



THIRTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Committee on Technical Cooperation

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 10 and 11 November 2005, chaired by Mr. Yimer Aboye (Government, Ethiopia). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr. Jeetun and Ms. Yacob, respectively.
2. The Committee had the following agenda items:
 - The ILO's technical cooperation programme 2004-05;
 - Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Technical cooperation priorities and action plans regarding elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;
 - Other questions.

I. The ILO's technical cooperation programme 2004-05

3. The Chairperson recalled that, during its March 2005 session, the Committee on Technical Cooperation had discussed and approved some modalities for improved functioning of the Committee. In line with that, the first agenda item would be conducted in an interactive fashion. The paper¹ for the session had been prepared towards that end and, in addition, to facilitate deliberations, each of the regional directors would make a short presentation on recent events, highlights and lessons learned from the very many concrete operational activities carried out during 2004-05.
4. A representative of the Director-General, Ms. Ducci, recalled the decision taken in March 2005 to improve the effectiveness of the Committee's work. With the paper providing regional focus, regional directors had been invited to make short presentations on operational activities carried out during 2004-05. Those presentations reflected regional diversity. Nevertheless, there were some common features across regions, among others, the growing support for decent work country programmes (DWCPs); the need to pool regular budget and extra-budgetary resources; the importance of tripartite involvement; an emphasis on capacity building with a specific potential role for the International Training

¹ GB.294/TC/1.

Centre in Turin; the synergy between standard setting and technical cooperation; and the growing awareness of the core role of decent work in national development strategies. The recognition of the central place of decent work in development agendas was reflected in the conclusions of the African Union Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa in September 2004, the conclusions of the IV Summit of the Americas in November 2005, and in paragraph 47 of the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome of September 2005. The ILO would henceforth work to respond to new and additional demands for support in the global, regional and national arenas.

5. With technical cooperation as a major theme in next year's session of the International Labour Conference, it was felt that this was a timely opportunity for Committee members to provide strategic guidance to the Office, at the same time as decent work country programming was moving to its operational phase. In addition, DWCPs were a programming framework providing a tool for setting clear priorities; an opportunity to foster tripartite dialogue; a platform for donor support; an incentive for more strategic thinking; and the main interface between the Decent Work Agenda and national development frameworks, such as CCA/UNDAF and PRSPs.
6. The paper highlighted the steps undertaken to implement the ILO resource mobilization strategy approved in November 2004. The Office relied on its constituents' support to promote technical cooperation programmes based on recognition of the ILO's unique comparative advantage by virtue of its tripartite constituency and global mandate, as well as its knowledge base and policy development and assistance. That uniqueness was increasingly recognized across the United Nations system. The ILO was also deploying special efforts to participate in United Nations field coordination and reform processes for operational coherence at the country level. It was also in the process of strengthening strategic alliances with other specialized agencies with complementary mandates and policy concerns.
7. Ms. Ducci described how the Office was implementing decisions made in March 2005 by developing tools to ensure systematic gender mainstreaming across technical cooperation projects and greater visibility of gender equality in partnership programmes with donor agencies. In relation to the follow-up to the resolution concerning tripartism and social dialogue, a protocol had been jointly developed by ACTRAV and ACT/EMP and was undergoing consultations in the Office.
8. Ms. Ducci concluded her introduction by recalling the appeal made to donor countries to contribute to the continuation of the special technical cooperation programme for Colombia. Following close collaboration between the ILO and the Colombian tripartite constituents, project proposals had been elaborated in relation to social dialogue and employment creation, and donor agencies were being approached with concrete perspectives for securing funding for some of the proposals.
9. Ms. Amadi-Njoku, the Regional Director for Africa, stressed the importance the ILO attached to poverty alleviation through employment promotion in the region. She expressed regret that the encouraging overall economic performance in Africa over the past few years had not generated employment to a corresponding level. For the next biennium, and within the framework of DWCPs, poverty alleviation in the context of globalization would be the main objective, with particular emphasis on youth employment, women's entrepreneurship and skills development. The ILO's commitment to follow up the African Union Summit was also underlined.
10. Ms. Amadi-Njoku noted the need for: integrating social and economic issues in the ILO's work; giving due consideration to macro-level implications of ILO technical cooperation activities; and promoting and operationalizing international labour standards in technical

cooperation. She added that technical cooperation was a major input in DWCPs. The Office was striving to ensure the involvement of social partners in Africa in the design and implementation of technical cooperation projects and DWCPs.

