



NINETEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Director-General**Second Supplementary Report:
Legal protection of a new ILO logo**

1. An institutional logo represents an essential element of an organization's image. It is not only an organization's public face, but also carries important psychological, as well as emotive value.
2. The ILO's logo has periodically been adapted to reflect the times. The first "logo" was in fact the ILO seal and was adopted in 1921. In 1938, a new logo was introduced. The last modification was made 35 years ago. Thus, the new logo will become the fourth in the ILO's 84-year history.
3. With the passing of the industrial era, the ILO has adapted to reflect the changing needs of its constituents. It has placed a renewed emphasis in reaching out to a wider number of people in whose lives the ILO has a new relevance and meaning. As such, the cogwheel symbolism used in the current ILO logo is no longer representative of the broader world of work.
4. The new logo is intended to present graphically and simply the Organization's tripartite nature as well as a changing world of work. It is designed to communicate across educational levels and languages. Other organizations have undergone a process of reflection on their changing roles and images, and have chosen to redesign their logo. The choice of design and methodology of the new logo has been based on the lessons these organizations have learned.
5. With the current logo, the acronym of both the Organization and the Office must be translated into various languages, thereby requiring visual identification of the different and multiple acronyms which are an inherent part of it (ILO, BIT, OIT, MOT, IAA, IAO, OIL, etc.). Production of multilingual material with different logos leads to a considerable increase in costs. A logo should be language-neutral and easily reproducible and recognizable. The acronym in the relevant languages will disappear, thus making the logo's multilingual use easier, more flexible, and hence cost-effective.
6. In response to requests of the Governing Body and its desire to promote the ILO to a wider audience, a single, easily identifiable look is a key element. Today a wide variety of designs and looks are available throughout the house. They are used to distinguish one department, programme or bureau from another. This has "... diluted the ILO's impact,

blurred its image, reduced its efficiency and confused the sense of direction of its staff. ...”¹ This also contributes to the confusion of the outside audience, as it is not clear that documents are produced by one single organization. A clear, consistent and distinct image is essential to communicating a cohesive message and the work of the Organization.

7. Consequently, over the past year the ILO has been involved in a process of renewal regarding its graphic look, involving wide changes in the design of publications, documents, web sites, exterior public signs and any other visual representations of the Organization.

About the new logo

8. The new logo evokes openness and approachability to the working women and men of the world. Bearing in mind the difficulty of visually conveying the notion of the world of work in the twenty-first century the abstract sun-like symbol is global and immediately understood by people of all cultures. It represents warmth, positive energy and strength. The rays emanate in all directions from the central kernel, which is the ILO, and disseminate information globally. Its shaded areas represent the unique tripartite nature of the Organization and its relevance within the whole structure. The ILO’s name will be placed separately, beneath the symbol, in the language appropriate to the context. The United Nations wreath of olive leaves (symbolizing peace) reaffirms ILO membership in the UN family.



International Labour Organization

9. In order to ensure a smooth transition to the new organizational look, the new logo will be *gradually* introduced into ILO materials. The Director-General is aware of the costs that can be incurred in the adoption of a new logo. With this in view, careful planning is under way to limit costs. All material carrying the current logo should first be exhausted. The Office has compiled a list of organizational materials that contain the logo, with a calendar for phasing out each of those items.
10. As the new logo is introduced in a uniform manner, the use of all other logos (sectoral, departmental, etc.), as well as on personal letterheads – will be discontinued. New guidelines will lay out acceptable methods of identifying units within the common organizational image.

Legal protection

11. As was done for the name and acronym of the ILO through the “Resolution concerning the Legal Protection of the Name of the International Labour Organization” that was adopted by the 45th Session of the ILC (1961), the Governing Body should now give consideration to similarly protecting the new emblem.

¹ ILC, 87th Session (1999), Report I, *Report of the Director-General: Decent Work*, p. 3.

12. This protection is obtainable through the World Intellectual Property Organization which administers the Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property of 1883, as amended on 28 September 1979, which provides under Article 6ter, paragraphs (1)(a) and (b): “The countries (of the Union) agree to refuse or to invalidate the registration, and to prohibit by appropriate measures the use, without authorization by the competent authorities, ... of armorial bearings, flags, other emblems, abbreviations, and names, of international intergovernmental organizations of which one or more countries (of the Union) are members. ...”
13. Considering that there could have been pre-existing rights in the new emblem that could jeopardize its registration with national authorities, a search was conducted in a sampling of countries² in certain services sectors to ascertain whether any similar pre-existing marks existed. The search results did not reveal any substantially similar marks that could give rise to confusion.
14. *Bearing in mind that the new logo would no longer contain the acronym of the ILO and, as such, that it would not be afforded protection as is presently the case with the current logo through the inclusion of the acronym, the Governing Body may wish to submit the following resolution to the International Labour Conference for adoption:*

“The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Recalling its Resolution concerning the Legal Protection of the Name of the International Labour Organization that was adopted by the 45th Session of the International Labour Conference (1961),

Having noted further the provision concerning the protection in connection with trademarks, of emblems, abbreviations and titles of international intergovernmental organizations contained in the Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, as last amended on 28 September 1979,

Recognizing the necessity of obtaining legal protection for its emblem and of thereby preventing the use for improper purposes of the good will extended to international organizations;

- (1) Urges member States of the International Labour Organization to take all measures, including where appropriate the application to the International Labour Organization of the Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, as last amended in 1979, and of any legislative provisions for the protection of international organizations which may be necessary to prevent the use, without authorization in conformity with the law of member States and the agreement of the Director-General, of the emblem of the International Labour Organization; and*

² Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

- (2) *Authorizes the Director-General to convey the emblem of the International Labour Organization to the World Intellectual Property Organization for communication to national registry authorities.”*

Geneva, 13 February 2003.

Point for decision: Paragraph 14.