Eurasian Women’s Forum: Towards Peace, Harmony and Social Well-Being

Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation (ILO News) – “At a time when the global economy is still struggling to regain its footing after the massive financial crisis and other economic shocks, and with a new generation of wars and unrest and flows of desperate people around the world, the need for a discussion which aims “Towards Peace, Harmony and Social Well-Being” is urgent, said ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy, Sandra Polaski at the opening of the Eurasian Women’s Forum today.

“The discussion of Peace, Harmony and Social Well-Being is very much in line with the core mandate of the International Labour Organization, which is expressed in its preamble: “Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice,” said Polaski.

An important element of social justice is equality between women and men. On this fundamental dimension, Russia and most of the CIS countries and many others present at this forum perform relatively well, compared to a world where gender equality remains a goal rather than a reality. Overall, in most CIS countries, women hold more than 30 per cent of top positions as legislators, senior officials and managers, which is above the global average. Nonetheless, there is still much room for improvement to come to full gender parity, said Polaski.

Today in most regions women equal or even outnumber men as university graduates and this is true in many CIS countries, as well. In Russia, 60 per cent of adult women have attained tertiary education, which is the highest percentage in any G20 country.

The high level of education among women is a reflection of historical political and cultural traditions in the region, that speaks not only of gender equality, but also of the striving of the entire population for education. This achievement...

Trade Unions of BRICS Countries Address Common Problems

Trade union leaders from Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa took part in the 4th Trade Union Forum of the BRICS countries, which ended in Ufa, Russian Federation, on 9 July. Representatives of International Trade Union Confederation and International Labour Organization have been invited to the Forum as guests of honour. The ILO was represented by Dimitrina Dimitrova, Director of the Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The participants have adopted a declaration, which was handed over to the President of Russian Federation Vladimir Putin during his meeting with the Russian delegation at the Forum led by chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia Mikhail Shmakov.

The document points out, in particular, that over the past two years, half of all working families have experienced either unemployment or underemployment, and 1.2 billion people live in abject poverty.

“Strengthening of BRICS plays a key role in promoting democratic international relations without violation of sovereignty and the right of peoples to self-determination, in improving a multipolar world political architecture without dictate and discriminatory economic sanctions,” the Declaration emphasizes. “Workers in our countries see in BRICS a more equitable model of global relations, which should be built beyond and above traditional East-West and North-South watersheds,” it adds.

The Declaration also called on governments of the BRICS countries “to do their utmost to reduce political tension in the world, to ensure global security and stability, cessation of hostili...
First Ever Meeting of BRICS Labour Ministers Will Be Held in Ufa Next January

On 4 September, on the margins of the meeting of labour and employment ministers of G20 in Ankara (Republic of Turkey), the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation Maxim Topilin met with Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (Geneva), and Director of the ILO Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia Dimitrina Dimitrova made presentations at the panel discussions on Women and Power: World’s Agenda of Sustainable Development and Women and the Evolving Economy. New Opportunities and Challenges.

On 24 – 25 September the Forum will discuss the issues of social well-being and sustainable development, international action to build trust and achieve progress, empowerment of women in evolving economic context, policies and social integration. Today ILO Deputy Director-General Sandra Polaski and Director of the ILO Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia Dimitrina Dimitrova made presentations at the panel discussions on Women and Power: World’s Agenda of Sustainable Development and Women and the Evolving Economy. New Opportunities and Challenges.

“I would like to assure you that our discussions will inform ILO efforts to build strong gender equality dimensions at the international level,” she concluded.

The forum brought together more than 700 guests and participants from more than 80 countries of the world. On 24 – 25 September the Forum will discuss the issues of social well-being and sustainable development, international action to build trust and achieve progress, empowerment of women in evolving economic context, policies and social integration. Today ILO Deputy Director-General Sandra Polaski and Director of the ILO Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia Dimitrina Dimitrova made presentations at the panel discussions on Women and Power: World’s Agenda of Sustainable Development and Women and the Evolving Economy. New Opportunities and Challenges.

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G20 and BRICS frameworks, and we will work closely with your governments and social partners in advancing this objective,” she concluded.

“The outcome of the meeting will be summed up on 3 September in a declaration of the BRICS labour and employment ministers, which is expected to propose specific measures to improve the employment situation, strengthen social protection and promote decent working conditions, thus providing for stable economic growth in the BRICS countries,” Russian labour minister said.

“Considering the priorities of the International Labour Organization, its leading role at the meeting in Ufa is indisputable,” the head of the Russian labour ministry said, adding that interaction with the ILO on the January meeting was already underway.