- 11.** Referring to the activities of the past year, Ms. Amadi-Njoku highlighted the effectiveness of projects related to the elimination of child labour, youth employment and women entrepreneurs, and added that a large number of war-affected children had been reintegrated into societies and had benefited from prevention measures. Several countries had adopted or launched action programmes on youth employment and, at the recent Southern Africa Sub-Regional Conference on Youth Employment, key areas for ILO intervention in nine countries had been identified for implementation in the next biennium. She also highlighted programmes for enhancing women's entrepreneurship, particularly in partnership with the African Development Bank. Ms. Amadi-Njoku concluded by expressing her appreciation to the donor countries for their financial support to projects in the region.
- 12.** The acting Regional Director for the Americas, Mr. Martínez, presented the technical cooperation activities in Latin America and the Caribbean in line with the four strategic objectives of the ILO. In the area of standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, the emphasis had been on promoting the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in its different components. Particular efforts had been made to strengthen labour inspection and train and sensitize judges and magistrates in view of their responsibility to interpret and apply the law. Employment creation had remained a top priority and three tripartite employment forums in different subregions had attempted to elaborate new strategies and policies to tackle the high rate of unemployment, particularly among young people. In the area of social protection, the ILO had sought to support national constituents in enhancing the financial viability of social security and health insurance systems and to extend the low coverage of the labour force. With regard to social dialogue, progress had been made to support national labour administration, to strengthen employers' and workers' organizations and to promote the institutionalization of tripartite dialogue. Mr. Martínez recognized that the main ILO weakness in his region lay in the field of social protection, as strategies and tools promoted and applied by the ILO had failed to satisfactorily address the challenge of extending social security coverage. Another important lesson learned consisted in acknowledging that ILO technical cooperation was more successful in terms of cost-effectiveness and results when it was the outcome of tripartite decision-making processes. In future, the ILO in the Americas would place special emphasis on youth employment and the informal economy, working on both productivity and enabling a legal and administrative environment.
- 13.** The Regional Director for the Arab States, Mr. Rifai, in presenting the programming framework for his region, spoke of contrasting, diverse and challenging opportunities. Technical cooperation in certain crucial areas would allow for the number of ratifications to be increased; further assistance to be provided in the design and revision of labour codes as requested by countries, ensuring that reforms reflected the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; and the youth unemployment rate to be addressed as a matter of priority, it being twice as high as the average unemployment rate in the region. In that respect, he indicated that the ILO was focusing on training and on upgrading skills for youth employability. He emphasized the issue of employment creation in the occupied Arab territories, where the ILO had contributed to the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection, but where the situation was still difficult owing to security reasons. Social security and social protection programmes of assistance had gone through major changes. The Office was working on strengthening countries' capacities to deal with situations where as much as 85 per cent of the total labour workforce in some countries was made up of migrant workers. Mr. Rifai also indicated that pressure for political and social changes was increasingly affecting democratization processes, for

example in Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Arab territories. Such reforms had also affected the reorientation of the ILO technical cooperation programme towards policy advice responding to needs, particularly in countries that had experienced major crises, such as Iraq, where the ILO had contributed by assisting the Government in formulating employment policy following the national conference held in December 2004. There had been major achievements with regard to social dialogue in, among other countries, Jordan, Yemen and Bahrain, where the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions had been created with the assistance of the ILO. Other successful technical cooperation projects were mentioned, such as the time-bound programme on child labour in Lebanon and the social dialogue programme in Jordan.

- 14.** The Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Mr. Buttler, outlined the political and socio-economic context of technical cooperation in Europe and Central Asia, characterized by the processes of transformation from centrally planned to socially oriented market economies in some 30 countries. While resumption of economic growth had been observed, the record on employment remained unsatisfactory. In 2004, the ILO had decided to shift more of the emphasis of technical cooperation to the Balkan, Caucasian and Central Asian countries, out of which ten were PRSP countries.
- 15.** The key concerns had been those of matching constituents' needs in the context of transformation with the Decent Work Agenda, focusing on good governance and social dialogue, more and better employment, and poverty reduction through decent employment; improved coverage within social security and social welfare systems; and social inclusion. Accordingly, through the ILO Subregional Offices in Budapest and Moscow, along with the ILO Office in Ankara, 11 countries had been identified for DWCPs.
- 16.** The European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the World Bank, UNDP and the specialized agencies of the United Nations were considered as important international partner organizations.
- 17.** The Regional Director went on to highlight some of the results achieved by the tripartite constituents through the results-based management of technical cooperation in the region, citing, among other things, ratification of Conventions, eradication of the worst forms of child labour, adoption of labour codes, revision of national employment and migration strategies, old-age pension reforms, and agreements on prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- 18.** Mr. Buttler concluded by thanking the donors for their support and calling upon them to join the ILO in making decent work a national goal and implementing it with national and international partners through DWCPs.
- 19.** The Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Hasegawa, noted the great diversity of needs of countries and ILO constituents as a characteristic of the region, which spanned issues related to extreme poverty, labour market transformation, and coping with globalization. The ILO's response to national disasters and emergencies was a particularly prominent feature, with more than US\$40 million mobilized in extra-budgetary resources from many donor governments, UNDP, trade unions and a private company in response to the tsunami in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The ILO had been successful in contributing to recovery efforts with programmes involving emergency employment schemes, skills development, and local economic development, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable, including women, children, young people and people with disabilities. Some of the lessons learned, which included the need to be present and involved with the United Nations and other partners from the start, and the need for financial flexibility in accessing resources, were now being applied to the earthquake-affected areas of Pakistan. Two weeks after the disaster had struck, the ILO had already begun to provide cash for the work of the pilot project for debris removal. The ILO had

