



## **Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body to the Conference for the year 2006–07**

This report on the work of the Governing Body is submitted to the Conference in accordance with article 14 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body. It covers the period since the last general session of the Conference (June 2006), i.e. the 296th (June 2006), 297th (November 2006) and 298th (March 2007) Sessions of the Governing Body. It focuses only on the highlights of the Governing Body's year, and does not cover matters that are otherwise before the Conference.

Those seeking more extensive and detailed information on the work of the Governing Body as a whole are referred to the notes at the end of the report. They may also consult the minutes of its 296th, 297th and 298th Sessions (June and November 2006; March 2007) or the documents submitted to its committees and to the Governing Body itself. Other relevant material, as well as the reports and other Governing Body documents mentioned in the text and in the endnotes, are available on the Governing Body Internet site.<sup>1</sup>

### **I. ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**

#### **Compilation of annual reports**

In the eighth annual review under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration, the Governing Body had a discussion on the basis of the compilation of reports prepared by the Office<sup>2</sup> and the Introduction of the ILO Declaration Expert–Advisers.<sup>3</sup> The Governing Body acted on a number of observations made by the Expert–Advisers and engaged in a more in-depth discussion of certain aspects of the Introduction, including the country baselines under the Declaration's annual follow-up and the case studies and national tripartite dialogues on the fundamental principles and rights at work that have been carried out in volunteering countries (Liberia and Sierra Leone). The Governing Body endorsed the recommendation of the Expert–Advisers for the continuation of such experiences in selected volunteering countries with the support of the Office and the donor community. Office assistance should: (i) respond to the requests made by a number of governments that need the ILO's help in removing the obstacles to the full implementation of the rights and principles contained in the Declaration, or in moving towards ratification; (ii) be in particular included in the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and all other forms of assistance provided; and (iii) aim at helping employers' and workers' organizations to develop their own capacity to promote the Declaration's principles and rights.

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## Technical cooperation

In November 2006, the Committee on Technical Cooperation examined and approved the “Priorities and plans for technical cooperation” under the Declaration, which focused on the effective abolition of child labour. This action plan, which was submitted by the Office as a follow-up to the second Global Report on the subject, *The end of child labour: Within reach*,<sup>4</sup> proposed that “the International Labour Organization and its member States continue to pursue the goal of the effective abolition of child labour by committing themselves to the elimination of all the worst forms of child labour by 2016”. To this effect, all member States would, in accordance with Convention No. 182, design and put in place appropriate time-bound measures by the end of 2008. The action plan defines the role of the Office in assisting member States and the world community in pursuing this over the next four years. It rests on three pillars: (a) supporting national responses to child labour, in particular through more effective mainstreaming of child labour concerns in national development and policy frameworks; (b) deepening and strengthening the worldwide movement as a catalyst in the fight against child labour; and (c) promoting further integration of child labour concerns within overall ILO priorities. The action plan underlines the need for all three pillars to be backed up by solid research and for a special emphasis on Africa, where the least progress has been made.

## Discussion of the Global Report

In March 2007, the Governing Body confirmed the decision taken at its 295th Session (March 2006) on the arrangements for the discussion of the Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.<sup>5</sup> The Global Report submitted to the present session of the International Labour Conference will be the second Global Report on the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation.<sup>6</sup>

## II. Child labour

### IPEC action against child labour in 2006: Progress toward targets

In November 2006, the Governing Body examined operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) on the basis of the mid-term Implementation Report 2006. Programme delivery in 2006 rose to US\$74.3 million, compared with US\$70 million in 2005. In 2006 donors pledged US\$72.5 million to IPEC. The delivery rate dropped slightly to 67 per cent in 2006, from 68 per cent in 2005. For the child labour outcome cited in the Programme and Budget for 2006–07, a target was set to undertake “targeted action against child labour in line with fundamental ILO Conventions on child labour” in ten additional member States. The IPEC report for 2006 shows another two member States, in addition to those reported in 2004–05, as having already implemented two or more interventions in 2006. Eight additional member States have implemented one of the interventions specified by IPEC as contributing towards this target.

IPEC continued to report on both the programme and budget indicators for IPEC and additional indicators, which help to provide a more complete picture of IPEC’s work. In 2006, 21 member States were implementing time-bound programme (TBP) projects supported by IPEC. The number of direct and indirect beneficiaries reached through the programme is not available for mid-biennium reporting, but at the close of the 2004–05

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biennium more than 350,000 children had benefited directly from projects run by the ILO or its implementing agencies. As for ratifications, by the end of March 2007, a total of 163, or nine out of ten ILO member States, representing 80 per cent of the world's children, had ratified Convention No. 182; and 148 member States had ratified Convention No. 138. IPEC also continued to work closely with other ILO programmes and units and made efforts to integrate child labour in the DWCPs. As part of the worldwide movement, through IPEC, the ILO continued collaboration with other UN agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank, particularly as related to the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All, and, in the context of child labour and agriculture, with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), as well as with the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) and others.

The 2006 Global Report on child labour emphasized the strong role of the social partners in the worldwide movement against child labour, and IPEC's priority for collaboration with the social partners continued. To this end, IPEC organized a half-day technical session in order to discuss and identify opportunities for further enhancing this collaboration.

The second Global Report on child labour submitted under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was discussed at the 2006 session of the International Labour Conference. The proposed global action plan recommended that the ILO and its member States commit themselves to working towards the elimination of all the worst forms of child labour by 2016. To this effect, all member States would, in accordance with Convention No. 182, design and put in place appropriate time-bound measures by the end of 2008. The action plan received member State support from the International Labour Conference, the Governing Body Committee on Technical Cooperation and the IPEC International Steering Committee.

