



EIGHTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Developments in the United Nations**Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction.....	1
I. Major United Nations events	3
1. Millennium Summit.....	3
2. Special Session of the General Assembly: World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World (Copenhagen+5)	4
3. Special Session of the General Assembly: Women 2000 – Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century (Beijing+5).....	5
II. Regular United Nations events of particular interest to the ILO, 2000-01	5
1. Millennium Assembly, 2000	5
2. Economic and Social Council, 2000-01	7
3. Commission for Social Development.....	7
4. Commission on the Status of Women	8
5. Commission on Human Rights and treaty bodies.....	8
6. Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	8
III. Forthcoming major United Nations events, 2001-02: Involvement in preparatory processes	9
1. Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCIII).....	9
2. General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS	10
3. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.....	11

	<i>Page</i>
4. Follow-up to the World Summit for Children: General Assembly Special Session on Children	11
5. Second World Assembly on Ageing.....	12
6. World Summit on Sustainable Development: Review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and its Agenda 21, 2002 (Rio+10)	12
7. International Conference on Financing for Development	13
IV. Special partnerships	14
1. Global Compact.....	14
2. High-Level Youth Employment Policy Network.....	14
V. Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).....	15

Introduction

1. Like previous such papers submitted to the Governing Body since its 259th Session, the present paper gives an overview of developments in the United Nations intergovernmental and inter-agency bodies and initiatives of particular interest to the ILO during the year 2000 and the beginning of 2001. It highlights the ILO's own participation and involvement in such activities, focusing on the role and place that ILO values and concerns have come to occupy in the international debate being conducted under the aegis of the UN system.
2. The year was characterized by a significantly greater number of high-profile events closely related to the ILO's spheres of competence. Central to these is globalization and its impact on the social and economic issues addressed in the ILO's mandate. The challenge of making globalization work for everyone constituted the *leitmotiv* of all major deliberations and events, bringing to the fore the social dimension of globalization which is at the core of the decent work agenda of the ILO. At the [Millennium Summit](#) in September 2000 it was widely recognized by Heads of State and Government that while globalization creates unprecedented opportunities, its benefits and costs are unequally shared. Opportunities for sustained economic growth and development in the world are still overshadowed by intensified poverty, unemployment and social instability. The challenge for nations, and for the international community, continues to be to enhance the benefits and alleviate the negative impact of globalization, and to combat poverty, which is increasingly viewed as the goal of all development.
3. Another challenge for the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions springs from the traditional dichotomy between economic and social policy: in the past adequate prior analysis of the social impact of economic policies in spheres such as macroeconomic stabilization, international financial policies, structural adjustment or the transition to market economies was rare. Not only did this lead to excessive social costs, but the social tensions to which it gave rise also undermined the effectiveness of the economic policies themselves. Here too there is growing awareness, increasingly reflected in United Nations discussions, that the social and economic dimensions of policy must be integrated. There is a growing convergence of opinion that the social partners, business and civil society have a key role to play both within United Nations intergovernmental discourse on these themes, and also in achieving development objectives. To build such partnerships on appropriate foundations – which in the case of the ILO derive from its Constitution – is a significant challenge for the United Nations. References to the need to assert and sustain acceptable international labour standards – and their relevance to a global market economy – are increasingly heard in debate in the United Nations. Moreover, the importance of creating jobs, securing basic rights at work, enhancing social protection and promoting social dialogue has rarely been more globally evident. In this sense the ILO's concerns, and the important role of the Organization in addressing them, have seldom in the past had so high a profile on the international agenda.
4. The past year has seen continuing emphasis on the core issues of security and the organization and resourcing of peacekeeping operations. The concept of security has been widened to include such issues as HIV/AIDS. Moreover, member States have placed increasing demands on the UN system to undertake civil administration in the wake of political and military dislocation, as well as in preventing conflict and in coordinated assistance during the phases of reconciliation, reconstruction and development after conflict. These developments have important implications for the promotion of decent work through fundamental rights, employment creation, social protection and the formation of social institutions during periods of economic and social reconstruction. Increasing demands also have serious resource implications for the UN system. While

these issues are still unresolved, 2001 nevertheless dawned with welcome progress on some of the resource questions that had dogged much recent dialogue between governments. This bodes well for the capacity of the United Nations to respond to pressing world economic and social concerns, which include the drive for decent work.