also participated in the United Nations common assessment on the livelihood and employment impact of the disasters. In addition, the ILO should increase its visibility regarding its disaster response programme, since many donors and the public in general were often not aware of the role the ILO played. In particular, the ILO should clearly show its comparative advantage in labour-based employment creation, both as a short-term livelihood support and for longer term rehabilitation and reconstruction of communities and sustainable employment. For the region as a whole, employment was a key priority and the ILO was receiving an increasing number of requests for advice on coping with the social impact of globalization, and for assistance in improving the functioning of labour markets, increasing productivity and improving the quality of jobs. The constituents had also identified interlinked issues such as productivity, job quality and workplace relations at national and enterprise level as key areas for ILO technical assistance. He thanked the governments and social partners in the region for their cooperation and assistance in implementing ILO projects efficiently and effectively and for their flexibility in allowing the ILO to shift resources from ongoing projects to provide support to disaster-affected countries and communities. The strong support of national governments in the region had also contributed to the size and success of the ILO's child labour programme, such as the project in India. Mr. Hasegawa recognized the generous extra-budgetary support of the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea to strengthen the regional network and programmes in the area of skills and employability. He pointed out that the future outlook concerned the implementation of DWCPs across the countries of the region, with the issues of skills development and employability, migration and youth employment emerging as clear priorities.

20. After presentation of a video on the ILO's immediate assistance to Pakistan to cope with the recent tragedy, the meeting continued with further deliberations on the agenda item.
21. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, was appreciative of the changes he could see in the modalities and functioning of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. It was clear from the paper that the Office was following up on the decisions taken by the Committee during its March 2005 session in a number of areas, including holding interactive sessions with the presence of regional directors.
22. While appreciating the format of the paper, Mr. Jeetun mentioned that a statistical breakdown of technical cooperation by sector for each region would have been useful. Reporting on technical cooperation at the substantive level by region was comprehensive. His group appreciated that the paper showed the importance of effective tripartite participation and social dialogue, and noted that the 2002 resolution on tripartism and social dialogue was highly relevant. The group appreciated the support provided by regional offices in the capacity building of employers' organizations.
23. The section on resource mobilization was appreciated, as it provided a response to some of the queries made at the March session of the Committee. Recalling the difficulties faced in the early rounds of the TC-RAM process, he hoped that problems had been solved. Referring to the envisaged donor workshop to be organized by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Employer Vice-Chairperson asked for the involvement of the social partners in the event.
24. Mr. Jeetun acknowledged that priorities for the regions differed, and that the list of important issues was long, especially for Africa. He held the view, however, that, although priorities differed, lessons learned needed to be shared among the regions. The Office was called upon to strive for enhanced cooperation between headquarters and the regions in order to share lessons learned.

25. Commenting on the regional distribution of expenditures, the Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed his concern at the continued decline in expenditure for Africa and the Arab States, which was especially worrisome for Africa, where the challenges in terms of lack of employment, HIV/AIDS and poor institutional capacity were enormous.
26. Further disappointment was expressed with the continued decline in expenditure in the employment and social dialogue sectors, particularly at a time when employment creation was a top priority for many developing countries. Reference was made to the African Union Summit held in Ouagadougou in September 2004 and to paragraph 47 of the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome. In that context, Mr. Jeetun wanted to be informed on the efforts that had been made by the Office to convince donors of the need for more balanced support for the different sectors. There was also a need to continue dialogue with the donors in order to harmonize their priorities with those expressed by the constituents.
27. On the pattern of expenditures, Mr. Jeetun raised the concern that the amount spent on experts, whether local or international, looked disproportionately high in comparison to that spent on training, which was important for capacity building and sustainability.
28. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concluded by enquiring about the status of delivery and the task force on the subject. Recognizing that delivery in some regions was low, he pointed out that human resources were needed to implement projects and, in that context, existing vacancies needed to be filled.
29. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, speaking on behalf of the Worker members, expressed her gratitude to the Office for the informative paper that had been presented to the Committee. She added that the importance of technical cooperation could not be overemphasized, as a tool for the implementation of the four strategic objectives of the ILO, the promotion of international labour standards, and the operationalization of the priorities discussed in other Governing Body committees.
30. Referring to decisions made in the November 2004 and March 2005 sessions of the Committee on Technical Cooperation, Ms. Yacob observed that the Worker members had expected the Office to provide a complete update on the progress made in implementing all those decisions. She requested that, in future, such updates should be provided in the report submitted to the Committee.
31. With regard to technical cooperation approvals and expenditure, the Worker Vice-Chairperson voiced concern over declines in the extra-budgetary amounts spent on the least developed countries, the decrease in the delivery rate, and the decrease in the regular budget for technical cooperation (RBTC). She further highlighted that the large amount spent on international experts was another cause for great concern, and requested that the Office look into measures to ensure that more was spent on activities such as training, capacity building for the tripartite constituents, and equipment. In that regard, Ms. Yacob urged the Office to take into account the vast expertise and resources that were already available among the social partners.
32. The Workers' group welcomed the interactive discussions between members of the Committee and the ILO's regional directors, but felt that it was unclear from the report how the regions had been effectively engaging social partners in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of technical cooperation projects and programmes. Ms. Yacob specifically suggested that, in future reports, the Office include a list of the trade unions that had been consulted or involved, and in what projects. She requested that, in future reports, the Office should provide information on how social partners had been integrated into technical cooperation projects.