“The focus of the meeting in Ufa will be on three main themes. These are quality and accessible employment in harmony with workers’ professional qualification and the state of the labour market; more efficient search of employment; and labour mobility,” Maxim Topilin said. “Also on the agenda will be the problem of formalization of the labour market—transition from informal to formal employment, and communications interaction on the issues of labour and employment.”

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According to Maxim Topilin, a meeting of the working group will be held in Moscow on 18-19 November, where delegates from the BRICS countries will discuss the preparations for the ministerial meeting and draft documents to be adopted.

Source: http://www.rosmintrud.ru/

Continued from Page 1

should be proud of, recognized and preserved; and this result of a historical progress should serve as a basis for other pursuits.

As for women’s participation in the economy, the rates in the CIS countries is 54.5 per cent, higher than the global average, and the gender gaps in labour force participation in CIS countries are smaller than the global gender gap. However, the labour force participation rates for working age women in over half of CIS countries have decreased over the last twenty years.

Polaski called on the countries to take steps to reduce these downward trends where they exist, so as not to lose the relatively high level of women’s participation that was built up over earlier decades.

“I would like to assure you that the insights and messages from our discussions will also inform ILO efforts to build strong gender equality dimensions at the international level, including within the

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Source: http://www.rosmintrud.ru/

Discussing Principles of Corporate Social Responsibility

8 July 2015 – The Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP) hosted a meeting, organized at the initiative of the International Labour Office (Geneva), to exchange information on the respective activities of RSPP and the ILO to promote the principles of corporate social responsibility. A substantive discussion took place on the current issues in this field, the projects currently being implemented by the ILO and RSPP, as well as possible areas of cooperation.

Representing the RSPP at the meeting were E. Feoktistova (director) and G. Kopylova (advisor) of the Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility and Non-Financial Reporting, while ILO was represented by Githa Roelans, Head of Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva; Vladimir Curovic, Senior Specialist for Employers’ Activities and John Blixt, Enterprise Development Specialist, both of ILO’s Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

During the meeting, E. Feoktistova presented RSPP’s long-term projects in the field of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, as well as its new initiatives in support of responsible business practices of Russian companies.

Githa Roelans highlighted the priorities of the ILO related to the promotion of the principles of responsible business and introduced ILO’s new product—an electronic tool to guide companies in making use of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy in their business practices.

Acknowledging RSPP’s wealth of experience and its valuable methodological tools, the ILO representatives expressed interest in the dissemination of that experience and in the use of some of RSPP’s tools in their Organization’s practice.

Source: http://rspp.ru
Stand up for Workers Rights, Forum of Trade Unionists Urges

The end of summer proved to be one of the busiest periods in the calendar of trade unions of the Siberian Federal District. On 26 August in Gorno-Altaisk a district conference on “Promotion of social dialogue at federal district level” was organized by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) and the ILO.

The meeting was attended by more than 80 union activists, representatives of the ILO, territorial trade union associations, legislative and executive authorities, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, regulatory and oversight bodies and non-governmental organizations. The conference participants discussed the prospects for the development of social partnership in the Siberian Federal District and exchanged experience in streamlining the interaction between trade unions and regulatory and oversight agencies, advocacy, sharing the best practices of trade union organizations and other issues.

Messages of greetings to the participants in the conference from the head of the Altai Republic and head of the Republic’s government Alexander Berdnikov and presidential envoy to the Siberian Federal District Nikolai Rogozhkin were read out to the participants in the Conference.

The International Labour Organization was represented at the Conference in Gorno-Altaisk by Sergeyus Glovackas, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Rights Advocacy for trade union activists of the Siberian Federal District in his remarks he quoted the words of the President of the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the role that worker rights advocacy for trade union activists of the Siberian Federal District was held Barnaul, the capital city of the Altai Territory. In his remarks at the workshop, Sergeyus Glovackas pointed out that the gathering was the third event aimed at promoting the standards of decent work, organized in the Siberian Federal District with the ILO support.

“What is being done in the Russian Federation in the field of promotion of decent work standards, developed with the help of the International Labour Organization, is very important,” the ILO official said. “We hope that we will be able to extend this experience to other countries in the region,” he added.

On August 27, a similar workshop to discuss the promotion of international labour standards and protecting workers’ rights was held in the capital of the Altai Republic, the city of Gorno-Altaisk.

ILO Officials Discuss Youth Employment Issues with Partners in Azerbaijan

From 6 to 8 July 2015 ILO officials Mikhail Pouchkin and Julia Surina paid a visit to Baku within the framework of project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States.” They had several meetings at the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population and discussed the project-related activities and perspectives.