5. Over the past year these issues have been addressed through an increasing range of system-wide coordination activities in the form of substantive contributions to reports and the active participation of United Nations organizations and agencies in meetings of preparatory committees, expert meetings and both formal and informal consultations related to major international initiatives. This trend in working methods is intended to draw, in a much more important and systematic manner than in the past, on the complementary mandates, knowledge and expertise of the various members of the system. It is also aimed at ensuring greater consultation of all the actors involved, and this trend seems set to develop still further. Moreover, the various global conferences initiated and convened during the 1990s set ambitious new global targets in various fields, and designing the most effective procedures and mechanisms for assessing the outcomes of global conferences and measuring their impact is the subject of ongoing debate in the United Nations. At the highest inter-agency level, the demands placed on national and international systems by the new global environment were the subject of substantive discussion by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) at its two regular sessions of 2000, which involved the Secretary-General and the Executive Heads of the UN system agencies.¹
6. This paper highlights the fact that, as a result of such demands, the ILO is playing an increasingly dynamic role in the international arena and the UN system. As the importance of the ILO's concerns receives growing recognition, so the ILO is being called upon to make its values, expertise and experience available to a growing circle of actors, and to connect its work with a broader spectrum of intergovernmental and inter-agency processes. The ILO has increasingly sought early strategic involvement in the planning of new global events and conferences and has become a key player in the follow-up to the agreements reached and in the implementation of the plans of action formulated. Through that involvement, it has furthered the development of an integrated and coherent decent work agenda with significant visibility and resonance in the international debate and with widely recognized economic and social implications. This has required a greater degree of Office-wide consultations and cross-sectoral approaches and the stronger involvement of the various technical sectors and other units of the ILO in terms of substantive contributions, participation and representation. It has also required intensive contacts and regular working relationships with its partner organizations throughout the UN system. The ILO's involvement in the preparatory processes of forthcoming major events is the subject of a new, separate section of this paper.
7. Efforts to find new methods of addressing problems have resulted in the ILO's entering into a number of special partnerships. These bring together international institutions, civil society and private sector organizations, and national governments, in pursuit of common goals. Two examples are highlighted in this paper: the United Nations Secretary-General's [Global Compact](#) and the *High-Level Youth Employment Policy Network*, also initiated by the Secretary-General and deriving from his [Millennium Report](#).
8. The ILO's Bureau for External Relations and Partnerships will shortly launch a new website that will feature, in addition to information on international developments, partnerships and civil society institutions, an overview of international events of relevance

¹ See below, section V.

to social and labour issues. This site will highlight the ILO's involvement and will include extensive links to related websites, both in the ILO and elsewhere, as well as information on the agenda of the events and related developments.

I. Major United Nations events

1. Millennium Summit

9. The fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly opened on 5 September 2000 as the [Millennium Assembly of the United Nations](#), and a [Millennium Summit of the United Nations](#) was convened from 6 to 8 September 2000, involving Heads of State and Government. The ILO delegation was led by the Director-General.
10. The Secretary-General presented a report entitled *We the Peoples: The United Nations in the Twenty-first Century*. Its key proposals are the promotion of freedom from want, freedom from fear, a sustainable future, and renewal of the United Nations Organization. Presenting it, he said that no calling was more noble, and no responsibility greater, than that of enabling men, women and children to make their lives better; only when that begins to happen will we know that globalization is indeed becoming inclusive, allowing everyone to share its opportunities.
11. At the conclusion of the three-day summit, the [United Nations Millennium Declaration](#) was adopted. It states values, principles and objectives for the international agenda. It also sets deadlines for action, chief among them being the global target of *halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015*. Among the steps aimed at development and poverty eradication, the Declaration contains commitments to make the right to development a reality for everyone. Participants agreed to strive to ensure the success of the forthcoming [Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries](#)² and of the [High-Level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development](#).³ Other commitments included steps to strengthen United Nations cooperation with national parliaments, with the Bretton Woods institutions and with the World Trade Organization, and to give opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes.

Events associated with the Millennium Summit

12. As part of preparations for the Millennium Summit and Assembly, civil society organizations, in collaboration with the United Nations, held a [Millennium Forum](#) at UN headquarters (22-26 May 2000). Over 1,400 representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations gathered to discuss visions for the future of the United Nations. The forum prepared a document for the Secretary-General's consideration on the themes of peace, security and disarmament, development and poverty eradication. The Director-General [addressed the opening session](#) of the forum.⁴

² See below, section III.1.

³ See below, section III.7.