33. The Worker Vice-Chairperson further stressed that it was difficult to assess the results and impact of technical cooperation in the absence of clear objectives, indicators and targets, in particular with regard to measuring the impact of gender mainstreaming as an important aspect of ILO technical cooperation. She further brought to the attention of the Committee selected technical cooperation projects in Colombia, Indonesia, Iraq and Palestine along with technical cooperation programmes within the follow-up to the African Union Summit and in response to the earthquake in South Asia and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean. She noted some of the progress made, and applauded the ILO's quick reaction in helping the Pakistan earthquake victims. At the same time, she voiced the Workers' group's concerns, which ranged from lack of trade union involvement, trade union rights violations, the challenges of regional and subregional integration, and the need to use technical cooperation to promote ratification of standards, to specific issues which the ILO was encouraged to address, and to the lack of information about important worker-related initiatives in the Committee's report.
34. On behalf of the Workers' group, Ms. Yacob said that she would like to see more technical assistance directed towards assisting countries to effectively implement the core elements of the Global Employment Agenda, and to assist workers' organizations in that regard. High priority should also be given to job creation and income redistribution, and workers' organizations should enhance their skills to assess the labour and social impacts of economic policies. She further welcomed the Office's proposal to strengthen DWCPs through technical cooperation, and requested that it submit a paper for the March 2006 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation on the content and impact of these programmes, as well as the countries where they operated and the involvement of social partners. Ms. Yacob urged the Office to adopt an integrated and holistic approach in dealing with technical cooperation, which should result in the strengthening of labour standards in small and medium-sized enterprises and assist enterprises to avoid job losses. She also suggested that the regions refer to the conclusions of the 2005 general discussion of the International Labour Conference on youth employment in developing their technical cooperation programmes. She recalled the Workers' group's concerns on the strategy underpinning the Youth Employment Network.
35. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the Office's efforts to increase resources for technical cooperation, and agreed with the need for greater coordination between donors and the Office, which should include the social partners, in entering into multi-year partnership agreements with key donor countries. With regard to public-private partnerships, Ms. Yacob stressed the need to involve trade unions and that private partners should commit themselves to respecting core labour standards. She suggested that the Committee could consider having a paper submitted to the November 2006 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation with a view to developing policy guidelines on that important matter.
36. In conclusion, Ms. Yacob acknowledged the work of the Office in implementing technical cooperation programmes. Subject to the response of the Office to the points raised, the Worker Vice-Chairperson expressed support for the point for decision in paragraph 138. On behalf of the Workers' group, Ms. Yacob also expressed condolences to the family of the late Mr. Khalid Doudine, who had been the ILO representative in Jerusalem and who had passed away in July 2005 of a heart attack.
37. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, noted the move towards DWCPs and requested information about the number of DWCPs designed so far, and the implications of this new modality for the Office and for resource allocation. He underlined the importance of coordinating activities with the United Nations system and requested further information on the work being done on PRSP and its relation with DWCPs, and the link between DWCPs and the CCA/UNDAF framework at national

level. He also wanted information on the effect that participation in the United Nations system coordinator arrangements would have on ILO activities and resources. The representative requested information on how the Office would address the critical issue of declining resources for the African region and LDCs. On resource mobilization, he welcomed the organization of donor workshops and requested that the implications of DWCPs for donors be discussed.