Also among the issues discussed during the visit were the implementation of active labour market programmes in Baku and Geokchay district, peer review of youth employment policies scheduled for 7 September, as well as the possibility of implementation of a youth guarantee scheme in Azerbaijan.

The visiting ILO officials also had a separate meeting with Mammad Musayev, President of the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the role that the employers’ organizations could play in the upcoming ILO activities, with a special emphasis on youth employment.

Training for Georgian Labour Inspectors

On 12 – 16 September a training for labour inspectors was held in Georgia. This was a second training course organized for officials of the service of labour inspectors recently established within the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs. On top of the agenda of the five-day training session were the workers’ employment rights, with a special emphasis on the elimination of human trafficking and forced labour.

The training course has been sponsored by the Government of Georgia and organized with the assistance from the International Labour Organization. Representatives of the ILO and the International Organization for Migration, as well as the officials of the US Embassy in Georgia dealing with human trafficking, took an active part in the course.

“As a social partner, the Georgian Trade Union Confederation supported the Government’s initiative to organize the training, and made a presentation during the seminar,” a source in the Confederation said.

Sources: http://www.apamy.ge
Young Trade Unionists in Central Asia Forge Closer Ties to Improve their Unions’ Efficiency

On 14 – 16 July, 2015 the Kazakh city of Almaty hosted a sub-regional workshop for young Central Asian trade union leaders on „Trade union youth and their role in expanding union ranks“. The Pan-European Council of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-PERC) and the ILO provided assistance in organizing the event, while the Federation of Trade Unions of Kazakhstan offered technical support. Taking part in the workshop were young trade union activists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan who are in charge of their union’s youth policies and membership expansion activities.

The workshop organizers developed a substantive agenda which included presentations, round-table discussions and exchange of opinions on both conceptual aspects of trade union movement and practical instruments for organizational work.

The participants were greeted by the President of the Federation of Trade Unions of Kazakhstan, Abelyaz Kusainov. An overview of ILO’s work in the region was offered by Sergeyev Gvozdeva, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities at ILO Moscow Office, who wished the young union activists more perseverance in developing and refining their expert potential and competence in order to be able to address the whole range of challenges the trade unions in the region are facing.

Among the resource persons who steered the workshop through practical elements of the agenda was Anton Leppik (Belgium) of ITUC-PERC, who focused on labour and trade union rights issues and the international instruments to protect them. Goda Neverauskaite (Lithuania), PERC Youth Committee president, spoke about the work of young European trade union activists; Dmitry Chuykov (Russia), member Youth Council of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR), moderated the discussion on trade unions and civil society, while Julia Velichko of FNPR’s Murmansk regional trade union federation discussed the communications aspects of recruiting new union members.

Working in groups, the participants were able to articulate their experience and concerns with regard to the hurdles they have to overcome as they step up their efforts to expand their union ranks, as well as develop blueprints for recruiting new members.

“A Breastfeeding and Work – Let’s Make it Work!”

The World Breastfeeding Week is traditionally observed in more than 170 countries. The theme of this year’s World Breastfeeding Week “Breastfeeding and Work – Let’s Make it Work!” highlights the importance of supporting working mothers to breastfeed, says ILO Director-General Guy Ryder in his message on the occasion of the Week.

Ensuring adequate maternity protection and time and space for breastfeeding at work is not only the right thing to do, it also makes economic sense, the ILO head emphasizes. Women who have adequate maternity benefits value their employers, leading to job satisfaction and loyalty. Likewise, breastfed children fall sick less often, resulting in fewer days that care givers are absent from work, the ILO Director-General points out.

Workplace action has a key role in increasing breastfeeding rates.

The International Labour Organization has adopted three maternity protection Conventions that stipulate protective measures for pregnant women and for women who have recently given birth.

Global momentum to support breastfeeding needs to reach new levels, from national to local action. It is time to mobilize the actors in the world of work – governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations – to act in concerted effort with the health, nutrition, and gender equality communities so as to enable working women to breastfeed and reap the benefits both for themselves and for the health and well-being of future generations.

The ILO is committed to working with partners to make the change happen, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder says in his message on the occasion of the World Breastfeeding Week.

Labour Ministry Officials Upgraded Skills in Compiling National Reports

To improve the quality of national reports on the application of the ILO Conventions ratified by Tajikistan, a technical seminar was organized in the country’s capital on 27-31 July, 2015 for specialists of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population. In opening the workshop, First Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population of Tajikistan Emin Sanginzoda welcomed the participants and expressed the government’s appreciation to the ILO for providing systematic and substantial support totripartite partners in the country as part of the Decent Work Country Programme and other joint projects.