⁴ Speech: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/speeches/somavia/2000/newyork.htm>

13. Also prior to the Millennium Summit, the first Millennium World Peace Summit (28-29 August 2000) sought to coordinate religious and spiritual leadership as a driving force for building tolerance, fostering peace and encouraging inter-religious dialogue between all regions. The Director-General made presentations at three sittings of the Summit. He also [spoke](#) as a special guest at the Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments which preceded the Millennium Summit,⁵ and urged parliamentarians to develop global policies for promoting decent work, and to make a commitment to ratify and to implement the ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).
14. A [State of the World Forum](#) ran in parallel with the Millennium Summit, involving Heads of State and representatives of the business sector, trade unions, civil society organizations, science and technology, and religious and interfaith communities. The [Director-General addressed the forum](#) on "The knowledge economy and the future of work",⁶ and participated as a panellist and facilitator of various sessions.

2. **Special Session of the General Assembly: World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World (Copenhagen+5)**

15. The twenty-fourth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World" was held in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000, following an extensive preparatory process in New York. The ILO was heavily involved throughout the process and during the Special Session itself. The ILO delegation was led by the Director-General, and included the Officers of the Governing Body. The outcome document adopted by consensus on 1 July 2000 includes a political statement on the centrality of more equitable, socially just and people-centred societies, an assessment of developments since the World Summit for Social Development, and a wide array of initiatives.⁷
16. In the text of the brief [Political Declaration](#) (Part I of the outcome document), member States stressed that "full respect for fundamental principles and rights at work" was one of the "essential elements for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development". ILO concerns were also well reflected in the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (Part II of the document).
17. A number of further initiatives adopted at the Special Session were based on proposals contained in the ILO's contribution to the preparatory process entitled [Decent work and poverty reduction in the global economy](#).⁸ Of particular significance was the explicit endorsement of the ILO's decent work programme and its four strategic objectives. Member States also recognized the "need to elaborate a coherent and coordinated

⁵ Speech: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/speeches/somavia/2000/ipu.htm>

⁶ Speech: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/speeches/somavia/2000/nysep.htm>

⁷ For a detailed account of the preparatory process, see [GB.276/ESP/3](#); [GB.277/ESP/3](#) and [Add.1](#); for a detailed account of the Special Session and its outcome, see [GB.279/ESP/3](#).

⁸ [Decent work and poverty reduction in the global economy](#), submitted to the Governing Body in March 2000.

international strategy on employment” and supported “the convening of a World Employment Forum by the ILO”.

18. They further undertook to support “continued efforts towards ratifying and fully implementing the ILO Conventions concerning basic workers’ rights ... [and] to respect, promote and realize the principles contained in the ILO Declaration” and committed themselves to support and participate in the global campaign for the immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including by promoting universal ratification and implementation of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). Member States stressed the “need for close cooperation between the ILO, UNICEF, the World Bank and other relevant actors” in the fight against child labour.

3. **Special Session of the General Assembly: Women 2000 – Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century (Beijing+5)**

19. The twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, entitled [Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century](#), was held in New York from 5 to 9 June 2000. This event provided an opportunity to assess the progress made and obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action agreed at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), and to identify further action and initiatives to achieve its full implementation. The General Assembly adopted by consensus a Political Declaration and an outcome document. Following its active involvement in the preparatory process, the ILO had strong representation and organized and participated in various side events during the Special Session.⁹
20. The outcome document reaffirms the Beijing [Platform for Action](#) as the reference for governmental commitment to women’s rights in the 12 critical areas of concern and emphasizes the gender dimension of the challenges posed by globalization. It stresses the gender effects of changing patterns of production, work and accelerated technological advances in information and communication, pointing out their uneven impact on women. The outcome document calls for measures to ensure that women reap the benefits rather than bear the burdens of globalization. The agreed text also calls for the respect, promotion and realization of the principles contained in the ILO [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) and asks member States to “strongly consider ratification and full implementation of ILO Conventions which are particularly relevant to ensuring women’s rights at work”.

II. **Regular United Nations events of particular interest to the ILO, 2000-01**

1. **Millennium Assembly, 2000**

21. Following the Millennium Summit, the Millennium Assembly opened with a plenary debate (12-22 September 2000). Several delegations called for improvement of the international financial system so as to ensure that all can benefit from globalization.

⁹ For a detailed account of the Special Session and its outcome, see [GB.279/ESP/4](#).