### **III. International labour standards**

#### **Ratification and promotion of ILO fundamental Conventions**

The campaign for the ratification of the ILO's fundamental Conventions has continued to achieve significant results, with 19 ratifications of ILO fundamental Conventions being registered from ten countries since 1 June 2006. These ratifications have added six countries to the list of member States having ratified the eight ILO core Conventions.

There are now 125 member States that have ratified all eight fundamental Conventions, and 21 that have ratified seven of them. The total number of ratifications obtained for these instruments is 1,281, or 89.4 per cent of the possible 1,432 ratifications (all numbers as of 10 May 2007).

#### **Promotion of ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**

Following the Governing Body's guidance after the adoption of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, the Office has developed and published a comprehensive five-year

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action plan that is designed to achieve widespread and rapid ratification and effective national implementation of the Convention. The action plan aims at achieving the requisite number of ratifications (30 Members representing at least 33 per cent of the world gross tonnage of ships) within five years, which would allow the Convention to enter into force 12 months later. An important activity under the action plan, which the Governing Body endorsed in March 2007, relates to the implementation of the Conference resolution for the development, at a tripartite expert meeting, of guidance for port State control officers. A tripartite expert meeting with respect to guidance for flag State inspections, which will implement another resolution of the Conference, was also endorsed. Both meetings are scheduled to take place in 2008.

To date the Convention has been ratified by Liberia (in June 2006), the second largest of the world's flag States. Other countries, including Members of the European Union, the Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Panama, Philippines and the Russian Federation, are known to have taken significant steps towards ratification.

## **Complaints under article 26 of the ILO Constitution**

### ***Observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)***

In November 2006, the Governing Body had before it: (i) an update on the situation since June 2006, including a report of a mission which had visited Yangon in October 2006 in order to discuss the establishment of a mechanism for addressing complaints of forced labour;<sup>7</sup> and (ii) an examination of the legal aspects arising out of the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference as regards Myanmar's observance of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29).<sup>8</sup>

In its conclusions, the Governing Body noted that the Workers, the Employers and the majority of Governments had expressed their great frustration that the Myanmar authorities had not been able to agree on a mechanism to deal with complaints of forced labour within the framework set out in the Conference conclusions. The Myanmar authorities should, as a matter of utmost urgency and in good faith, conclude such an agreement, on the specific basis of the final compromise text proposed by the ILO mission. Following the Conference conclusions in June 2006, a specific item would be placed on the agenda of the March 2007 session of the Governing Body, to enable it to move on legal options, including, as appropriate, involving the International Court of Justice. The Office was therefore requested to make the necessary preparations for the Governing Body to request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on specific legal questions. As regards the question of making available to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court a record of the relevant ILO documentation related to the issue of forced labour in Myanmar, it was noted that the documents in question were public and the Director-General would therefore be able to transmit them. In addition, the Director-General could ensure that developments were appropriately brought to the attention of the United Nations Security Council when it considered the situation in Myanmar.

In March 2007, the Governing Body had before it: (i) documents providing the details of the negotiation and final agreement on 26 February 2007 of a Supplementary Understanding between the ILO and Myanmar which established a complaints mechanism to enable victims of forced labour to seek redress, as well as details of other activities carried out by the Office;<sup>9</sup> (ii) a report from the Liaison Officer ad interim on the initial functioning of the complaints mechanism;<sup>10</sup> and (iii) a document setting out preparations

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made by the Office as regards the question of requesting an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.<sup>11</sup>

The Governing Body welcomed the signing of the Supplementary Understanding. It also welcomed the fact that the implementation of the complaints mechanism had begun, and that action had been taken by the authorities in those cases that involved forced labour. The Governing Body underlined the importance of the mechanism continuing to function effectively in the context of a very serious forced labour situation. In this regard, as foreseen in the Supplementary Understanding, it was vital that the Liaison Officer should have the necessary staff resources to adequately discharge the responsibilities. The Governing Body requested the Office to move quickly to assign suitable international staff to assist the Liaison Officer, and requested the Government of Myanmar to extend the necessary cooperation and facilities. The Governing Body decided to defer the question of a request for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice, on the understanding that the necessary question(s) would continue to be studied and prepared by the Office, in consultation with the constituents and using the necessary legal expertise, with the question(s) to be available at any time that might be necessary.

***Observance by the Government of the Republic of Belarus of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)***

The follow-up given to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry established to examine the observance by the Government of Belarus of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), was reviewed by the Governing Body, with reference to the reports of the Committee on Freedom of Association approved in November 2005, March 2006, and March 2007, respectively.

Pursuant to a request from the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference, acting on the recommendation of the Committee on the Application of Standards in relation to its discussion on the application of Conventions Nos 87 and 98 in Belarus, the Governing Body had before it, in November 2006<sup>12</sup> and March 2007,<sup>13</sup> documents for debate and guidance concerning the measures taken by Belarus to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry established under the ILO Constitution. In March 2007, the Governing Body adopted the following conclusions on this matter:

The Governing Body: (1) noting the dialogue that has taken place, calls upon the Government of Belarus to fully cooperate with the International Labour Office for the implementation of all the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry; (2) calls upon the Government to ensure that all workers' and employers' organizations can function freely and without interference, and obtain registration; (3) urges the Government to abandon the present draft concept on the trade union law and review all its legislation in full consultation with all the social partners concerned in order to ensure fully the right to organize both in law and in practice, in accordance with Convention No. 87, so that free and independent trade unions may exercise their full rights; (4) decides to keep the developments under close review.