- 38.** The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, noted that the percentage of expenditure on technical cooperation in the employment sector had continued to decrease in 2004, and that Africa had dropped to second place as a recipient of ILO technical cooperation resources. He expressed the concern of the group in view of the scarce resources for the operationalization of DWCPs and for the follow-up to the African Union Summit. He concluded by expressing the group's confidence that Africa would regain its position as the priority region for ILO technical cooperation programmes.
- 39.** The representative of the Government of Japan informed the Committee of the support her Government was providing to the ILO through its Trust Fund for Human Security, and also through the Asian and Pacific Skills Development Programme. She announced her Government's intention of collaborating with the ILO in launching a youth employment programme in Asia.
- 40.** The representative of the Government of Mexico agreed with the points for decision in paragraph 138, stressing the importance of the involvement of constituents, political will and social dialogue as essential conditions for achieving results and sustainability of technical cooperation programmes. On resource mobilization, he highlighted the importance of developing partnerships within the United Nations system and with the development banks.
- 41.** Mr. de Arbeloa (Employer member) wanted to be informed as to what had hampered the implementation of tripartite agreements in the field of social security and why those that had been reached in some countries had not been observed. He also requested further information on the efforts that the Office could deploy in order to strengthen employers' and workers' associations in the region, and promote policies encouraging investment growth and employment creation, as opposed to those in place in some countries, which had dampened private investment. Referring to the informal sector, he proposed that the International Institute for Labour Studies should carry out a study on informality and the factors that were contributing to its expansion in the region. He requested the Office to invite Mr. Hernando de Soto to make a presentation on his work in that area.
- 42.** The representative of the Government of El Salvador referred to the Subregional Tripartite Employment Forum in Tegucigalpa, at which important tripartite agreements had been reached, and to the follow-up activities that had taken place in her country.
- 43.** Mr. Dahlan (Employer member) pointed out the reduction of technical cooperation for the Arab States and that the need to fill vacant posts by the recruitment of specialists was essential for the area.
- 44.** Mr. Mattar (Employer member) proposed the creation of a fund for Palestine to address the deficit in funding. He also drew urgent attention to the deterioration being faced by southern Lebanon and Iraq.
- 45.** Mr. Chen Lantong (Employer member) appreciated the constructive technical cooperation activities deployed in Asia and recommended that, in the face of globalization, focus be placed on traditional ILO intervention areas relating to the four strategic objectives. He added that ILO technical cooperation should be used to enhance the capacity of both

employers' and workers' organizations, with attention being paid not only to the improvement of workers' skills and well-being but also to enhancing the managerial competence of entrepreneurs. He called upon the Office to pay more attention to the needs of the populous Asian region, with its great economic, political and cultural diversities.

46. Mr. Oshinowo (Employer member) stressed the importance of involving the constituents in needs identification and the different implementation stages. He felt that such a systematic approach would improve the delivery rate of technical cooperation in the African region and help to build national governments' capacity for effective leadership in the development planning process.
47. Ms. Awassi Atsimadja (Employer member) reiterated that the fields in which ILO technical cooperation interventions were made were valid. She added that technical cooperation activities undertaken to reinforce employers' organizations in Africa would benefit from cooperation between the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and ACT/EMP.
48. The representative of the Government of France acknowledged the positive rise in expenditures but regretted the decreasing share of allocations for Africa and LDCs. She supported the implementation of DWCPs as an integrated approach to development and underlined the central role to be played by the social partners. She encouraged the Office to reinforce the planning and control of its budget, as voluntary contributions had risen significantly, and suggested increased collaboration with United Nations partners and institutions such as the World Bank.
49. Mr. Lambert (Employer member) mentioned a concern raised at the Seventh ILO European Regional Meeting in Budapest in February 2005 on the issue of youth employment. He endorsed the concern expressed about the decline in resources for the employment sector. He also expressed his concern with regard to job opportunities for young people.
50. The representative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran requested an explanation on Appendix IV of the paper (expenditure by country and area), which indicated a negative figure for his country.
51. The representative of the Government of Kenya had noted the overall rise in expenditure, but was concerned about the declining trend in the allocation of resources to the African region. He requested the involvement of implementing countries and social partners in monitoring and evaluation missions. Kenya endorsed the points for decision contained in the paper.
52. The representative of the Government of Niger, supporting the statement made by the Africa group, expressed the need for capacity building for the development of DWCPs. He was of the view that national authorities and social partners should be actively involved in all stages of projects which, in their turn, needed to be integrated with national plans such as PRSPs.
53. The representative of the Government of Pakistan expressed his gratitude for all support received after the earthquake. He suggested that cash surplus funds should be diverted to rehabilitation activities and additional donor funds should be sought. He mentioned the importance of freeing children from child labour and people from bonded labour.
54. Given the extensive presentations and large number of speakers, and the fact that one agenda item had yet to be covered, the Chairperson proposed that, rather than giving the

floor to each of the regional directors for their responses to the debate, Ms. Ducci should make a consolidated response.

55. Ms. Ducci thanked the delegates for their comments and for the rich debate covering a large number of issues. She assured Committee members that information on what was going to be done as a follow-up to the Committee's decisions would systematically be documented in future reports.
56. With respect to the pattern of expenditure among technical cooperation sectors, it was pointed out that the declining trend in the employment sector had been reversed, though additional efforts would still be required to further improve the situation.
57. Concerning the high expenditure on international experts in the ILO technical cooperation programme vis-à-vis the sum spent on training, Ms. Ducci explained that it was those experts who mostly delivered training and capacity-building activities. However, the Office was ready to consider ways and means of improving cost-effectiveness, including making further use of the competencies of constituents in technical cooperation. With regard to the decline in RBTC expenditures for 2004, she explained that it related to an accounting pattern linked to the Office's budget cycle, and the overall amount of the RBTC had not decreased for the biennium as a whole. The Office was aware of the need to fill vacant posts and was actively pursuing the matter.
58. In view of the interest expressed in DWCPs and the role of technical cooperation, Ms. Ducci stated that the Office would submit a report on the subject to the March 2006 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. The issue of public and private sector partnership would be covered in the report on technical cooperation that would be submitted to the 2006 session of the International Labour Conference, and proposals for guidelines would subsequently be proposed at the November 2006 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. Developments related to assistance to Colombia would be reported at the March 2006 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation.
59. Ms. Ducci highlighted the role that the ILO could play in crisis response, as demonstrated by its support following the recent earthquake in South Asia and the previous tsunami crisis. Also, the Office would seek ways and means of strengthening its assistance to the territories under the Palestinian Authority.
60. The representative of the Director-General assured the Committee that, in response to concerns at the declining share of technical assistance to Africa, efforts would be made to influence donors and thereby mobilize more resources for Africa. Ms. Ducci concluded by touching upon the implications for the ILO of the 2005 United Nations World Summit Outcome, and informed the Committee that a relevant document would be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2006.
61. ***The Committee recommends to the Governing Body that it request the Director-General to:***
 - (a) ***actively encourage donors to increase extra-budgetary funding to complement the regular budget in support of the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda, and in particular to strengthen DWCPs in all regions through technical cooperation;***
 - (b) ***further encourage the participation of tripartite constituents in technical cooperation programmes and activities;***