The participants considered ILO procedures for the development of international labour standards and their ratification, as well as for preparing national reports on compliance with the ratified Conventions. As a result of the workshop, the participants developed a zero draft reports on the status of the ratified Conventions based on the comments of the Committee of Experts.

The seminar was conducted by ILO consultant on international labour standards Alexander Yafaev.
Round Table on the Implementation of International Labour Standards in Uzbekistan

A round table to review the progress in the cooperation between Uzbekistan and the International Labour Organization (ILO) was held in Tashkent on 5 – 6 August 2015. It was attended by approximately 70 participants representing the tripartite Uzbek constituents – senior officials and staff of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, the Federation of Trade Unions, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as other Uzbek ministries and institutions.

The ILO, World Bank, International Trade Union Confederation, International Organization of Employers, UN, UNICEF, EU and Embassies of the US, Germany, Switzerland, France, Korea and Russia in Uzbekistan were also participating in the round table.

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The representatives of the government, trade unions and employers highlighted measures that are being undertaken to further promote voluntary recruitment and to prevent the mobilization of education and medical personnel for the cotton harvest. Awareness raising and monitoring activities will continue to ensure that children under eighteen years of age are not involved in picking cotton. The ILO officials have been discussing such measures with its partners in Uzbekistan, and the Organization is providing appropriate information and support to them.

It was agreed that the next round table to examine the outcome of the cotton harvest monitoring this year will be organized in November.

SUEK Miners Take Voluntary HIV Testing at Work

A little more than half a year has passed since the leader of the Russian coal industry joint stock company “Siberian Coal Energy Company” (SUEK) joined the ILO’s Global Initiative on “Voluntary and confidential counseling and testing on HIV at the workplace” (VCT@WORK). This summer, the specialists of territorial AIDS centers have completed a programme of HIV sampling activities at SUEK’s enterprises in three territories – the Republic of Khakasia, Republic of Buryatia, Republic of Khakasia, and Krasnoyarsky krai.

The workers and employees of the three coal mines were the first to undergo voluntary and confidential HIV testing and counseling, with members of the administration and trade union leaders of those three sites taking the lead. In the Republic of Khakasia and Krasnoyarsky krai the number of workers willing to take the test was so high that the specialists of AIDS centers had to work longer hours to accommodate all the requests.

The outcomes of the pilot events at the SUEK enterprises in the Republic of Khakasia were discussed by the participants in the round table on “New approaches to addressing HIV/AIDS in the world of work,” in which members of the Republican tripartite commission on the regulation of social and labour relations took part. Natalia Karamasheva, Minister of Labour and Social Development of the Republic of Khakasia, emphasized in her remarks that “current epidemiological situation in the Republic of Khakasia shows HIV infection among the working population, which demonstrates relevance of HIV prevention at workplaces. The SUEK initiative in offering workers to undergo voluntary counseling and testing for HIV at workplaces will be an effective instrument for addressing the HIV issue in the Republic.”

According to Liliya Tsai, Senior expert at SUEK’s OSH department, “making information on HIV available to the employees, organizing voluntary testing and counseling, training sessions and round table discussions to address diverse issues – sometimes sensitive and complex – has generated a keen interest among workers. Before the end of the year we plan to organize, jointly with the ILO focal point on HIV/AIDS in the world of work, similar events in all the regions where our company is present.”

Borodinsky coal mine. Nikolai Laletin, Director of SUEK’s Krasnoyarsk branch, takes HIV test.

Natlia Karamasheva, Minister of Labour and Social Development of Khakasia, speaking at the round table meeting.
Role of Social Partnership in Reducing the Share of Informal Economy – Workshops in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

Developing the cooperation with trade unions of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, this summer the ILO acted as co-organizer of a series of meetings to discuss important issues of labour relations and informal employment. Thus, a round table conference of social partners on “The role of social partnership in reducing the share of informal economy” was held on 10 – 11 July, 2015 in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of the Republic of Tajikistan, one of the most remote high-mountain regions of Central Asia.

That round table also marked the starting point in the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme signed on 24 June by the trade unions, employers and government of Tajikistan. The programme gives special priority to pooling and coordinating the efforts of social partners with a view to reducing the share of informal economy, which is currently one of the most critical challenges the country is facing.

In his remarks at the round table Sergeyus Glovackas, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities of the ILO Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, emphasized the importance of ILO’s Recommendation No. 204 on informal economy adopted at the recent session of the International Labour Conference, and called on all the parties to make efforts for its implementation.