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***Observance by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)***

In November 2004, the Governing Body was informed of a complaint submitted under article 26 of the Constitution, concerning the non-observance by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). The complaint was transmitted to the Committee on Freedom of Association in advance of a Governing Body decision as to whether the complaint should be forwarded to a commission of inquiry. Since November 2005, the Committee on Freedom of Association has requested the Government to indicate its willingness to receive a direct contacts mission to the country in order to obtain an objective assessment of the actual situation.

**Representations under article 24 of the ILO Constitution**

In November 2006, the Governing Body declared receivable a representation alleging non-observance by the Government of Turkey of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and referred the matter to the Committee on Freedom of Association. At the same session, the Governing Body declared receivable a representation alleging non-observance by Argentina of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and set up a tripartite committee to examine it.

In March 2007, the Governing Body declared receivable a representation in so far as it alleged non-observance by Mexico of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and set up a tripartite committee to examine it.

**Freedom of association**

During the past year, the Committee on Freedom of Association examined 170 cases, and in 191 cases followed up the measures taken by member States to give effect to its recommendations. The Committee in several cases noted positive developments in the matters before it. While it cannot be said that the submission of complaints against alleged violations of freedom of association has in any way subsided, the Committee has been pleased to be able to continue to note important positive developments in respect of certain of these cases, such as the release of detained trade union leaders and members, the registration of trade unions, and the reinstatement of trade union leaders and members dismissed on anti-union grounds.

**Improvements in the ILO's standards-related activities:  
From strategy to implementation**

In March 2007, the Governing Body had before it a document<sup>14</sup> on the implementation of the four components of the standards strategy agreed upon by the Governing Body in November 2005, which gave rise to a wide-ranging debate. This

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document took into account the informal tripartite discussion which had taken place on this matter in November 2006, as well as the discussions within the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards in November 2005 and March 2006. In the first place, the document addressed the issue of the standards strategy, in particular with regard to developing and keeping up to date the body of standards and the need to ensure effective follow-up to the conclusions of the Working Party on Policy regarding the Revision of Standards. Secondly, it proposed measures aimed at increasing the coherence, integration and efficacy of the supervisory system, in particular rationalization measures regarding the regular supervisory system. Thirdly, the document examined an implementation strategy for ILO standards based on technical cooperation. Fourthly, it envisaged the implementation of a communications strategy for standards with the emphasis on enhancing access to the “standards capital”. The multiple actions proposed were grouped in the form of an action plan contributing, in a consistent and effective manner, to enhancing the impact of the standards system, notably through the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). The Governing Body invited the Office to consider the comments made during the discussion and, in the light of that discussion and further consultations, to submit a paper in November 2007 on a proposed plan of action, including additional options for the streamlining of information and reports due under article 22, such as the examination of an intensified thematic approach to non-fundamental and non-priority Conventions.<sup>15</sup>

## **General status report on ILO action concerning discrimination in employment and occupation**

In March 2007, the Governing Body had before it for debate and guidance a general status report on ILO action concerning discrimination in employment. The report provided an update of guidance emerging from the supervisory process and highlighted examples of ILO action concerning discrimination undertaken in 2006. It noted that the DWCPs for a number of countries specifically address equality issues and promote the application of the relevant standards, and that it is now firmly established that the principle of equality and non-discrimination should be addressed as a cross-cutting issue through the ILO Decent Work Agenda.

## **Progress in the work to adapt the *Manual for drafting ILO instruments***

During the past year, the Governing Body continued to encourage the Office to adapt the *Manual for drafting ILO instruments*, which was prepared by the Office of the Legal Adviser and reviewed by a tripartite group of experts in 2005–06. The Manual is a reference guide for all those involved in the process of developing ILO instruments. It is available in hard copy and in an interactive format on CD-ROM as well as on the ILO web site<sup>16</sup> in English, French and Spanish. At the request of the Governing Body and following informal consultations with the constituents, the Office has transformed the full text version into a user-friendly quick guide, in collaboration with the International Training Centre. The quick guide will be made available for use during the present session of the International Labour Conference for use by constituents involved in standard-setting discussions.

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## **IV. Institutional and legal issues**

### **The ratification campaign for the 1997 amendment to the ILO Constitution**

The impetus given by the Governing Body to the campaign for the ratification of the Instrument of Amendment of 1997 to the ILO Constitution resulted in 94 member States having ratified it by mid-May 2007. Since June 2006, seven member States have ratified or accepted the instrument, and several others have reported concrete measures to do so. The Office promoted ratification at both the Asian (2006) and African (2007) Regional Meetings, as well as at sessions of the Governing Body and at internal meetings with directors in the regions. The promotional brochure has been updated and printed in English, French and Spanish; it is available electronically in those languages and in Portuguese.<sup>17</sup> Possible ways for making it available in Arabic and Russian are being pursued. The current Conference offers an additional opportunity for States to deposit their instruments of ratification with the Director-General, to bring the Organization closer to the goal of acceptance by two-thirds of the member States (120 out of 180 member States): an additional 26 ratifications are required for entry into force. A list of ratifying States is also available on the Web.<sup>18</sup> A further update on progress in ratifications will be provided to the Governing Body in November 2007.

### **The status of privileges and immunities of the International Labour Organization in member States**

To date, a total of 106 out of 180 ILO member States have acceded to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and accepted its Annex I relating to the International Labour Organization. The Governing Body considered the issue in November 2006<sup>19</sup> and endorsed the view of the Office that a minimum consistent level of privileges and immunities across all member States would strengthen the efforts of the ILO and its constituents to achieve the Decent Work Agenda.