- (c) *request the Office to continue its efforts to enhance coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of operational programmes by linking ILO DWCPs to the United Nations system and other multilateral development frameworks at country level (UNDAF, CCA, PRSPs, MDGs, etc.).*

II. Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Technical cooperation priorities and action plans regarding elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour

62. A representative of the Director-General, Mr. Tapiola, opened the discussion by noting that this was the second action plan on the topic of the elimination of forced or compulsory labour to be presented to the Committee on Technical Cooperation.²
63. The first plan, presented in 2001, had received generous donor funding. The Director-General, at the June 2005 session of the International Labour Conference, had called for a global alliance against forced labour, with specific roles for employers' and workers' organizations. This global alliance required political will, technical capacity and resources. The proposed action plan noted the need for still better information on that complex issue, although the ILO had now estimated that there were a minimum of 12.3 million victims of forced labour globally.
64. The action plan proposed direct action on two main themes – forced labour, poverty and discrimination, and forced labour, migration and trafficking. Each emphasized the role of labour institutions, ranging from ministries of labour to employers' and workers' organizations. Mr. Tapiola closed by calling for renewed donor funding, particularly core support for the Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL). He passed the floor to Mr. Plant, the head of the programme, to update the Committee on its activities and achievements.
65. Mr. Plant highlighted the opportunity that the Director-General's goal of the eradication of forced labour by 2015 provided for the ILO to make a real contribution to global poverty reduction. The action programme already had considerable achievements to report, thanks in particular to generous core support from the Governments of Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The recent global estimate had helped focus on the basic facts and trends of modern forced labour. The programme's approach had enabled member States to address the problems of modern forced labour, combining policy advice, capacity building and assistance with surveys and data collection at national level, and direct support to victims at community level. Its geographical spread included developing, transition and industrialized countries. A particular concern had been to strengthen the capacity of employers' and workers' organizations to address these problems. Mr. Plant outlined the programme's plans regarding building a global alliance for the future, drawing attention to the continued need for donor support.
66. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, recalled that, during discussion of the Global Report at the June 2005 session of the International Labour Conference, the Employers' group had expressed the importance of having an agreed definition of forced labour, i.e. distinct from poor working conditions and lack of decent work. He felt that the Office was overemphasizing trafficking and that a more balanced view should be taken of the different

² GB.294/TC/2.

forms of forced labour. In view of the promotional nature of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Employers supported an integrated approach and urged the Office to draw on the lessons learned through implementation of the first action plan. That required capacity building, especially for employers' and workers' organizations, which had a great deal to contribute. It also required appropriate legislation and concerted action to raise public awareness through partnerships with the media.

- 67.** Mr. Jeetun expressed specific reservations regarding paragraphs 18, 19 and 20 of the paper. He noted the use of different terminology, referring to “employer organizations”, “employer groups” and then “employers”, and called for greater consistency. He questioned who would organize the proposed consultations with employers and wondered how economic sectors and supply chains would be identified, given that those issues had not been discussed in June. The Employers’ group did not agree with the contents of paragraph 20, and objected to the choice of words, which they felt risked sending the wrong message. The question of recruitment was an employer prerogative, and governments had the primary role in monitoring what was done on the labour market through labour inspection. It would be dangerous to transfer that role to trade unions. For the global alliance to succeed, each constituent should perform its appropriate role.
- 68.** Mr. Jeetun emphasized the importance of political will, and hoped that governments would fully cooperate. The Employers stood ready to play a full and active part in the alliance. He expressed the group’s hope that the second action plan would be as generously funded as the first.
- 69.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, condemned the continued existence of forced labour across the world, often entwined with child labour and problems of conflict. Regarding definitional issues, there was a considerable body of jurisprudence; for example, excessive compulsory, unpaid overtime could amount to forced labour. She pointed out that trafficking occurred not only across borders but also within a country, and was a very common element of forced labour. Given that the ILO Declaration was about both principles and rights, an important objective of ILO action should be to empower workers and trade unions to demand their rights. She highlighted the central importance of effective implementation of ratified Conventions, along with the need for assistance for those rescued from forced labour to prevent them becoming victims again. Training and rehabilitation of children released from forced labour should be long term, and adults should have access to decent work and social protection. Poverty eradication and income-generation activities were critical factors; the recent G8 resolution on debt cancellation was important in that respect and required the full support of the donor community.
- 70.** Ms. Yacob recalled that the Workers’ group had already insisted that the 12.3 million global estimate must always be clearly presented as a conservative, minimum estimate. The group requested that all ILO publications, press releases, etc., should make that clear to avoid diminishing the size of the problem. The Workers believed that SAP-FL should continue to spearhead the ILO’s technical cooperation on forced labour, but must complement standards supervisory work and work closely with other departments. She supported the need for ILO social partners to be fully involved in all projects and welcomed the focus on capacity building to allow them to be active partners in the global alliance, promoting empowerment of workers with regard to their rights and enhancement of workers’ organizations’ capacity to assist those trapped in forced labour. She highlighted the good work done by trade unions in Pakistan in that respect. The workers’ alliance mentioned in paragraph 20 must be read within the context of the global alliance as a whole, with each partner performing its respective role.

