

NEWSLETTER



Edition of the ILO Team for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

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Address by the Director

This edition of the Newsletter is dedicated to the recent highly successful official visit of the Director General, Mr. Juan Somavia, to the Russian Federation. The visit took place in Moscow and was from the 15th to 19th of July. The official delegation comprised Mr. Kari Tapiola, Executive Director on Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; Mr. Friedrich Buttler, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia; Mme Tabatabai, Director, Department of Communication; Mme Ching, Cabinet and myself. The purpose of the visit was to hold talks with high-level government, worker and employer representatives on a wide range of economic and social issues critical to one of the ILO's largest members.

The visit was very comprehensive and began with separate meetings with the tripartite constituents Mr. A Pochinok, Minister of Labour and Social Development and Heads of key Departments; Mr. M. Shmakov, Chairman, Federation of Independent Trade Unions of the Russian Federation and leaders of affiliated trade unions; Mr. O. Ereemeev, Director-General, Coordinating Council of Employers' Unions of Russia and colleagues.

There were also meetings with Mr. M. Dmitriev Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade; Mrs. V. Matvienko, Deputy Prime Minister and Mr. M. Kasy-

anov, the Prime Minister. Mr. Somavia paid two courtesy calls on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was received by Mr. I. Ivanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr. A. Denisov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In addition the delegation paid a visit to the State Duma, where they were received by Mr. G. Seleznyov, Chairman of the State Duma and Mr. A. Scivanov, Head of the Labour and Social Policy Committee. The meeting focused on the constructive relationship and collaboration that had developed between the ILO and the State Duma and how it could continue. The delegation was also able to meet the Mayor of Moscow Mr. Yu. Louzhkov and visit a children's shelter. Mr. Somavia and Mr. Louzhkov discussed the important developments that had taken place in the city with particular reference to the relationship between economic development and social protection as well as the tripartite agreement, which is reviewed quarterly.

As well as these official meetings Mr. Somavia gave a keynote address at a Round Table on Decent Work and Globalization, and he hosted a reception, at which he launched the ILO Moscow Office web site on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (see <http://www.ilo.ru/aids/index.htm>). He was also made an honourable Doctor of the Moscow State Social University for his services to Occupational Safety and Health and in particular for the publication of the Russian version of the ILO Encyclopaedia of Occupational Safety and Health.

The delegation paid a visit to the ILO Moscow Office to meet the staff and see a major presentation on the work of the Office across the CIS and the Office Strategy on Integrated Policy De-



J. Somavia and M. Kasyanov

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velopment (<http://www.ilo.ru/about.htm>). Mr. Somavia expressed his pleasure at seeing such an integrated and enthusiastic team.

Throughout his visit Mr. Somavia mentioned how he could feel the strength of Tripartism working in the Russian Federation and how this could be seen in relation to all the key issues: implementation of the New Labour Code, the proposed ratification of Convention 182 on the Worst forms of child labour, the challenges in the field of employment and the ongoing need to extend tripartite working to the enterprise level. He emphasized the need for Decent Work in the Globalized

World and the necessity of maximizing the benefits of entry to the WTO, if the Russian Federation decides to join, in order to be able to minimize the adverse consequences.

It proved possible for the delegation to visit Sergiev Posad and the private apartments in the Kremlin and to sample the food and hospitality of the Russian Federation.

On leaving, Mr. Somavia expressed his hope that he would be able to visit the Russian Federation in the not too far distant future.

*Pauline Barrett-Reid,
Director
ILO Moscow Office*

City of Moscow: Meeting with the Mayor

Mayor Louzhkov opened the meeting by saying that this was his first meeting with the International Labour Organization and that he intended to brief his guests on subjects of interest to the ILO and the City, such as employment, small and medium size business structuring and social protection. He said, "It is easier to decorate a city than to create full employment to its inhabitants".

The Mayor explained that the City's social partnership system was based on a tripartite agreement between the Moscow Federation of Trade Unions (to which belong 90% of Moscow employees), the Government of Moscow and the Confederation of Enterprises and Producers of Moscow. He gave the Director-General a copy of the latest agreement that has helped the City out of the confrontation that existed 12 years ago when Mayor Louzhkov took leadership in the City.

He explained that employment is an extremely important issue at this time. The City has succeeded in restructuring its enterprises, which includes removing them from the City Centre area where land is very expensive. Low unemployment rate can be attributed to the growth in small and medium-sized enterprises. The City has also been able to provide additional financial support to pensioners and low income families as well as subsidies for housing and health care. A critical task of social policy is education. The City has opened 20 new schools a year. The City is touching the problem of street children by building new shelters and trying to reintegrate children into their families. The majority of these children come from outside the area of Moscow.