The Governing Body therefore requested the Director-General, on the one hand, to renew the invitation to member States that have not yet acceded to the Convention or not yet accepted Annex I relating to the ILO to do so and, on the other hand, to report periodically on the situation of privileges and immunities in the member States, and in particular in the context of DWCPs. In a letter addressed to the member States concerned, the Director-General is appealing for ratification, with acceptance of Annex I, so as to enable the Governing Body to examine a further report on the issue in November 2007. The status of privileges and immunities in member States falls within the legal framework that is to be taken into account within the review of the ILO field structure that is currently under way.

### **Collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**

In November 2006, the Governing Body discussed developments in relation to possible collaboration between the ILO and the ISO on occupational safety and health management systems (OSH-MS). On the specific question raised in the Office paper, the Governing Body decided to request the ISO to refrain from proceeding with a survey of its members on the possibility of developing an OSH-MS standard. It also decided to discuss

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the matter further at its next session, including a general consideration of future ILO collaboration with the ISO. In March 2007, the Governing Body reaffirmed the ILO's mandate in the matter of occupational safety and health, and decided to ask the ISO to refrain from developing an international standard on OSH-MS.<sup>20</sup> The Governing Body further requested the Office to continue consultations with ILO constituents on possible cooperation between the ILO and ISO and to report in November 2007, with recommendations reflecting these consultations.

## **V. Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization**

### **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Ministerial Declaration on generating full and productive employment and decent work for all**

In November 2006, the members of the Working Party acknowledged that the Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), July 2006,<sup>21</sup> had given great support to the promotion of decent work. They also noted with appreciation that the Ministerial Declaration asked the agencies of the multilateral system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, regional banks and economic commissions, to take explicit account of the impact of their activities on decent work and productive employment, and provided guidance on how the multilateral system could forge greater operational coherence in its policies at the national level. It offered a practical tool for all constituents and gave support to discussions being led by the ILO on a tool kit to promote decent work system wide in the forum of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and its High-level Committee on Programmes.<sup>22</sup>

All members of the Working Party noted that it was now essential to harmonize national and international policies in the fields of finance, trade, migration, social security and the labour market. A number of speakers expressed support for the role assigned to the ILO in the multilateral system and the request for it to develop time-bound action plans with other actors. The action plans should be prepared through tripartite consultations. The focus of ILO action was shifting to the implementation and delivery of decent work, particularly at the country level through DWCPs. Collaboration and coordination with other organizations was now paramount. It was suggested that ILO follow-up action on the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration should be considered in greater detail at the forthcoming sessions of the Governing Body. Several proposals were made concerning actions to be taken by the Governing Body which were subsequently dealt with in various committees and in the plenary in March 2007.

### **High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence**

The report of the High-level Panel<sup>23</sup> was presented to the Working Party in November 2006 but, since it had only been released the previous week, it was decided that it would be considered in detail by the Governing Body in March 2007. During the deliberations held in November 2006, it was observed that the ILO goals could be fully achieved only within an effective and better integrated United Nations system, especially in the context of globalization. Some speakers noted a link between the conclusions of the High-level Panel and those of the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. The ILO tripartite structures had a major opportunity to lead the drive for greater coherence in the global system because the ILO goal – decent work

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for all – was central to effective mechanisms for the governance of globalization. Tripartism was recognized as an asset, enabling United Nations organizations to connect with society at large. Several speakers also observed that the report dealt in some depth with field-level coordination. The concept of system-wide coherence should be applied at the national level, especially in order to strengthen linkages with the Decent Work Agenda and productive employment for all as a foundation for sustainable development, and to improve policy coherence between bilateral and multilateral programmes. It was suggested that employers' and workers' organizations should meet the United Nations Resident Coordinators at the national level – either independently or together – to help them understand the role of social dialogue. An executive workshop on decent work for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Coordinators and ILO country directors has been carried on in April 2007.

## **Follow-up to the International Labour Conference discussion on changing patterns in the world of work**

In November 2006, the Working Party also reflected on the Report *Changing patterns in the world of work*<sup>24</sup> with a view to selecting topics for the Working Party to discuss over the coming years. The Office paper identified various trends such as: (a) the difficulties in the multilateral trade negotiations linked to national political concerns on the pace and scale of the impacts of liberalization; (b) a pattern of growth in many countries which seems to favour the top end of income and wealth distribution much more than the middle and the bottom; (c) the investment and employment implications of global warming; (d) the interaction between what is happening in workplaces and in labour markets at the national level; (e) the need to view the underlying currents of change, notably the movement out of agriculture and rural areas, and the global demographics of continued population growth in a global, rather than purely national, context; and (f) the influences of women and men on the local livelihoods and workplaces.

The Working Party indicated that various issues needed to be considered. Those issues included: (a) the relationship between growth and employment which was changing with globalization; (b) the employment implications of policies to mitigate climate change; (c) globalization and informality; (d) the interaction between technological change, liberalization of trade and investment, and employment; (e) the relationship between growth and jobs in a globalized world, including capital market volatility and its impact on decent work; (f) the role of private enterprise, especially micro and small enterprises; (g) youth employment; (h) education and skills development in the face of rapid technological change; (i) migration and the “brain drain”; (j) productivity and competitiveness; and (k) the response of labour legislation or collective bargaining to changes in the world of work.