71. The Workers' group proposed the inclusion of the promotion of universal ratification and implementation of the fundamental Conventions on forced labour as an element in the action plan. It stressed the need to focus on the important countries that had not yet ratified one or both of the forced labour Conventions. It appealed to all donors to support the plan and urged the Office to prioritize its activities, suggesting special emphasis be placed on universal ratification of the Conventions, assistance to member States that establish time-bound programmes to eliminate forced labour, and capacity building of the social partners. In closing, Ms. Yacob suggested that there was greater potential to name and shame those guilty of exacting forced labour. She also requested an update on the implementation of the action plan on freedom of association and collective bargaining that had been adopted in March 2005.
72. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, recalled IMEC's concern, voiced during the June 2005 session of the International Labour Conference, that discussion of the Global Report was neither interactive nor well attended. The group requested new arrangements for the forthcoming discussion of the report on child labour. He noted the focus on poverty reduction as the central element in the fight against forced labour and encouraged cooperation with other international organizations. He requested further information on ILO plans for consultation in that respect. The group would also like to see more detail on targets, for example the number of pilot countries in 2006-07, and would appreciate further clarification on the links between the forced labour action plan and DWCPs.
73. The representative of the Government of Japan, speaking on behalf of the Asia-Pacific group, highlighted the group's great concern about continuing forced labour problems. Specific legislation must be strictly enforced in every country to combat every form of forced labour. The group was a strong supporter of ILO technical cooperation and the Office should seek to integrate all forms of funding and allocate more regular budget resources to technical cooperation. There should be a special focus on LDCs and independent evaluation of technical cooperation programmes.
74. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, expressed their vision, shared with the Director-General, of eliminating all forms of forced labour by 2015. Forced labour was an evil and dehumanizing experience, taking away dignity, freedom, security and access to social justice. The group endorsed the main elements of the action plan, recalling that most forms of forced labour were hidden from the public eye and were therefore difficult to combat. He appealed to donors to fund the plan, including activities in African countries.
75. The representative of the Government of Nigeria gratefully acknowledged ILO assistance to the country in combating human trafficking. She pointed to the need for improved data gathering on trafficking, particularly in destination countries and covering both forced economic and forced sexual exploitation. The ILO, through its technical cooperation programmes, could bring about cooperation between countries of origin and destination, including promotion of legal migration. Global advocacy must be sustained throughout the action plan.
76. The representative of the Government of Kenya, concurring with the Africa group's statement and commending the Office on its paper, called for legitimate roles to be played by all three social partners. SAP-FL had gained momentum through the 2005 Global Report, and needed adequate resources in order to undertake the large amount of work now required to eradicate forced labour. Activities should begin in member States where forced labour had been detected. Standards for private employment agencies must be strengthened, as forced labour often manifested itself in subtle ways; the absence of

effective legislation on trafficking was also a problem. He particularly welcomed proposals for capacity building, awareness raising and direct action.