Frequent reference was made to the digital divide between developed and developing nations. Participants appreciated the efforts by the Secretary-General to create a UN Digital Task Force to bring together governments, development institutions, private industry, foundations and trusts to boost information technology opportunities in developing countries. Other commitments included strengthened attention to the special needs of Africa.

22. Issues raised in the plenary debate included the use of children in armed conflict and under conditions of bonded labour. Many delegates referred to the unacceptably high level of unemployment, particularly among young people, and to the importance of job security. They foresaw new partnerships between the United Nations, civil society and the private sector in promoting investment and economic development, in particular in the least developed countries.
23. The Millennium Assembly had before it a report by the Secretary-General (A/55/344) on the twenty-fourth Special Session of the General Assembly entitled “World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World”. In general, speakers stressed the need to close the gap between the developed and developing countries. The cancellation of the external debt of the heavily indebted poor countries and the increase in official development assistance were the most important measures mentioned by the G.77 countries.
24. In line with usual practice, a number of agenda items of concern to the ILO were assigned to the Economic and Financial (Second) and the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural (Third) Committees of the Assembly. These addressed issues including globalization, poverty eradication, human rights, financing for development, business and development, the advancement of women, the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the rights of the child, of migrant workers, and of indigenous and tribal peoples.
25. This provided an opportunity for the ILO to highlight the [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) and its Follow-up, and to publicize ILO programmes and activities. References were made to the ILO’s activities in many of the reports of the Secretary-General, in resolutions submitted by these two committees, and in the statements by national delegations.
26. Thirty-two resolutions relating to human rights were adopted at the Millennium Assembly, and the ILO was asked by delegations to provide supporting information in several specific cases. A resolution on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families¹⁰ expressed deep concern at the growing manifestations of racism and other forms of discrimination and degrading treatment against migrant workers in different parts of the world. A resolution on the protection of migrants¹¹ called for the Assembly to strongly condemn all forms of racial discrimination and xenophobia with regard to employment, vocational training, housing and other services. In a resolution on the situation of human rights in Cambodia¹² the Assembly noted with concern the prevalence of child labour. A resolution on Myanmar¹³ deplored

¹⁰ A/RES/55/88.

¹¹ A/RES/55/92.

¹² A/RES/55/95.

¹³ A/RES/55/112.

human rights violations and noted with grave concern the failure to cease the practice of forced labour or to implement ILO resolutions. The ILO was also mentioned in resolutions on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education¹⁴ and on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.¹⁵

2. Economic and Social Council, 2000-01

27. The [High-Level Segment of the 2000 Substantive Session](#) took place at UN headquarters from 5 to 7 July under the Presidency of Ambassador Makarim Wibisono of Indonesia. The theme was “Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: The role of information technology in a knowledge-based global economy”. The ILO was active in the preparations and sessions of the Council, and made a presentation on the forthcoming [World Employment Report 2001: Life at work in the information economy](#) at a special side event during the High-Level Segment.
28. A notable characteristic of the High-Level Segment was the participation of over 50 Ministers, Heads of State, heads of international financial institutions, Executive Directors of UN programmes and funds and, for the first time, the CEOs of leading private companies in the field of information technology. The adoption of a [Ministerial Declaration](#) was another feature.¹⁶ This reflected a broad consensus on the role of information and communications technology (ICT) in development. Delegates stressed the need for partnerships with the private sector and with non-governmental organizations, foundations and other stakeholders to reach international consensus on the use of technology for social and economic development. The Coordination Segment of ECOSOC in July 2001 will follow up on these discussions
29. The ILO is collaborating closely with the secretariat in preparations for the High-Level Segment of the 2001 ECOSOC session (Geneva, 16-18 July) on the theme: “The role of the United Nations in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development”. The report of the Secretary-General will examine the role of the United Nations in helping to meet the challenges of sustainable development for Africa, and will address coordination of the UN system’s work in Africa, building upon the Coordination Segment of ECOSOC of 1999 and its progress report of 2000.

3. Commission for Social Development

30. The theme for the 2001 session of the Commission for Social Development (New York, 13-23 February 2001) was “Enhancing social protection and reducing vulnerability in a globalizing world”. The report prepared for the Commission noted that, against the normative background of international labour standards and effective dialogue between all parties, the ILO helps member States to improve and expand the protection they provide to all women and men, both nationals and migrant workers, in relation to the full range of contingencies: basic income security, health care, sickness, old age and invalidity, unemployment, employment injury, maternity, family responsibilities and death. It also

¹⁴ A/RES/55/94.