## **Trade and employment: Panel discussion on issues arising from the joint ILO/WTO Secretariat study on challenges for policy research**

Most of the March 2007 session of the Working Party was devoted to a joint ILO/WTO Secretariat study on trade and employment.<sup>25</sup> Mr Pascal Lamy, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) emphasized that the changing nature of trade, and in particular the role of offshoring, was likely to make it increasingly difficult for policy-makers to predict which jobs were at risk; that trade is not the only driver of change; and that a trade-off between providing insurance for workers and economic efficiency does not need to be steep. Increasing inequality was a major concern in many countries, and the low-skilled appeared to be hardest hit. While trade was often blamed for

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the phenomenon, there was broad agreement that technological change, not trade, was the main driver of these increases in inequality. Mr Lamy drew a number of conclusions from the joint study: firstly, that trade policy interacts with other policy areas, including labour market policy, education policy and redistribution policy; secondly, that coherence among these policy fields helps to optimize the outcomes of trade liberalization and is likely to have positive effects on public support for trade reform; and, thirdly, that research to support increased policy coherence could have high pay-offs. Mr Lamy suggested a number of questions on which further research was necessary.

Other interventions were made by: Mr Andrade (Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Chile); Ms Pillai (Secretary of Labour and Employment, India); Mr Katz (President of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE)); and Sir Roy Trotman (Worker Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body). While bringing out their specific viewpoints on the question of trade and employment, all the members endorsed the usefulness of the joint ILO–WTO work. In the ensuing general debate, the members of the Working Party welcomed the collaboration between the ILO and the WTO Secretariat which had led to the present study, and expressed their appreciation of its high quality and balance. Some speakers highlighted the great positive potential of trade for growth and job creation, but also expressed concerns about negative repercussions and trade-related job losses. Others took up the argument that trade led to both the destruction and creation of jobs and enterprises, and weighed the positive and negative aspects against one another. Various speakers called for greater coherence between trade and labour market policies in order to avoid adverse outcomes. The danger of trade-related job losses was underscored, but it was stated that workers were not opposed to open markets, but rather to the terms, sequence and selective opening of markets which often disregarded the negative impact on workers' rights.

Participants called for a closer integration of trade and social policies in order to facilitate a smoother adjustment process. Adjustment support policies were absolutely essential to improve the returns from globalization and to help people to move from declining sectors or jobs to those undergoing expansion. Many speakers also said that the repercussions of trade on inequality were a major concern for them, and that such adverse distributional outcomes might put the sustainability of globalization into question. Various speakers asked how the WTO could contribute to universal respect for labour standards, or at least to not undermine them, and suggested, among other things, the participation of tripartite delegations in WTO negotiations, reciprocal observer status between the ILO and the WTO, and a committee on trade and decent work.

The issue of labour standards in trade agreements was also raised. The Employers in particular opposed linking labour standards to WTO trade agreements. Mr Lamy replied that a debate on the issue had taken place at the WTO, but there had been no consensus on inserting an explicit link between trade and labour in the texts, with the exception of explicit references to forced labour. Many speakers suggested that freer trade and labour standards should not be seen as antagonistic objectives, and pointed out certain complementarities. The importance of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as a common vision was reiterated.

It was broadly acknowledged that the paper was in itself a substantial contribution to greater inter-agency coherence. Many speakers stressed that building a knowledge base on the interaction of trade and employment was a pivotal task for both the ILO and the WTO Secretariat. The proposal to facilitate exchanges of information and experience among constituents on the social effects of trade reform was received positively. It was suggested that the ILO should make efforts to strengthen the capacity of constituents in that regard. A novel idea developed during the deliberations was to use the joint ILO/WTO Secretariat study in national-level social dialogue, a suggestion which received broad support.

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The Director-General put on record Mr Lamy's commitment to continued collaboration between the two secretariats, within the realm of their respective competences. He raised the issue of anticipating the impact of trade liberalization, and said that poorly designed trade policies could not be corrected by well-designed labour market policies.

He observed that the discussion demonstrated an important institutional breakthrough and provided a justification for the existence of the Working Party. The report and the discussions also highlighted the role of research. He acknowledged the wishes expressed by many speakers that the ILO continue work with the WTO and strengthen its collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the regional banks, either in the form of policy coherence initiatives or in other ways.

### **Growth, investment and employment: An update on policy coherence research and meetings**

In March 2007, a paper<sup>26</sup> was presented to the Working Party which reported on two Policy Coherence Initiative (PCI) meetings held in Washington and Geneva in 2006 and which outlined international and regional activities of the PCI in 2007. It was noted that the PCI was one of many efforts at coordination in the system – efforts which included the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) themselves, the UN reform and “One UN” countries, the discussion on WTO/ILO collaboration earlier that day, and the ILO/UNDP Memorandum of Understanding.

Various speakers noted that the PCI with its associated organizations was of the highest relevance, and that the PCI meetings to date had been of great interest. The PCI was seen as an appropriate response to the deliberations of ECOSOC on bringing economic and social policy considerations closer together. A coordinated and collaborative research agenda among the PCI participants was welcomed, and it was noted that the PCI was becoming increasingly an instrument for advancing concrete and operational objectives to achieve a coherent policy framework within the multilateral framework, each agency retaining its distinctive comparative advantage while helping to breakdown the barrier between considerations of economic and social policies.

### **ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization**

A progress report<sup>27</sup> on an ILO Forum on Decent Work for a Fair Globalization was submitted in March 2007, informing the Working Party that the Government of Portugal would be hosting the Forum during the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union. Although the practical organization of the Forum, scheduled for 1–2 November 2007 in Lisbon, continues to be a subject of close consultation with the Governing Body Officers, a central principle will be to ensure interaction between the ILO tripartite constituency with the various international organizations, non-governmental bodies and individuals invited to the Forum. A format of small panels, chaired by Governing Body members or leaders of constituents, will be an effective catalyst for that process.