Women Will Actively Work Towards Formalization of Employment

On 15 – 17 September the Georgian town of Kobuleti hosted a sub-regional meeting of leaders of women’s networks within the Pan-European Regional Council of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC PERC). It was attended by 26 participants from eight countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The purpose of the meeting was to present and discuss the recently adopted ILO Recommendation No. 204 on the transition from informal to formal economy.

As part of an inaugural session, the presentation of ILO’s Recommendation No. 204 was made by Sergeyus Glovackas, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities with the ILO Moscow Office; later on he also made in-depth comments about the strategy of the International Labour Organization for promoting social protection and outlined ILO’s recommendations to trade unions concerning the provision of social protection to workers.

Irakli Petriashvili, President of the Confederation of Trade Unions of Georgia, stressed the importance of promoting the ILO Recommendation No. 204 in a region where informal employment in non-agricultural sector covers one half to three-quarters of the labour market.

While the specific situations may vary, in most cases informal employment means poor working conditions, inadequate pay and lack of social protection, he said.

The three-day programme included discussions on various aspects of the participation of women and women’s organizations in the trade union work, particularly in the informal sector. The specific experience of Georgia and Kyrgyzstan was considered. Separate sessions covered matters of national action plans, join the global effort to invigorate the transition from informal to formal employment.

Since the success of this joint effort will largely depend on the progress on the ground, the participants stressed the importance of having the Recommendation No. 204 translated, as early as possible, into national and local languages, so that the provisions of that document could be used as a guidelines at the local level.

In addition to the round table in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, the problem of the reduction of informal employment was discussed at two other meetings organized in Tajikistan in July, with the participation of the ILO. The participants discussed the preparation and managing of a national campaign to reduce the share of informal economy and the role of trade unions of Tajikistan in achieving that goal. The workshops were organized by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan and the leadership and activists of sectoral unions participating in these activities.

Workshops to discuss national campaigns for reducing the share of informal employment and protecting the rights of informally employed workers through social dialogue were held on 18 – 20 and 21 – 23 July in Kyrgyzstan’s Issyk-Kul region. In organizing these events the ILO was joined by the Federation of Trade Unions of the Kyrgyz Republic and the several sectoral trade unions.

Progress of Decent Work Country Programme Reviewed at Workshop in Dushanbe

On 21 – 22 July, a workshop was held in Tajikistan to review the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme for that country and the development of a monitoring plan for it. Taking part in the event were First Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Population Emin Sangimzoda, Chairman of the Employer’s Union of Tajikistan Azizbek Sharipov, First Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Tajikistan Ismoil Sharipov and head of the social protection department at the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic Kudratullo Kurbonov.

The International Labour Organization was represented at the workshop by Senior Programme Analyst at ILO in Geneva Graeme Buckley, Programme Officer at ILO Moscow Irina Melekh, ILO G20 Skills Project Coordinator Tahmina Mahmud and ILO National Coordinator in Tajikistan Sobir Aminov. Other participants included heads of departments and specialists of society-partner organizations.

The participants in the workshop had a good opportunity to review the outcomes, outputs and indicators of the Decent Work Country Programme for 2015-2017 and identify the timeframe for its implementation. As a result of the deliberations and teamwork, a zero draft implementation plan for the Decent Work Country Programme for 2015–2017 has been developed. It has been agreed that ILO would finalize the draft and share it with its constituents – government, employers’ and workers’ organizations – by early September, for their further comments and approval.
Azerbaijan Hosts Third Round of Peer Review of Youth Employment Policies

As part of the project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States,” implemented by the ILO and financed by Public Joint Stock Company LUKOIL, a Peer Review Network focusing on youth employment policies was launched in 2014, with nine countries participating. For the first round of peer reviews, the Kyrgyz Republic was reviewed by the Republic of Armenia in 2014, while for the second round of the review, youth employment policies of Tajikistan were assessed by the tripartite constituents of the Republic of Azerbaijan. On 9 – 11 September 2015, Azerbaijan’s capital city of Baku hosted the third round of the peer review of its youth employment policies, programmes and institutions.

High-level experts from labour ministries of the participating countries, representatives of social partners from Kazakhstan, Russian Federation and Uzbekistan and three Russian regions (Kalmykia, Perm Territory and Khanty-Mansy Autonomous Region) and ILO officials took part in the event aiming at developing joint approaches in addressing youth employment issues, which are common to the countries of the sub-region. The examination and appraisal of Azerbaijan’s performance in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating youth employment policies and programmes was conducted by the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan (Uzbekistan was invited as an observer), based on the prepared national overview and an on-site visit by the evaluators to Baku.