¹⁵ A/RES/55/88.

¹⁶ [E/2000/L.9](#).

noted that the ILO helps combat HIV/AIDS in the workplace and intervenes in crises arising from natural disasters and post-war conflict. The ILO participated actively in the work of the Commission and in parallel panel discussions on the theme of social protection, decent work and development.

4. Commission on the Status of Women

31. The forty-fifth session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) (New York, 5-16 March 2001)¹⁷ will address the thematic issues of women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS, and, secondly, gender and all forms of racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The ILO contributed actively in the expert group meetings convened to prepare the Secretary-General's reports, providing technical input and participating in preparatory meetings.

5. Commission on Human Rights and treaty bodies

32. The ILO continued to collaborate with the Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations treaty bodies concerned with human rights issues. The ILO attended the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and various subsidiary bodies including the Working Groups on Development, on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, and on Indigenous Populations.

33. The ILO has a working relationship with all the United Nations "treaty bodies" that supervise instruments of common interest, and each year attends the [Annual Meeting of Chairpersons of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies](#).¹⁸ The Office presented reports to and attended sessions of the treaty bodies responsible for supervising the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

34. The [twenty-third session of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW) was held in New York from 12-30 June 2000. Items of interest to the Committee included the adoption of the ILO's Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), equal access to employment, the situation of elderly women, trafficking and violence, the rights of migrant workers, and the political and economic exploitation of working women. The [twenty-fourth session of CEDAW](#) was held in New York from 15 January-2 February 2001. The ILO made a presentation to the Committee on Convention No. 183, and addressed other matters of concern, including affirmative action, trafficking and improving women's access to employment.

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/45sess.htm>

¹⁸ <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/a.htm>

35. The [Optional Protocol to the CEDAW Convention](#), which was adopted by the General Assembly in October 1999, entered into force on 22 December 2000 with the ratification of the fifteenth State. By ratifying the Optional Protocol, a State recognizes the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction.
36. On 15 November 2000 the General Assembly adopted the [United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#),¹⁹ and the [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children](#).²⁰ The Office took part in discussions leading to the adoption of these instruments in order to ensure consistency with relevant ILO standards, in particular those on forced labour and migrant workers.

III. Forthcoming major United Nations events, 2001-02: Involvement in preparatory processes

1. Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCIII) (Brussels, 14-20 May 2001)

37. In 1997 the General Assembly decided to convene the [Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries](#) (Brussels, 14-20 May 2001), which is to be convened 11 years after LDCII (Paris, 1990). The objectives of the Conference are as follows:
- to assess the results of the programme of action during the 1990s at the country level;
 - to review the implementation of international support measures, particularly in the areas of official development assistance, debt, investment and trade;
 - to consider the formulation and adoption of appropriate national and international policies and measures for sustainable development of the least developed countries and their progressive integration into the world economy.
38. The General Assembly designated UNCTAD as the focal point for organizing the Conference and accepted the offer of the European Union (EU) to host the Conference. The General Assembly asked that well-focused sectoral, thematic and country-specific round-table meetings be held during the Conference to contribute to its work, and that the involvement of civil society should be facilitated.
39. A [draft programme of action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010](#) has been prepared for the Conference.²¹ A meeting of the Preparatory Committee (Brussels, 5-9 February 2001) reviewed a draft programme of action²² to be adopted at the

¹⁹ http://www.odccp.org/crime_cicp_convention.html

²⁰ http://www.odccp.org/trafficking_protocol.html

²¹ A/CONF.191/IPC/L.4.

²² <http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/aconf191ipcl4.en.pdf>

Conference. The draft focused on a number of crucial areas for LDCs: good governance, strengthening human and productive capacities, globalization, conserving the environment, and financing development. The draft also advocates economic diversification, in particular through the development of: the informal sector; small and medium-sized enterprises; tourism, transport and business services; agriculture; and manufacturing. Particular attention will be given to the role of employment in poverty eradication. The ILO is actively involved in the preparatory process and has been assigned responsibility for one full thematic session of the Conference, with the theme of employment and human resources development. A number of NGOs will be meeting in parallel with the Conference at an NGO forum.

