

**FOR INFORMATION**

THIRD ITEM ON THE AGENDA

ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization: Report on preparations

1. This note provides a brief update on preparations for the ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization. At the 295th (March 2006) Session of the Governing Body, following discussion in the Working Party of a paper (GB.295/WP/SDG/2) setting out possible themes, timing and format, resource implications and participation in a forum, it was agreed to proceed with its preparation. It was also agreed that the Officers would be consulted on the preparations and a report presented to the Working Party.

Venue and date

2. Following discussions with the Minister for Labour and Social Solidarity of Portugal, Mr José António Fonseca Vieira da Silva, a joint understanding was reached on the proposal of Portugal hosting the ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization, during the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union, in the second half of 2007. It was further agreed that the most suitable time and place for the event would be 1–2 November 2007 in Lisbon which would facilitate the participation of most Governing Body members in the Forum. (Most of the Committees of the Governing Body are scheduled to meet in the week starting on 5 November.)
3. Before confirming this arrangement, the Officers of the Governing Body were consulted and welcomed the interest of Portugal in hosting the ILO Forum, although it was noted that 1 November is a holiday in many countries and that the Committee on Freedom of Association would be meeting at that time.
4. With the assistance of the Portuguese authorities, the AIP Conference Centre in Lisbon was reserved from 31 October to 2 November and a number of pre-reservations made at the nearby hotels. The Conference Centre is centrally located and has a range of conference rooms and interpretation facilities, making it most suitable for the holding of an event like the Forum. It is owned by the Portuguese Industrial Association.

Programme

5. Consultations based on the background paper for the March 2006 session of the Working Party led to a consensus on six broad subject areas which could be addressed at the Forum. These were:
 - Employability: Education, skills development and technology.
 - Upgrading work and enterprises in the informal economy.
 - Migration for work, within borders and internationally.
 - Social protection policies for social cohesion and economic development.
 - Policy coherence among international organizations.
 - Decent work opportunities for young women and men: Overcoming discrimination and disadvantage.
6. It was envisaged that the Office would prepare a short background paper presenting information on these topics and suggesting questions for discussion.
7. Each subject area could be discussed in separate workshops. With six themes this would imply parallel workshops for three sessions. Discussions in each workshop would be opened by a panel of around four speakers chaired by a Governing Body member or leading figure from one of the constituents. The Chair could provide a short summary at the close of each workshop and to the concluding session. Drawing on the results of the workshops, the concluding session could examine the overarching issue of the role of decent work in shaping a fair globalization with particular emphasis on building partnerships and promoting convergence.
8. To accommodate this format, one possibility that could be considered is holding an opening session at 5 p.m. on 31 October to be addressed by leading figures from the host country, the ILO and one or two guest speakers that would provide an introduction to the aims and context of the Forum. This could be followed by a reception so that participants could meet each other on their likely day of arrival in Lisbon and begin substantive discussions on 1 November. An alternative would be to divide the first morning between an opening plenary and workshops. Consideration could also be given to interspersing the workshops with short plenary sessions to hear invited speakers.
9. Such a programme and the corresponding preparatory work will be developed in more detail over the coming months. The guiding principle would be to create opportunities for a constructive exchange between ILO constituents and representatives from other intergovernmental bodies and civil society organizations, both in the formal sessions and through informal contacts, about how in practical terms their respective mandates and mutual interest in decent work for a fair globalization could interact in the future.

Participants

10. Participation would be by invitation in order to ensure a good balance between the various interests and regions, together with a strong presence of women. Important criteria for selection are demonstrated relevance, engagement and expertise on issues connected to the Decent Work Agenda. It is envisaged that around 200 participants from around the world plus approximately 50 from Portugal could be accommodated in the conference facility.

11. Titular members of the Governing Body, or their deputies, attending the subsequent November session would be invited to Lisbon. In addition, the Workers' and Employers' groups could be invited to nominate a further ten participants each for supported participation with the request that they make every effort to ensure a gender and geographical balance.
12. Together with representatives of the professional associations that work closely with the ILO this would mean around 90 participants who are intimately connected to the work of the ILO.
13. It might be envisaged that around 25 representatives of various intergovernmental organizations could be invited. These would include the agencies with which the ILO is working most closely in following up the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration of 2006 and in the integration of Decent Work Country Programmes into UNDAF and PRS development frameworks.
14. An important role might be envisaged for parliamentary and local authority international bodies. Non-governmental organizations on the ILO special list plus others that have a particular interest and contribution to make in advancing the Decent Work Agenda would also be invited. Finally, a limited number of prominent individuals from academia, think tanks, the media or the political world could be invited. Approximately 80–90 invitations would be available for these last three categories.
15. A detailed list of invitees will be discussed with the Officers.
16. Discussions are under way with possible sponsors, and indications are that sufficient support will be available to complement the resources on the approved budget allocated by the ILO to finance the event.
17. The Working Party is invited to note the report and that consultations on the preparations with the Officers will continue.

Geneva, 16 March 2007.

Submitted for information.