In his opening remarks, the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Azerbaijan Salim Muslimov referred to a series of measures taken in that country towards enhancing the level of education and employment and strengthening the social protection of young people. Deputy Chairman of Azerbaijan Trade Unions Confederation (ATUC) Agil Dadashov spoke about the unions’ active participation in programmes and events aimed at promoting youth employment in the country.

Mammad Musayev, president of the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) of Azerbaijan, focused on the positive impact of the private sector, as well as public-private partnerships, on the youth employment situation in the country. Olga Koulaeva, Senior Employment Specialist at the ILO Moscow Office, described as useful the measures being taken in Azerbaijan with a view to enhancing young people’s vocational skills to match the requirements of the labour market. The ILO would continue to support the member states’ efforts towards that end, she said.

As the CIS countries are all facing similar youth employment challenges, the ILO’s Youth Employment Project aims to support the governments and social partners in the CIS in their search for good practices and models promoting job creation and youth employment. The practices, which were presented during the on-site visit by the evaluators, included such innovative tools as an electronic system for registering labour contracts, which facilitates the transition from informal to formal economy. Another practice included special programmes for the rehabilitation of, and promoting the employment among, the people with disabilities.

In order to present, discuss and summarize the findings of the third peer review round of youth employment policies, the tripartite members of the youth employment network from the nine participating countries will gather in Sochi, the Russian Federation, on 13 – 17 October 2015.

At that meeting, on the basis of discussions and taking into account the international experience, international experts, the network members and the ILO representatives will be expected to formulate specific policy recommendations on youth employment.

Today we recognize and commend the civic engagement of young people who, time and again, are showing themselves globally to be forces for positive change. Often the changes they are seeking are connected to the world of work: they are mobilizing and speaking out for a better future with decent work. Their success matters to us all.

It is now eight years since the start of the global financial crisis, and it is encouraging that global youth unemployment rates have finally stabilized. However, this rate remains well above its pre-crisis level, and the labour market transition for young women and men, particularly the most disadvantaged, is still an uphill battle.

Tackling the global youth employment challenge calls for action on many fronts but one thing is certain – policy-making needs to heed the voice of young people if it is to respond effectively to their needs and aspirations. Young people in their diverse contexts and realities know well the often simple measures that could best help them on to the ladder of opportunity and onto the road to realizing their ambitions and dreams.

Young people are also investing their energy in solidarity with others. They are often champions for ethical production, for workplaces free from child labour and forced labour, for equality of treatment and for the right to organize as well as for economic activities that protect the planet and people’s livelihoods.

The world of work must stand shoulder to shoulder with young people in their stand for decent jobs and social justice.

Today, as we celebrate the civic engagement of youth, we call on all actors in the world of work – employers and their organizations, workers’ organizations and governments – to actively foster the inclusion of youth making space for young people in their organizations and activities and listening to the voice of youth.

By encouraging the participation of youth in their organizational activities, in social dialogue processes and labour market institutions, and by upholding the rights of young people in the labour market, world of work actors can lend powerful support to the inclusion of young people. This will be particularly important in realizing the vision of the 2030 Development Agenda that no one should be left behind.
Promoting Decent Work Standards – Focus of Conference in Yakutsk

In late September, Yakutsk, the capital city of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), hosted the international conference on “Promotion and implementation of standards for decent work in the federal districts of the Russian Federation.” The purpose of the three-day event, jointly organized by the International Labour Organization and the Far Eastern branch of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) was to discuss the role and the importance of international labour standards and trade union rights in the implementation of the decent work standards in the field of social protection, and social standards in wages in the Far Eastern Federal District.

The conference was attended by leaders of FNPR, government representatives of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), members of the State Assembly (IL Tumen) and the republican government agencies, representatives of Yakutia’s trade union federation and activists of regional union associations. Sergeyus Glovackas, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities at ILO Moscow office was participating on behalf of the International Labour Organization.

The conference started on September 22 with a seminar on labour rights for Yakutian trade unionists and their colleagues in the Far Eastern Federal District. In opening the event, the Deputy Chairman of Trade Union Federation of the Republic Secretory of FNPR and vice-rector of the Academy of Labour and Social Affairs, described the conference as “highly relevant and meaningful event for the Far Eastern Federal District.” “What is becoming increasingly important today is not the rights advocacy by professionals – lawyers and law inspectors. What is important is the rights advocacy by the grass-root FNPR organizations,” he emphasized.