2. General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (New York, 25-27 June 2001)

40. Alarmed by the accelerating HIV/AIDS epidemic and its global impact, the General Assembly of the United Nations has decided to convene a [Special Session on HIV/AIDS](#) at the highest political level (New York, 25-27 June 2001). The Special Session will aim to intensify international action to fight the epidemic and to mobilize the resources needed. The [report](#)²³ to be presented by the Secretary-General to the Special Session will focus on action on seven critical challenges that will help reverse the AIDS epidemic. These include: leadership and coordination; alleviating the social and economic impact of the epidemic; reducing the vulnerability of particular social groups; achieving agreed targets for the prevention of HIV/AIDS infection; ensuring care and support for people infected by HIV/AIDS; developing relevant and effective international support; and mobilizing the necessary financial resources.
41. Since January 2000, when the Security Council took the unprecedented step of discussing HIV/AIDS as a threat to human and national security, the ILO has been working closely with [UNAIDS](#) and its co-sponsors, as well as the UN Secretariat, to emphasize the importance of workplace initiatives and programmes in the global effort to combat HIV/AIDS. This is reflected in resolutions adopted by both the Security Council and the General Assembly concerning HIV/AIDS in 2000 and 2001 which highlighted the impact of the pandemic on labour and productivity. Following the launch of the ILO's own global [Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work](#)²⁴ in November 2000, in response to the [resolution concerning HIV/AIDS and the world of work](#) adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2000, a multisectoral and integrated approach has been adopted by the ILO in its contribution to the global effort to combat HIV/AIDS.²⁵ Significant in this respect is the ILO's collaboration with UNAIDS in preparations for the Special Session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS. The ILO has contributed directly to the preparation of the working documents and issues paper for the Special Session, particularly in the analysis of the economic and social impact of the epidemic and the legal and policy framework required for prevention, care and support.
42. UNAIDS, acting as the substantive secretariat for the Special Session, has taken a particular interest in the proposed ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work, which is expected to be adopted by an ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts in May

²³ [A/55/779](#).

²⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/>

²⁵ See [GB.279/7](#).

2001. Following its adoption, the Code of Practice will be made available to all delegations and observers at the Special Session as one of the official documents for the Session. It is expected that relevant aspects of the Code will be incorporated into the “Declaration of Commitment” which will be the final outcome of the Special Session. The Special Session is expected to set a number of concrete targets for action to fight HIV/AIDS at national, enterprise and household levels.

3. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

(Durban, 31 August-7 September 2001)

43. In 1997, in resolution 52/111, the General Assembly decided to hold a [World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance](#). The United Nations Commission on Human Rights is acting as the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference. The ILO is participating in the Preparatory Committee, and has been involved in the regional expert meetings in preparation for the Conference, in relation to its main concerns regarding migrant workers, indigenous and tribal peoples, discrimination and gender issues. Detailed information is also supplied to the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards at the present session of the Governing Body.²⁶

4. Follow-up to the World Summit for Children: General Assembly Special Session on Children

(New York, 19-21 September 2001)

44. Ten years after the World Summit for Children (1990), and 11 years after the adoption of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (1989), the General Assembly has decided to convene a Special Session on Children (New York, 19-21 September 2001). The main objectives of the session are to review achievements in the implementation and results of the World Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit; and to renew commitments and consider future action for children.

45. The ILO has been actively involved from the outset in preparations for this Special Session so as to ensure that valuable ILO input is provided and that appropriate account is taken of the ILO’s position on the elimination of child labour in the preparatory documents and final outcome. For the ILO, this Special Session is an opportunity to enhance partnerships in action against child labour, focusing on its worst forms. The firm support demonstrated to this global cause by the unanimous adoption of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and its pace of ratification must be linked to the commitments to be made at this Special Session for action throughout the UN system and its member States. ILO representatives made statements at meetings of the Preparatory Committee (New York, May-June 2000, and January-February 2001). Promotional activities, especially regarding Convention No. 182, including screenings of an IPEC video and an information stand, were undertaken at the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and at other related events and forums.

46. The ILO submitted a report reviewing achievements during the 1990s related to the World Summit for Children’s Plan of Action in ILO-relevant fields, mainly child labour, as an official contribution to the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the Special

²⁶ [GB.280/LILS/12](#).

Session. The report was distributed at the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee (A/AC.256/CRP.8). The ILO's active participation will be continued at each stage of the inter-agency and preparatory process for the Special Session, including an inter-agency consultation between the formal Preparatory Committee sessions to discuss the draft outcome document entitled *A World Fit for Children*. A further meeting of the Preparatory Committee is scheduled for June 2001. An item entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Special Session on Children" will be included in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session (2001) of the General Assembly.