The Director-General noted that street children is a worldwide phenomenon and that the City is taking humane steps to deal with the issue.

Mr. Somavia thanked the Mayor for his clear presentation of the City's social poli-

cies. "You are searching for a balance to guarantee the protection of those, which the market economy doesn't take care of. These are important world wide problems, but the balance for their solution is not everywhere developed as it is here", said the Director-General.

Mr. Somavia remarked on the beauty of Moscow and invited the Mayor to visit the ILO Headquarters in Geneva to share his experiences on how to balance the needs of the markets with those of people.

After the meeting the ILO Delegation visited a Shelter for Street Children of the Moscow South Administrative Region. The shelter hosts 60 children between 3 and 17 years of age. About one third of them had left for a summer camp. The youngest child was found on the streets after his parents from the Tver region had abandoned him. The children receive education in the shelter and the most talented can go to a nearby school. Most of the children have families. The establishment of such shelters is a very important initiative of the Moscow government, noted the delegation members.



Decent Work in the Global Economy

On Tuesday, July 16th 2002, at the President Hotel a round table discussion was launched with 50 participants – representatives of the ILO, Ministry of Labour and Social Development of Russian Federation, Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FITUR), Coordinating Council of Employers' Unions of Russia (CCEUR), Government officials, experts from academic circles and NGOs.

The ILO Director General opened his address on Decent Work in the Global Economy and stated, "Within the multilateral system, the ILO gives voice to the widespread fear that the present model of economic globalization is exacerbating social tension". He recognized a need for looking for a new kind of "more inclusive form of globalization" and "building legitimacy in the global economy".

"We are looking for a new kind of globalization that is about fairness, accountability and transparency. It is about enterprise and productivity. It is about getting the balance right. But it is also about new ideas, out-of-the-box thinking and imaginative solutions. Fundamentally, we need a concept of globalization that commands legitimacy in the eyes of the voters around the world because they feel that it responds to their fears and aspirations. This cannot be a one-size-fits-all model but rather a broader approach, within which choices can be made through democratic decision-making. We believe that this is possible", said the Director General.

The Director General presented the ILO's Decent Work Agenda- the new integrated approach as a strategic means to poverty reduction in a global economy initiated by the ILO in 1999.

While presenting the four pillars supporting the objectives of decent work: work and employment itself, rights at work, security and social protection, representation and dialogue, the Director General noted that, past experiences have now demonstrated that in the absence of proper institutions and perfect information reducing budget deficit does not necessarily lead to poverty reduction, whereas reducing the Decent work Deficit will do so!

Recognizing the importance of the World of Work in globalization process the Director General identified the large-scale and long-term unemployment to be "the primary cause of poverty, social exclusion and ultimately of political instability".

The Director General expressed his belief in social dialogue as "a foundation of social stability" and a "potent mechanism" for shaping national and international "economically productive and socially just policies". "We believe that understandings among workers' and employers' organizations play a key role, both within enterprises as well as in society at large. We believe that through national and global dialogue a more inclusive form of globalization can emerge", said the Director General.



The Director General stressed that national ownership over the reform programs and national capacity building for socially responsible restructuring to be prerequisites for the success in sustainable development. "For an open global economy to success over time, it can not be seen as the imposition of the powerful over the weak- either among or within countries. Local ownership is essential for long-term legitimacy. People will support the positive practical results they can measure in the life of their families," said the Director General.

The Director General concluded his statement by expressing his confidence to the power of the Russian nation, Russians' creativity and ability to overcome Russia's today's temporary problems. "I have the greatest trust that you will overcome successfully the pains and difficulties of today; that you will show the world the energy and creativity of the Russian soul; and that the Russian people and their families will be able to proudly say that freedom, liberty and democracy brought them a superior quality of life. The ILO is with you."

Following the ILO Director-General's Statement Russian Minister of Labour and Social Development, Mr.Pochinok, Chairman of the FITUR Mr. Shmakov and Director-General of the CCEUR Mr. Eremeev presented their statements and Questions and Answers session was held.

Among others issues the need for the development of a national employment strategy addressing employment generations to cope with unemployment, need for skills development and drawing up of labour market policies to accommodate the structural changes in the labour market resulted from various policy interventions, creation of enabling environment for SME and service sector development, the immense need for raising productivity and competitiveness of national producers and youth employment issues were discussed.