It was noted that the governments and the international community had broadly endorsed the objective of decent work and that the Forum could be an opportunity to reach out to important supporters of the concept, national parliaments and local authorities being chief among them. The invitation to selected international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) was vital, in that the largest and most established of those had extensive networks of their own through which to propagate ILO messages on decent work. In addition the academic community, among others, could discover a new set of issues upon which to base

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future research endeavours and elements in academic curricula. There was much of potential value to take away from this event. Dissemination, in short, was an important and intended outcome of the Forum.

## **VI. Employment and social policy**

### **Implementation of the Global Employment Agenda: An update**

Further to the agreement reached in March 2006 that the regular updates on the implementation of the Global Employment Agenda (GEA) would rotate between presentation of country experiences and regular reports on progress, the implementation update presented to the Committee on Employment and Social Policy in November 2006<sup>28</sup> reported on progress in making employment central in economic and social policy-making at the global, regional and national levels and meeting the special needs of Africa. The paper included: the outcome of the ECOSOC High-level Segment; the country reviews of employment policy (CREP) under the Bucharest process for countries of south-east Europe; the emergency employment and employment action programme in Liberia; and the major policy recommendations of the Employment and Skills Forum in Pakistan. The Committee stressed that it was important to demonstrate the contribution and value added by the GEA framework and its implementation strategy (“vision” document) to the DWCPs and to link and integrate this contribution with major policy frameworks (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the African Union Summit Plan of Action) in order to achieve policy coherence and maximize impact. The need to build the capacity of the social partners to actively participate in and contribute to this process was also outlined.

As a new feature in March 2007, the country presentations prepared by high-level policy-makers and the social partners from Burkina Faso and Pakistan were circulated as country background papers before the presentations were made. They focused on efforts made in those two countries to make employment central in economic and social policy-making and ways in which the GEA framework and ILO technical support had helped them in achieving those objectives. The country background papers drew upon a set of guidelines prepared by the Office in consultation with the Officers of the Committee. The presence of high-level policy-makers from Pakistan (Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Chairperson of the Policy Planning Cell, Ministry of Labour) and Burkina Faso (Minister of Youth Employment and Secretary-General of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security), and the impressive presentations by the social partners from both these countries, ensured thoughtful tripartite insights into economic policy-making in these countries. Suggestions were made by the Committee on improving the guidelines on country presentations.

### **Implementation of DWCPs: Checklist of policy areas on social protection**

In November 2006, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy had before it a paper<sup>29</sup> indicating the main policy areas on social protection and was presented with an overview of the programmes and areas of intervention of the Social Protection Sector, examples of specific country experiences, lessons learnt and challenges ahead. Committee members underlined the importance of social protection within the Decent Work Agenda and DWCPs, the synergy between social protection and employment, and the need to adopt approaches to the national context. In essence, there was broad consensus in the

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Committee that social protection was a vital element of decent work, and the report provided a strong foundation for the future work of the Office, including better adapted tools.

## **Business environment, labour law, and micro- and small enterprises**

In November 2006, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy discussed a paper<sup>30</sup> on the issue and provided guidance to the Office on possible strategy elements to address the challenges arising from efforts to minimize the cost of the regulatory burden on micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) without compromising the protection of workers in those enterprises. The debate in the Committee revealed a broad agreement on the need for further work by the Office to provide guidance to constituents in this area. Committee members gave a clear mandate for a large intersectoral research programme. While divergent positions were expressed as to the exact nature of collaboration with the World Bank on measuring and characterizing the quality of labour law, Committee members agreed that any cooperation with other institutions should take place on the basis of a distinctive and well-articulated ILO position.

## **Youth employment**

In November 2006, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy discussed the status of activities within the Office's Youth Employment Programme (YEP) and the Youth Employment Network (YEN) secretariat, the effectiveness of selected policy instruments and interventions, and examples of recent ILO work in this area.<sup>31</sup> In the effort to expand youth employment, Committee members recognized that both the quantity and quality of employment should be taken into account. There was general agreement on the work modalities of the YEP within the framework of the GEA, and on the need to continue its activities along the lines of the resolution concerning youth employment, adopted in June 2005 by the International Labour Conference, and its plan of action. It was widely agreed that the YEP should expand its knowledge base in certain priority areas and develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and instruments on youth employment outcomes, as well as engaging in assessing the impact of the Office's work on youth employment.

## **Wages around the world: Developments and challenges**

In March 2007, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy examined a paper<sup>32</sup> providing information on wage developments. Recognizing wages as a major component of decent work and conscious of the knowledge gaps that exist in relation to wages and income issues, the Governing Body invited the Office to develop and implement, in consultation with constituents, a programme of work reflecting the availability of resources, the potential for mobilizing other actors, and the need to build stronger partnerships with other institutions, which would initially address as a priority the following areas: (a) collection and dissemination of statistics; (b) country-level assistance, including in DWCPs; (c) wage-setting mechanisms and wage bargaining; (d) wages, productivity and economic performance; and (e) wage differentials and disparities.

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## Portability of skills

In March 2007, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy discussed a paper<sup>33</sup> which reviewed and analysed policies to promote the transferability and recognition of skills in the context of the GEA. Committee members commented on the benefits of skills development for workers, employers and labour markets through increased flexibility and mobility, the adverse impact of the “brain drain” related to migration, the different roles of the partners in skills development, and the relevance of portability of skills in the informal economy. They expressed an interest in further Office work on core skills and the methodologies involved, as well as forward-looking skills development strategies, and in receiving information on policy options, international experience, and in exploring topics such as linking skills development to national and sectoral development strategies. Calls were also made for closer cooperation with the Turin Centre and the Inter-American Research and Documentation Centre on Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) and with the social partners in technical cooperation activities.