5. Second World Assembly on Ageing (Spain, April 2002)

47. The General Assembly decided to hold the [Second World Assembly on Ageing](#) in Spain in April 2002. With the theme of "a society for all ages", the Assembly will focus on ageing and development, public/private partnerships and measures to strengthen intergovernmental solidarity, a review of the outcome of the First World Assembly (Vienna, 1982), revision of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, and development of a long-term strategy. Concern is expressed over sustainable longevity, which necessarily includes an analysis of the quality of life expectancy. Special attention will be given to the situation of older women, who tend to be caretakers and homemakers to an advanced age.²⁷
48. The ILO is actively involved in preparations, and is contributing substantive inputs on ageing and decent work throughout the process.

6. World Summit on Sustainable Development: Review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and its Agenda 21, 2002 (Rio+10) (Johannesburg, 2002)

49. The Commission on Sustainable Development will act as the Preparatory Committee for the review Summit.²⁸ The first Preparatory Committee will be held from 30 April-1 May 2001, followed by three additional Preparatory Committee meetings. The overall goal of the Summit is to reinvigorate, at the highest political level, the global commitment to sustainable development, to a North/South partnership and a higher level of international solidarity, to the accelerated implementation of [Agenda 21](#), and to the promotion of sustainable development. The ILO will focus its contribution on the role of decent work and sustainable livelihoods, reinforcing the centrality of these concerns to sustainable development.

²⁷ [E/CN.5/2001/PC/2](#).

²⁸ <http://www.un.org/rio+10/index.html>

7. International Conference on Financing for Development²⁹ (Mexico, 2002)

- 50.** At its fifty-fourth session the United Nations General Assembly agreed by consensus to convene a “high-level intergovernmental event” involving political decision-makers at least at the ministerial level.³⁰ The high-level meeting was to consider national, international and systemic issues relating to financing for development in a holistic manner in the context of globalization and interdependence. The event would address development through the perspective of finance, as well as the mobilization of financial resources for the full implementation of the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s.
- 51.** At its second meeting (New York, 12-23 February 2001), the Preparatory Committee for the high-level event decided to recommend that the General Assembly upgrade the meeting to an international conference that would include a segment at the summit level. The conference will take place at the highest political level, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the name of “International Conference on Financing for Development”. It will be hosted by Mexico and will probably be held in the first quarter of 2002.
- 52.** The provisional agenda³¹ of the conference is as follows:
- I. Mobilizing domestic financial resources.
 - II. Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows.
 - III. Trade.
 - IV. Increasing international financial cooperation for development through, inter alia, official development assistance.
 - V. Debt.
 - VI. Addressing systemic issues: enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development.
- 53.** The next meeting of the Preparatory Committee will discuss a working paper based on submissions by governments on possible initiatives or themes to be addressed by the agenda items.
- 54.** The ILO has been participating in the preparatory process, including two of the four inter-agency working groups convened by the secretariat to assist in the preparation of the Secretary-General’s report, which was presented to the recent meeting of the Preparatory Committee.

²⁹ <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

³⁰ A/RES/54/196.

³¹ A/AC.257/20 (<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/aac257-20.pdf>).

IV. Special partnerships

1. Global Compact

55. During 2000 considerable progress was made in giving form and substance to the [Global Compact](#) that the United Nations Secretary-General proposed at the World Economic Forum in January 1999. Following various contacts and meetings, Secretary-General Kofi Annan convened a High-Level Meeting on the Global Compact on 26 July 2000 at UN headquarters in New York. The objective was to signal the commitment of world business to promote the universal values of the Global Compact, which include the [ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#). Along with heads of UN agencies (ILO, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Environment Programme) participants included representatives of more than 40 multinational companies, as well as the International Organization of Employers (IOE), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and other business and civil society organizations.
56. In his remarks,³² the Director-General singled out four priority areas for cooperation between the ILO and the Global Compact partners and companies: child labour; engagement with stakeholders through social dialogue and sectoral meetings; information exchange on international labour standards and practices, including health and safety in the workplace; and training for managers on fundamental principles and rights at work. He emphasized two key issues for dialogue – freedom of association and job creation, and the importance of partnership between trade unions and business in advancing the aim of the Compact.
57. Following this meeting, the Global Compact has gained considerable visibility. An increasing number of companies have expressed interest in the Compact. At the United Nations, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General has decided to establish a United Nations Global Compact Office under its aegis. The United Nations expects the Compact “core agencies” (ILO, UNHCHR, UNEP) to continue to be supportive of the Compact and to play a special role in promoting the Compact and responding to company queries.