In their remarks, most participants expressed their appreciation of the role and significance of ILO’s international labour standards for the development and harmonization of labour relations in Russia’s eastern regions. Thus, according to A. Solovyov, deputy head of the government of Yakutia, the republic’s administration “fully supports the basic conceptual provisions and practical approaches of the International Labour Organization concerning the improvement of the quality of life, which define decent work as an important goal for national action.”

The delegates took a keen interest in the round table on youth employment in the Far Eastern Federal District. They had a good chance to hear a first-hand assessment of the situation from representatives of the Yakut youth themselves. The speakers did not merely spell out their views of the situation, but also formulated concrete proposals on possible ways of addressing the issues.

Stressing the importance of the Yakutsk conference, Sergeyus Glovackas pointed out that it was ILO’s first event of this kind in that remote region. “I’ve heard a lot about Yakutia, but what I saw here is well beyond and above my expectations,” he admitted. “I saw a very serious approach to the provision of decent work conditions, both at the level of trade union organizations, and at the government level. I can say with certainty that Yakutia is the republic of social partnership, and many regions will benefit from learning and using its experience.”

The outcome of the International ILO – FNPR Conference in the Far Eastern Federal District will be summarized in recommendations to the executive and legislative authorities and trade union organizations. —

Valentina Kirillina stressed the importance of the ILO’s steadfast protection of workers’ interests and their right to decent working conditions and secure and adequate social protection. Nikolai Gladkov, Alexander Solovyov: “Yakutia’s government fully supports the basic conceptual provisions and practical approaches of the International Labour Organization, which define decent work as an important goal for national action.”

ILO Participates in Moscow International Book Fair

The Moscow International Book Fair (MIBF) remains the most representative forum for publishers, printers, students and academics and general public in Russia. At this year’s 28th Moscow Book Fair, which was one of the top attractions at the All-Russian Exhibition Centre from 2 to 6 September, 400 publishers presented more than 100 000 titles of their publications.

The ILO joined four sister UN agencies – OHCHR, UN-HABITAT, UN Information Centre and WHO – to form a common UN stand, and it was the 11th collective participation of UN agencies in Moscow in the international book fair in the Russian capital.

Overall, over 3,500 book fans visited the UN booth this year, proving that the public information and advocacy materials produced by the United Nations and its system agencies continue to attract a lot of attention on the part of Russian student and expert communities and public at large. Collectively the five participating UN system agencies distributed about 9,000 copies of publications, booklets and magazines, both in print and electronic formats.

Arguably the most generous contributor to the UN exhibition at MIBF-2015 in terms of numbers and variety of materials, ILO staff were pleased to note that their agency’s publications on decent work, youth employment, social justice and other issues were among the most popular at the UN stand. In fact, many of our publications were gone long before the fair closed on 6 September. That is another indicator of the relevance of the ILO’s messages that resonate well with the aspirations of people in the region.
Social Protection Should Be Based on International Standards

On 16 – 17 September Tajikistan’s capital city Dushanbe hosted a workshop on “International labour standards on social protection,” organized with the support from the ILO for representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan and other government agencies.

The participants were welcomed by Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan Novruz Jafarov and First Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment Emin Sangirzoda. Both of them emphasized the topicality of such seminars and their importance for raising awareness in the country about the international labour standards in the field of social protection and their application at the national level.

As part of the workshop’s “educational” session, the participants reviewed the experience of the Republic of Moldova in providing the social protection to migrant workers and the ratification procedure and stages of application of ILO Convention No. 183 concerning maternity protection.

The goal of the seminar was to raise the level of professionalism among the specialists directly involved in the implementation of the social policy and ILO’s international standards in the field of social protection, as well as the study of foreign experience in addressing the issues similar to those faced by the Republic of Tajikistan.

At a working meeting, representatives of the ILO and Tajikistan’s Labour Ministry officials agreed that the next workshop on “International standards of social protection and their alignment with national standards” should be held in November 2015.

Our PUBLICATIONS

All publications can be found at our website www.ilo.ru

World Social Protection Report 2014/15

In Russian

This is a Russian translation of the ILO’s global report on the state of social protection systems worldwide. Since its creation, the ILO has been supporting countries to develop and implement social security systems for all. There has been tremendous progress since then, and today all countries in the world have a social security system.

Two years after the adoption in 2012 of the groundbreaking ILO Recommendation Concerning National Floors of Social Protection (No. 202), this World Social Protection Report offers a comprehensive body of evidence both on the impressive progress made over the last few years, and on the remaining gaps that need to be filled.

With its global scope and valuable statistical annexes, this document is an essential reference for anyone interested in social protection. It may become a useful tool for practitioners and provide the basis for better informed policy-making.