- 77.** The representative of the Government of Pakistan noted that bonded labour was embedded in poverty and discrimination, and those root causes had to be addressed. She believed that the goal of eliminating forced labour would reinforce the world's focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and that much more needed to be done regarding that global problem. Pakistan was the first country to launch a national action plan for the eradication of bonded labour, an approach now being replicated in many other countries. She gratefully acknowledged ILO assistance and requested that technical cooperation should be provided in a more sustained manner, with donor support. The Government supported the action plan's approach to developing new projects, and she pointed out that bonded labour projects merited extension to other countries in the South Asia subregion. She requested more information on the communication strategy, which should place greater emphasis on national media outreach. More resources (including from the regular budget) should be directed to the issue, including to the field.
- 78.** The representative of the Government of China endorsed the statement of the Asia-Pacific group. Forced labour, as well as trafficking for labour exploitation, was a serious violation of human dignity. The Government of China was pleased to see that SAP-FL had undertaken a range of effective activities and acquired much useful experience since its establishment. China had been cooperating with the ILO on forced labour issues in recent years, for example through multi-stakeholder seminars in Beijing, and recently in those coastal provinces from where people migrated the most. Those activities had provided Chinese officials with opportunities to exchange experience and information and raise public awareness on combating forced labour and trafficking. He hoped that the ILO would continue to play a leading role in eliminating forced labour.
- 79.** The representative of the Government of the United States associated herself with the IMEC statement, and expressed her very strong support for ILO technical cooperation on forced labour. Speaking also on behalf of the Governments of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, she wished to raise their concern about ILO references to migration management policies, which they considered to be the concern only of national governments. The ILO should ensure that it retained a focus, with regard to migrant workers, on areas within its mandate.
- 80.** Mr. Tapiola responded to the points raised by Committee members. In response to the Employers, he explained that the emphasis on trafficking reflected the fact that the problem was growing, and was increasingly an international priority, including for donors. However, forced labour was indeed a much broader issue, and the ILO was pursuing action against all its forms. Regarding the reservations expressed on paragraphs 18-20, he clarified that all work on those themes would necessarily be undertaken through ACT/EMP and ACTRAV. The discussions would serve to reach agreement upon the kind of activities to be carried out, including in which sectors. The global alliance needed to be constructed. At its core was the internal alliance of the ILO "family" of governments, employers' and workers' organizations, which, in turn, would cooperate with other parts of society – authorities, relevant NGOs capable of delivery, legislators, etc. He reaffirmed that there was general agreement on the necessity of strengthening the capacity of governments to fulfil their law enforcement and monitoring role. However, given shortfalls in government capacity, it would be important to explore what could be done in addition – for example, how social partners might complement governmental labour inspections and institutions, but certainly not substitute for them.
- 81.** Replying to the issues raised by the Worker spokesperson, Mr. Tapiola agreed that ILO action must cover both internal and cross-border trafficking. Given that the vast majority

of ILO member States had ratified the fundamental Conventions on the subject (168 had ratified Convention No. 29 and 165 Convention No. 105), the legal obligations that resulted were thus quite comprehensive. The ILO would continue to stress that 12.3 million victims of forced labour was a minimum estimate, and that, in reality, the problem could be much larger. Regarding the request for an update on activities on freedom of association and collective bargaining, that would be given to the International Labour Conference in June 2006.

82. Mr. Tapiola explained that the ILO continued to seek the right way of having an interactive discussion on the Global Report, and another formula would be proposed for June 2006. Regarding the question that had been raised on migration in the context of trafficking, the forced labour programme had to deal with issues relating to migration but was in no way the lead unit on broader issues of migration policy.
83. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body endorse the action plan outlined in the paper (GB.294/TC/2) and request that it be kept informed, through the Committee on Technical Cooperation, of the implementation of the activities proposed.*

III. Other questions

84. As proposed by Mr. Jeetun, the Employer Vice-Chairperson, the issue of thematic evaluation was raised under the agenda item. To provide the context, the Chairperson reiterated that the Committee usually reviewed thematic evaluation of technical cooperation projects during its March sessions. A document on programme, finance and administration that had been submitted to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee during that session of the Governing Body had suggested that "... the practice of the CTC discussing a thematic evaluation each year could be reconsidered".
85. Being of the opinion that the practice should continue and that, unless a position was taken at the present time, the Governing Body might adopt the PFA document proposal referred to above, Mr. Jeetun proposed a text for a point for decision that the Committee could consider placing before the Governing Body. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, agreed with the proposal.
86. The representative of the Government of Italy was of the opinion that, since the issue of evaluation at the Office-wide level was still being discussed by different committees, it would be premature to propose a permanent undertaking.
87. The representative of the Government of the United States, agreeing with that view, added that the text that had been proposed was somewhat vague, and suggested some changes to the text.
88. The representative of the Government of Canada echoed the views expressed by the previous two speakers.
89. After further deliberations and refinements suggested by the Worker Vice-Chairperson, the following consensus text was adopted by the Committee.
90. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body,*
concerned that, without prior consultation with the Committee on Technical Cooperation, a PFA report (GB.294/PFA/8/4) submitted for decision

proposes that some of the tasks of the Committee on Technical Cooperation be reconsidered,

affirming that the Committee on Technical Cooperation is responsible for providing guidance and assistance in governance of all aspects of ILO technical cooperation programmes,

request the Director-General to ensure that the submission of thematic evaluations of technical cooperation projects be continued at the March 2006 session of the Governing Body while the broader question of thematic evaluation in the overall evaluation strategy will be considered by the Committee on Technical Cooperation in March 2006.

91. There being no other issue under the agenda item, the Chairperson closed the meeting, informing the Committee that, in accordance with the standard procedures, the report of the meeting would be approved on its behalf by the Officers of the Committee. They would also agree on the agenda for the next meeting.

Geneva, 15 November 2005.

Points for decision: Paragraph 61;
Paragraph 83;
Paragraph 90.