## The informal economy

In March 2007, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy had before it a paper<sup>34</sup> on the informal economy, jointly prepared and presented by the Employment and Social Protection Sectors. Recalling the resolution and conclusions concerning decent work and the informal economy adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2002, the paper presented examples of innovative initiatives taken by constituents, and reviewed key policy issues and practical approaches being developed to promote decent work in the informal economy. It also indicated work undertaken in the context of the 2006–07 programme and budget. The Committee recognized the complexity of the issue and the need for all partners to work together. There was broad consensus that the Office should continue its work leading the policy debate on the informal economy with the twin objectives of preserving its employment-generation potential and extending protection. It also encouraged the Office to carry out further work on measuring and monitoring changing patterns in the informal economy.

## Strategies and practices for labour inspection

In November 2006, the Committee on Employment and Social Policy discussed the functions, strategies and practices of labour inspection in the context of the ILO Decent Work Agenda.<sup>35</sup> The Committee strongly supported the need for effective labour inspectorates as a basic condition for good governance at work. Inspectorates had a crucial role in giving advice and guidance, in supporting national programmes such as those on occupational safety and health, and in promoting compliance with the law. Investors were not attracted by weak enforcement.

However, it was also noted that many labour inspectorates were poorly resourced and inadequately trained, especially in developing countries. The Committee emphasized the vital role that the Office played in helping member States to strengthen labour inspectorates, with support from their social partners, by providing technical assistance and cooperation, developing training resources, and by other means.

The Committee therefore recommended that the Office be invited to develop, evaluate and implement a strategy to support the modernization and reinvigoration of labour inspection, with international collaboration as required to achieve these goals. It was agreed that this should include, in particular, developing the role of labour inspection within DWCPs and within national development strategies. The Committee also endorsed Office proposals to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of inspection services through

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tools such as tripartite labour inspection system audits and a global labour inspection Internet-based portal.

## **Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management**

As requested by the conclusions concerning occupational safety and health adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 91st Session (June 2003), the ILO participated actively in the development of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The Strategic Approach was completed and adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in February 2006.

In November 2006, the Governing Body endorsed the Strategic Approach, including the proposed follow-up actions.<sup>36</sup> The ILO participates actively in the trust fund implementation committee of the SAICM Quick Start Programme (QSP) to ensure that due weight is given to ILO considerations in funding decisions associated with project proposals from the ILO constituents. The first round of submissions to the QSP were analysed in October 2006. In collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the ILO approved integrated chemicals management projects for 15 countries and one workers' organization. These projects serve as the first phase for the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) capacity-building programmes in member States, under the UNITAR/ILO GHS Global Capacity-Building Programme. The second round of project submissions to the SAICM QSP took place in May 2007. The ILO will continue to ensure that project proposals from constituents are formulated under the QSP rules and receive due consideration for funding in the trust fund implementation committee.

## **Report and conclusions of the technical workshop on avian flu and the workplace**

A technical workshop on "Avian flu and the workplace: Preparedness and response", was held on 27 September 2006 in Geneva. The workshop, attended by representatives of employers, workers and international agencies, provided an opportunity to examine critical occupational safety and health and employment and livelihood issues in the context of the Consolidated Action Plan for Contributions of the UN system with regard to the potential spread of the avian flu virus. This was the first instance to review the recently launched United Nations action plan specifically in the context of the world of work.

The report and conclusions<sup>37</sup> of this workshop were examined by the Governing Body in November 2006. This activity was praised by both the Employers' and Workers' groups which requested the ILO to continue to be seized of this issue.

## **International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources**

The Governing Body took note of the information provided on the revision of the 1996 International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources (BSS) jointly sponsored by the FAO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA),<sup>38</sup> the ILO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD/NEA), the Pan-American Health

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Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It also considered the invitation by the IAEA for the ILO to participate in the revision of the BSS. The Employers' and Workers' groups of the Governing Body agreed to appoint one expert and one alternative each for participation in the technical committee meetings which are tasked with revising the BSS.

## **VII. Multinational enterprises**

### **Planning for the 30th anniversary of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy**

In March 2007, the Subcommittee on Multinational Enterprises discussed a proposal for an event to mark the 30th anniversary of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration). The Subcommittee stressed the need to show that the ILO had tools to go beyond its traditional support of governments. The event should target not just large companies but also small and medium-sized enterprises, as they were increasingly operating globally through supply chains. In the light of the Subcommittee's discussion, the Governing Body endorsed a draft programme for this event, which is scheduled to take place from 1 to 2 November 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal.

### **Report on the modalities of a programme to give an orientation on international labour standards, the MNE Declaration and other related matters**

The Governing Body approved the development of an Office programme, in cooperation with relevant departments, to provide companies with expert advice on the realization of international labour standards and the MNE Declaration. It requested that the Office seek to augment this work by extra-budgetary financing.

### **Updates on corporate social responsibility (CSR)-related activities:**

- (a) Within the ILO, including the InFocus Initiative on Corporate Social Responsibility and the International Training Centre**
  
- (b) Within other organizations**

The Subcommittee on Multinational Enterprises discussed corporate social responsibility-related activities within the ILO, including the InFocus Initiative on Corporate Social Responsibility and the International Training Centre,<sup>39</sup> and within other organizations.<sup>40</sup> The Governing Body recommended that a better definition be found of the role of the ILO in shaping the CSR debate more broadly; and requested that the information provided on activities carried out by other organizations include more detailed information on what was happening and how the ILO was involved in the other organizations' activities, including any links to the MNE Declaration.