Good practices on the elimination of child labour in Central Asia

In Russian and English

Good practices are an essential element of learning by doing; they contribute to the dissemination of information about effective innovative measures to tackle child labour, create a necessary knowledge base and help move toward our ultimate goal – the elimination of child labour.

The accelerated decline in child labour around the world in recent years has shown that, with the right policy mix and tripartite engagement, real and sustainable progress can be made. The success of the ILO’s constituents in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is a fine example of what works.

This publication, along with highlighting the advocacy issues in these three countries, present 15 examples of good practices from there, for further distribution, so that the politicians and decision-makers in Central Asia and beyond could learn useful lessons and, where appropriate, adapt and adopt them in the light of specific national conditions.
ILO Welcomes 2030 Development Agenda as Major Breakthrough for World of Work

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has welcomed the new Sustainable Development Agenda agreed by the United Nations’ 193 member states as a major breakthrough for the world of work.

“Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” is due to replace the Millennium Development Goals starting next year. The vision of decent work for all runs across the entire agenda with a specific goal to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda – which contains 17 sustainable development goals and 169 indicators – was formally adopted by world leaders gathering at a United Nations special summit on 25 September 2015.

Labour Inspectors from Kyrgyzstan and Russia Share Experience

Some thirty delegates, including representatives of Kyrgyz and Russian labour inspection bodies and ILO officials, took part in the annual conference of the Regional Alliance of Labour Inspections for the CIS countries and Mongolia, which was held on 15 July in the Kyrgyz city of Cholpon-Ata. Held under the general title: “Experience sharing in using national OSH profiles in the work of labour inspections,” the event was organized within the framework of the ILO technical cooperation project “From the Crisis Towards Decent and Safe Jobs” financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Ivan Shklovets, deputy head of the Russian Federal Labour and Employment Service (Rostrud) presented a new concept for a more efficient enforcement of legislation on labour inspections and occupational safety in the Russian Federation for 2015 – 2020. The concept introduces greater transparency and clarity into the work of labour inspection, as well as motivation and internal control at enterprises as a means of improving interaction between employers and workers.

G20 Countries Caught in Weak Economic and Jobs Recovery Spiral

The current pattern of slow economic growth and insufficient job creation in G20 countries reflects a self-reinforcing cycle of weak wage and income growth, leading to deficits in aggregate demand, low business confidence and investment and insufficient labour market recovery.

A caution to that effect is articulated in the joint report entitled G20 labour markets 2015: Strengthening the link between growth and employment prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and World Bank Group (WBG) for G20 meetings that took place in the first days of September in Ankara (Turkey).

Kazakh Trade Unions Move to Cut Down the Size of Informal Economy

On 21 – 22 July 2015, a subregional trade unions’ workshop on “Preparation and Implementation of National Campaign for Informal Economy Reduction” was held in the Issyk-Kul region of Kyrgyz Republic. At the workshop, delegates from the participating sectoral unions formulated goals and objectives of the campaign, identified potential partners and discussed the composition of executive bodies to coordinate and run the campaign.

The participants also developed operational blueprints for each participating sectoral trade union and for the Federation of Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan. The workshop was facilitated by ILO external collaborator Vsevolod Barboniagru from Moldova.

Azerbaijan: Youth Employment Seen as a Priority

“In Azerbaijan, the unemployment rate among young people aged 15-24 years is 13.5 per cent, while in the EU it amounts to 20.6 per cent, the country’s Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population Salim Muslimov said, recalling that the ILO had listed Azerbaijan among champion countries on youth employment.

Besides, according to ILO, this year Azerbaijan ranks among 41 countries that have a comprehensive legal framework and practical work experience in promoting effective youth employment,” the labour minister pointed out in his remarks at the cabinet meeting on 14 July, which was convened to discuss the outcomes of socio-economic development of Azerbaijan in the first half of 2015.

Trade Union Representatives of Transport Workers Gathered in Baku

From 30 September to 1 October in Baku the Republican Committee of Independent Trade Union of Railway Workers of Azerbaijan hosted an international workshop. It was attended by delegations from 15 trade union organizations of transport workers from the CIS and Baltic countries, as well as representatives of the ILO and the International Transport Workers’ Federation, the International Confederation of Railway Workers’ and Transport Builders’ Unions.

The main theme of the working meeting was “The establishment of trade union organizations in multinational companies and private enterprises (ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 – their significance, the experience and problems of implementation),” At the workshop, Sergejus Glovackas, Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities at ILO Moscow office, presented a report on the implementation of ILO Conventions.