2. High-Level Youth Employment Policy Network

58. In his [Millennium Report](#), the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, announced his intention to convene, together with the President of the World Bank, Mr. Wolfensohn, and the ILO Director-General, Mr. Somavia, a High-Level Youth Employment Policy Network that will draw on “the most creative leaders in private industry, civil society and economic policy to explore imaginative approaches to this difficult challenge”. In the [Millennium Declaration](#), adopted in September 2000 at the [Millennium Summit](#), Heads of State and Government endorsed the initiative.
59. The objectives of the policy network are threefold: (a) to formulate a set of recommendations on youth employment which the Secretary-General will propose to world leaders for action in September 2001; (b) to disseminate information on good practices and lessons learnt from specific past or ongoing youth employment policies and programmes; and (c) to identify, for implementation with its partners, a series of collaborative youth employment initiatives.

³² Speech: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/dgo/speeches/somavia/2000/gceng.htm>

60. The ILO has set up a task force, led by the [InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability](#), to coordinate an Office-wide technical contribution to the activities of the policy network, and has launched a consultation process with the ICFTU, IOE and other partners to develop draft recommendations. The ILO's substantive work in this regard is guided by the overall policy framework and strategic directions established within the decent work agenda, taking into consideration ILO standards, policy instruments, knowledge and experience that have particular relevance for the promotion of youth employment. The Office undertakes additional research and analytical work, as well as operational networking with a number of technical partners.
61. The preparatory work has been conducted in close partnership with the World Bank and the UN Secretariat. A High-Level Meeting of the policy network, scheduled for July 2001, will bring together Mr. Annan, the Director-General, Mr. Wolfensohn and 12 prominent leaders of the international community, labour, business and civil society, including Mr. Bill Jordan, General Secretary of the ICFTU, and Mr. César Alierta, President of Telefónica, on behalf of the IOE. The High-Level Meeting will discuss and elaborate on the recommendations formulated by the ILO, the United Nations and the World Bank, and will contribute their views, experience and proposals for action, with special emphasis on action-oriented partnerships for the implementation of concrete initiatives. The Office will report to the Governing Body on the outcome of the meeting and the technical work undertaken to promote youth employment, seeking guidance for future action.

V. Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)

62. The year 2000 was of great importance for the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). At its two regular sessions (Rome, April and New York, October) the Secretary-General and the Executive Heads of the UN system agencies focused substantive discussion on the demands placed on national and international systems by the new global environment. There is a shared concern in the ACC about the need to improve synergies and coherence within the multilateral system in order to tackle effectively the multifaceted challenges posed by globalization. Poverty and development, the rule of law, human rights, peace and security, as well as the environment, are issues that concern the entire multilateral system, and there is a glaring need for a better understanding of the linkages and connections between these different dimensions of sustainable development. This in turn requires a consistent and sustained effort to identify the best possible contribution that the system as a whole, and each of its parts, can provide to countries at the national, regional and global levels to ensure coherent and effective support to development efforts.
63. At their retreat in Palisades, New York, following the ACC's autumn regular session, the Executive Heads of the UN agencies examined the capacity of the multilateral system to promote effective follow-on on the Millennium Summit and discussed the individual and joint action required to further the objectives and commitments embodied in the Millennium Declaration. It was agreed that forthcoming conferences and other intergovernmental events should be utilized to promote the goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration as part of a system-wide advocacy effort highlighting the linkages between the various objectives set out in the Declaration, and particularly their relevance to poverty eradication and sustainable development, as well as linkages between local issues and global concerns. It was further agreed that the system should work towards a single common framework for country-level action, based on the key concepts of country ownership and inter-agency partnerships, and reflecting a comprehensive approach to development. Drawing on this ongoing reflection, the next regular session of the ACC in April 2001 will consider the challenges for the UN system in the light of a paper on the

relationships between the economic and social aspects of globalization in policy formulation, to be presented by the Director-General.

- 64.** The ACC machinery underwent a significant reform. Two high-level committees were created: the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the High-Level Committee on Programme (HLCP), which will replace the former Organizational Committee (OC/ACC), the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ). The new structure is to focus on a more strategic approach to organizational, management and programming matters across the system and will progressively review the existence and functioning of the remaining bodies of the ACC so as to streamline the machinery and provide ACC members with the support needed for visionary and strategic collective decisions.

Geneva, 7 March 2001.