OSH in construction: current situation, problems, ways of solution"; local seminars for chief labour inspectors.



Armenia: a booklet on social partnership in OSH in Armenian; annex to the national newspaper; creation of a bi-partite safety committee (see above).



Azerbaijan: a five-step campaign on OSH in construction including safety promotion in the media, information campaign for employers, tri-partite meetings on implementation of OSH legislation, workshop and proposals for reviewing the OSH legislation for construction.



Georgia: OSH articles in three national newspapers; a seminar on labor culture and safety; a meeting between the Labor Inspection leadership and Trade Union activists and a tripartite WD conference, which were broadcast by three Georgia's TV channels. Radio Tavisupleba (Freedom) broadcast an interview with a chief labor inspector.



Kazakhstan: two major seminars on the implementation of the Labour Code in Almaty chaired by Labour Minister Gulzhana Karagusova and in

Astana chaired by Deputy Minister Batyrzhan Ashitov; actions in several regions and enterprises on "Occupational safety and health is everybody's concern".



Kyrgyzstan: a dramatized WIND (Work Improvement in Neighborhood Development) seminar in the rural area; a WD seminar and adoption of the national programme for OSH in agriculture.



Tajikistan: a campaign for clean drinking water at construction sites within the framework of the Tenth Anniversary of Clean Water programme; dissemination of booklets, posters on waterborne types of illnesses.



Uzbekistan: seminars on labor culture and safety in Tashkent, Namangan and the Tashkent region; dissemination of printed material.



Journalists undergo training on gender equality

Three media roundtables were organized by ILO-Moscow in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. They were united by one common theme: *'Gender Equality and the World of Work: the Role of Mass Media'*.

These activities were organized under the ILO Dutch-funded project "Increasing Employability of Disadvantaged Young Women and Men and Other Marginalized Groups in the Caucasus and Central Asia through Skills Development and Entrepreneur Education."



Baku, December 2004

Working with the media is a relatively new trend in the work of the Subregional Office. The press is seen today as a key tool for raising public awareness and for forming public opinion on the most acute social and labour issues. Therefore it is not surprising that reporters have become one of key target groups for the ILO in promoting gender equality in the world of work.



Yerevan, February 2005

The purpose of the three meetings was not to cover the whole range of gender issues but to concentrate on the questions within the ILO mandate, e.g direct and hidden discrimination in employment, in remuneration and career development, the distribution of work and family responsibilities, as well as maternity protection and many others. For the organizers

it was vital to ensure two-way communication, to make it a real dialogue, to exchange opinions and to learn from their colleagues from the Caucasus about the gender situation in their countries and in their mass media.

The discussions, which at times got quite emotional, have revealed the following problems: the lack of professional gender experts and gender-disaggregated statistical data; limited contacts between the media and the expert community; difficulties in publishing 'social' articles in today's commercialized press; low public awareness of the gender inequality problems.

The next step in this direction was a three-day media training on gender issues conducted by famous Russian journalists – Nadezhda Anzhgikhina and Svetlana Svistunova, and also Dr. Sc. (Economics) Marina Baskakova and ILO's representatives.

The seminars proceeded in a dynamic, interesting and lively atmosphere. Serious presentations with short documentaries alternated with practical exercises. Journalists imitated live interviews, created imaginary news items on gender equality and analyzed local media information and TV adverts.

Gradually participants learnt how to look at everyday life events through "gender glasses" and felt that their works become deeper and more interesting.

Here are opinions of some partakers:

"During the three days we've got a large amount of new and useful information. Now I have to grasp and think everything over. I do not want to promise that I will start writing on gender equality on the labour market at once, but when I feel mature to do this, I will know for sure, where to find the information. This is very important for a journalist."

"Tomorrow I leave for Greece for a business trip. Now after your training, I can say that in addition to my working program, I will certainly study the issues of women-labour migrants from my country who work there."



Tbilisi, February 2005

"After the seminar it became clear that it is necessary to speak of gender problems openly and write about them more often. Otherwise we will be unable to build a state, where men and women live and work in equal conditions."

"Generally speaking I don't like conferences and seminars – sheer statements and addresses that sometimes sound rather dull. But this training was for the first time really interesting for me. I met with colleagues who actively and lively discussed this challenging issue – gender equality – that requires special attention."

"Earlier I did not pay much attention to gender problems around me, at home or at work. Now I will use gender glasses and keep my eyes peeled for these problems."