ILO Director General – Honorary Doctor in Moscow



"I am deeply touched by this honour... Now I have roots in the great city of Moscow! I remember the day, when I, as a new Director General, was asked to sign the first ILO grant ever; it was for the Russian translation of the ILO Encyclopaedia. My immediate reaction was one of approval."

Juan Somavia, ILO Director General, was awarded the Honorary Doctorate in the Moscow State Social University at a surprise ceremony witnessed by Minister of Labour, Mr. Pochinok, representatives of trade unions and employers' organizations, several high-ranking officials and representatives of academic circles.

Mr. Somavia who was on a one-week visit in Moscow, speaking at a number of high-level meetings, was able to take the time to participate in the presentation of the printed Russian version of the ILO Encyclopaedia on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

"Russia has a long-standing and recognised tradition of science and your writers have always been the social consciences for suffering people. Let us use our knowledge and our voices to make people aware of safety, to build a safety culture, to convince employers and workers, that safety pays", the DG urged.

He recalled that on 28 April every year the ILO commemorates workers killed at work. The ILO estimates that an unbelievable 2 million workers die every year in the world due to accidents and work-related diseases.

Mr. Pochinok, Minister of Labour, noted, that this is not a book one would read for pleasure, but it is "an indispensable

tool for the occupational safety and health professionals". Safe work and a reduction of occupational accidents and work-related diseases can be achieved. For this, knowledge and exchange of experience is needed.

The translation and publication process has involved tens of experienced OSH experts and scientists from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. The process has inspired Russian occupational safety and health authorities and academicians to start preparing a corresponding OSH Encyclopaedia. This time the ILO is invited to participate.

Russia is combining the traditional information dissemination on paper with a high-tech approach utilising effectively Internet, electronic networking, CD-ROMs and videoclips to transfer information. Russia opened in May 2002 the Internet Academy on Safe Work (<http://www.safework.ru/>), an OSH Internet portal linking Russian language Internet resources and Russian Information System of Labour Protection (RISOT) created by Ministry of Labour and Social Development of RF.

The strategy of ILO/SafeWork in the Russian Federation has been to assist in translating and publishing up-to-date OSH information in Russian and in building a network of OSH information centres and electronic dissemination. This is now bearing fruit, both in Russia and in the neighbouring countries. The ILO Moscow office has received requests for assistance in OSH from six countries in the region.

Presently, the overall OSH system in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is being analysed, in preparation of country OSH profiles, aiming at the development of National SafeWork Programmes and plans of action.

Facts

Russia and the neighbouring countries have experienced and skilled OSH expertise, but many times language forms a barrier for information exchange. Today, 20 000 pages of relevant, scientific and modern occupational safety and health information are available in Russian, comprising the ILO Encyclopaedia on occupational safety and health, ILO Codes of Practice and Guidelines, IPCS chemical safety data sheets, etc.

The ILO Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety is the authoritative source of information on all aspects of the multidisciplinary field of occupational safety and health. The new edition was produced through the collaboration of thousands of recognized experts from over 50 countries, including Russia. There are over 1,000 articles in the fourth edition, complemented by over 1,000 illustrations and easy-to-read tables. The four volumes comprise 4,000 printed pages.

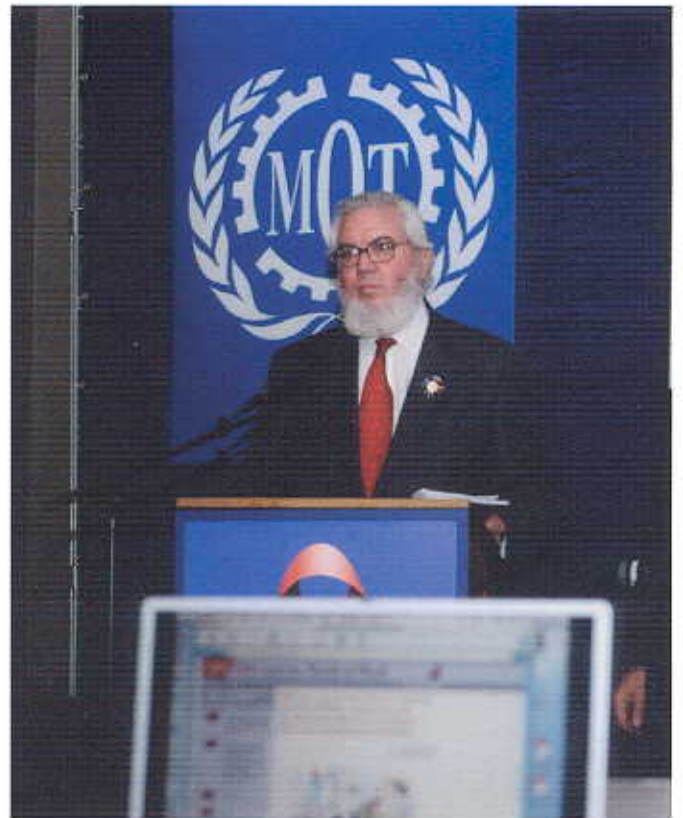
ILO Moscow website on HIV/AIDS

Director General of the International Labour Organization launched the ILO Moscow Web site on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work on the 17 July at the National Hotel prior to his official reception. In his opening speech, Mr. Somavia mentioned the importance of using the workplace as a key instrument in an information campaign on HIV/AIDS.

In reply the Russian tripartite constituents highlighted the threat of the spread of HIV/AIDS in Russia and welcomed this ILO Moscow Office initiative to create an information source that shows ways of addressing the epidemic through the World of Work.

Mr. Pochinok, Minister of Labour and Social Development of Russia underlined that information is the only way of combating the disease. Mr. Ereemeev, President, Coordinating Council of the Employers' Unions of Russia mentioned the economic consequences of the HIV/AIDS on enterprises, at sectoral and national level. Mr. Shmakov, Chairman, Federation of the Independent Trade Unions of Russia spoke out on the intention to conduct awareness raising campaigns among workers.

At the moment the Website (<http://www.ilo.ru/aids/index.htm>) contains basic UN and ILO documents on HIV/AIDS, and materials of the ILO Sub-regional Tripartite Seminar on HIV/AIDS Pandemic – Social Consequences in the CIS Countries. We are planning to increase its database with more materials and links to related Websites. One of the features of this information source is that it is bilingual (Russian/English). More that that, it will include the ILO Code of Practice



on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work and other key documents in national languages of the CIS as soon as they are translated.

HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

HOME > HIV/AIDS

International Labour Organization

Team for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК

AIDS has a profound impact on workers and their families, enterprises and national economies. It is a workplace issue and a development challenge.

Juan Somavia,
ILO Director-General

- ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work [pdf, 204 KB]**
- ILO Sub-regional tripartite seminar on HIV/AIDS Pandemic – Social Consequences in the CIS countries. Indicators for the World of Work.**
- Materials**
- Links**

Trade Unions and Child Labour



J. Somavia handing over the booklet to M. Shmakov

On July 16, Juan Somavia had a meeting with the leadership of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia. The main trade union priorities: decent employment, social guarantees, raising the level of the wages were discussed.

At this meeting an important event took place – Juan Somavia on behalf of the ILO handed over to trade unionists a series of training booklets “Trade Unions and Child Labour” just published in Russian. This emphasizes the role that trade unions can play in the elimination of child labour.

Their role is unique. Unfortunately, this is not a new issue. As it is pointed out in the booklets, in the 19th century trade unions campaigned for some of the earliest laws against child labour. Trade unions have direct access to places of work, they know people, parents and children, and they know every particular situation. And these materials are designed to help trade unions to understand and develop their own specific role and policies to combat child labour.

The child labour problem may seem to be so vast and complex that one reaction might be to say: “What can we do?” These booklets represent at least a part of the answer. Step by step, from one booklet to the next – material represents a sort of plan of action for these trade unionists who are ready to start on this struggle.

First of all it is necessary to understand child labour as a trade union issue and to develop trade union policy. The next step is fact-finding and information gathering about child labour. Then – campaigning against child labour, and then – the main trade union instrument of influence – collective bargaining. These booklets also provide information on how unions can use tripartite structures and the ILO Standards in their work.

It should be added that the booklets were produced through a collective process by trade unionists themselves. Draft booklets were prepared and sent out for comments to many trade union organizations and several workshops in Africa and Asia. They were then revised in the light of this feedback.

The ILO experts expect that the trade union partners in the CIS will be encouraged by many examples of trade union action against child labour described in this publication and use this as an instrument of the trade union work and training.



Meeting with the ILO Moscow staff

On Wednesday, 17 July, the ILO Moscow Office welcomed the Director General and the rest of the official delegation to its premises at Petrovka, 15. The Team has prepared a presentation of the region that covers 10 states, starting with the brief country profiles (area size, population number and several specific acute issues in labour, social, economic and political sphere such as employment/unemployment, poverty level, governance problems, external debt and others). Then the staff members individually presented the activities of the Office, which fall into a number of areas: labour standards, employment, social protection, social dialogue, child labour, gender, poverty and HIV/AIDS and the World of Work. The presentation gave the delegation the opportunity to discuss particular points of regional work with the staff.