A festive ceremony of awarding all the trainees with ILO's certificates wound up the seminars. Journalists will keep these documents as a keepsake of this significant and interesting event that will remind them how important it is to write on gender equality, especially in labour sphere. Soon these events will be followed by national journalist contests of gender publications, similar to the one held in Russia in October 2003. ■





In Brief

■ On February 21- March 18 Baku Confederation of Employers hosted a seminar on training of trainers for Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) and Know About Business (KAB) programs. The same seminars were held on March 28-April 8 at Georgia's vocational training association Pyramid in Baku. Both seminars were held within the framework of the ILO's project Increasing Employability of Disadvantaged Young Women and Men and Other Marginalized Groups in the Caucasus and Central Asia through Skills Development and Entrepreneur Education.

■ The first meeting of the Moscow region tripartite Project Advisory Board of the HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme was held at the Moscow Region Administration premises on April 7. About 20 participants took part in the meeting which gathered all tripartite partners - Sergey Koshman, Deputy Chief of the Moscow Region Administration, who chaired the meeting, Viktor Yegerev, Deputy Speaker of the Moscow Region Duma, Alexander Gushchin, Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Regional Trade Unions' Association and Valery Kulikov, General

Director of the Executive Directorate of the Moscow Region Council of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.

■ The ILO Subregional Office in Moscow jointly with the Nordic Council of Ministers convened an International Conference "Poverty and Income Policy in the Northwestern Federal Okrug of the Russian Federation - Gender Aspects" which took place in St-Petersburg (New Raivola) on April 7-8. The conference focused on developing recommendations and proposals on how to improve the labor and income policy. Over 80 vice-governors, chairpersons of regional and federal trade unions, employers' organizations, representatives of the Russian Parliament, research institutions, international agencies and donor-countries.

■ The State Duma Committee on Women, Family Affairs and Children held the International Meeting "Women-parliamentarians of the CIS countries to protect the rights of family and children" on May 16-17. Taking part in the meeting were delegations of the CIS countries, representatives of the state power legislative bodies of Russia's constituents, Russian NGOs and international organizations. Director of the ILO Moscow Office Pauline Barrett-Reid made a report "Gender

Equality in the World of Work: Family Responsibilities and Maternity Protection" at the round-table discussion devoted to family social assistance. The meeting discussed social and legal protection of the family and children, fulfillment of the CIS countries' obligations to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and development of international contacts between women-parliamentarians of the CIS countries.

■ On May 31 Ms. Pauline Barrett-Reid, ILO Moscow Director, was invited by Vedomosti (an influential daily business newspaper published by Independent Media jointly with The Wall Street Journal and Financial Times) to make a keynote speech at the conference "Personnel Costs Management: Opportunities and Restrictions". The conference, organized for human resources managers from top Russian companies, discussed a wide range of issues, including Russia's accession to WTO and its consequences for the country's economy. Ms. Barrett-Reid made a report entitled "Managing Globalization with Particular Reference to WTO Accession. The Role of Tripartism." *See full text of the presentation at <http://www.ilo.ru/news.htm> (May)*

Cities of the Subregion: Volgograd

In commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Great Victory over Nazi Germany the Board of the International Federation for Peace and Conciliation (IFPC) called the city-hero of Volgograd as a Capital of Peace and Conciliation.



Volgograd became Russia's first city that had been granted this honored title. The 200-day Battle of Stalingrad lasted in and around the city from July 17, 1942 to February 2, 1943 and became a major turning point in



World War II. The Axis powers lost around 1.5 million people - about a quarter of their total manpower on the Eastern Front, and never recovered from the defeat. For the Soviet army, which lost about one million soldiers and civilians during the battle, the victory at Stalingrad marked the start of the liberation of the Soviet Union, leading to eventual victory over Nazi Germany in 1945.

During these years the city was almost

completely destroyed and after the war it was built anew. The site of the famous victory is now marked by a gigantic statue of Mother Russia on the Mamayev Kurgan (the hill of



Mamai). Modern Volgograd is one of Russia's most beautiful cities and one of its largest industrial centres. ■ *To find more on Volgograd <http://www.volgogradcity.ru> (in Russian)*
Photos by Rodger Reid



ILO Subregional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Russia 107031, Moscow, 15 Petrovka st., office 23
Tel.: +7 (095) 933-0810, fax: +7 (095) 933-0820
Web-site: www.ilo.ru E-mail: moscow@ilo.org

Editor: Elena Iskandarova

This newsletter is distributed free of charge. Circulation: 3500 copies

On the issue of distribution please contact: +7 (095) 933-0810 or moscow@ilo.org