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## **Update on strategic priorities for the Multinational Enterprises Programme (MULTI) for 2006–07**

The Subcommittee on Multinational Enterprises discussed the strategic priorities for MULTI for 2006–07, giving guidance on which work items should be prioritized, which the Governing Body endorsed. Priorities identified include: the organization of the 30th anniversary of the ILO Tripartite Declaration, the development of the help desk, the coordination of CSR-related activities in the Office, preparation of training packages in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO, and research on export processing zones (EPZs) and supply chains.

## **VIII. Sectoral activities**

### **Future orientation, programme and related issues**

In November 2006 and March 2007, the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues discussed the future orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme in detail. The Committee considered papers<sup>41</sup> submitted by the Office which proposed, inter alia: to organize sectors in eight groupings and to abandon the automatic rotation of sectors; to deepen the consultation process with social partners and governments in each grouping using advisory bodies; to improve the coordination of research to strengthen the knowledge base on sectoral issues; to reinforce in-house collaboration; and to fortify the links between sectoral programmes and the field, in particular, through the incorporation of sectoral issues in DWCPs. On the basis of those papers, the Committee made recommendations on how the ILO sectoral approach could be improved. The Governing Body endorsed those recommendations and encouraged the incorporation of sectoral considerations into the general activities of the Organization and into DWCPs, and approved the setting of priorities through the creation of groupings of sectors and advisory bodies that would review the content and types of sectoral activities to assist the Office in its work with the Governing Body and its Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues. Endorsing the recommendations of the Committee, the Governing Body also determined five main activities to be held in 2008–09 in the framework of the Sectoral Activities Programme.

### **Action programmes and sectoral meetings**

In November 2006 and March 2007, the Governing Body approved the recommendations of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues relating to the purpose, duration and composition of sectoral meetings to be held in 2007,<sup>42</sup> and endorsed the publication and distribution of the notes on proceedings of the two tripartite meetings for the road transport<sup>43</sup> and retail<sup>44</sup> sectors held in 2006 and the publication of the code of practice on safety and health in underground coalmines.<sup>45</sup>

In November 2006, the Committee discussed and analysed the evaluation report of the sectoral action programmes started in 2004.<sup>46</sup> It also took note of the report of the Global Steering Group on ongoing action programmes in March 2007, which focused on the progress made in the action programmes started in 2006.<sup>47</sup>

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## **Collaboration with UNESCO and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on sectoral issues**

On the basis of the recommendations of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues, whose members had reiterated their support for the work of Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) to promote high professional standards and status of teachers, the Governing Body authorized the distribution of the report of the Ninth Session<sup>48</sup> and asked the Director-General to take into consideration, where appropriate in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO, the Joint Committee's proposals for future action in planning and implementing future ILO activities.

Separately in March 2007, the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards reviewed the Joint Committee's findings and proposals on allegations submitted by teachers' organizations concerning non-observance of the Recommendations concerning teaching personnel. On the basis of the Committee's recommendations, the Governing Body authorized the Director-General to communicate the relevant parts of the report to the governments and teachers' organizations concerned, and decided to refer the report to the International Labour Conference, at its present session, for examination by the Committee on the Application of Standards.

In June 2006, the Governing Body approved the resolution and the draft guidelines of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident, and authorized their dissemination by the ILO.<sup>49</sup> In response to the Working Group's second meeting,<sup>50</sup> the Governing Body in March 2007 approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Joint Working Group.

In November 2006,<sup>51</sup> the Governing Body authorized the continued participation by the Office in the work by the IMO to develop safety standards for small fishing vessels, and invited Governments and the Employers' and Workers' groups of the ILO each to nominate a representative to participate, at no cost to the Office, in the work of the related IMO correspondence group and in the ILO delegation to the 50th Session of the IMO Subcommittee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessel Safety in 2007. Following the Office's report on any new developments concerning this work in March 2007, the Governing Body, having received no nomination from the Government group, approved the nominations for Employer and Worker representatives.

Through the Committee, the Governing Body also took note of work in other joint ILO/IMO bodies.<sup>52</sup> Following the recommendation of the Committee, the Governing Body agreed to host the Third Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Ship Scrapping, subject to a decision to be taken by the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the IMO.

## **IX. Technical cooperation**

### **Progress in the implementation of DWCPs**

In November 2006, the Committee on Technical Cooperation reviewed DWCPs. Two years after the formal introduction of DWCPs as the main vehicle for planning and implementing ILO programmes at the country level, the approach had taken root across the regions. Although the process was still at an early stage, significant results could already be seen. In Africa, 16 out of 53 countries had fully developed DWCPs in place, with a further 25 under preparation. In Asia and the Pacific, ten countries had completed some

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form of DWCP-based programming framework. The corresponding figures for Europe and the Americas were ten and one respectively, although in the case of the latter, a subregional plan for Central America was under preparation. The Arab States had one DWCP. The Committee examined the extent to which the DWCPs had been incorporated in the UNDAF and linked to wider UNDAF outcomes. It also looked at how DWCPs enabled the Office to move towards a less donor-driven priority-setting approach by anchoring activities funded from regular and from extra-budgetary resources, as well as examining the lessons learnt and issues to be addressed in the future.

## **Resource mobilization for technical cooperation: Policy and implementation status**

The Governing Body had adopted, in November 2004, the broad lines of an ILO resource mobilization strategy. Further to its specific recommendation in March 2005 to make provisions to support gender mainstreaming, the Governing Body endorsed, a year later, a proposal to introduce donors to decent work country programming. In June 2006, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution and conclusions recommending, among other things, that the ILO should continue to encourage multi-year partnership agreements with donor agencies and gradually move towards a common programming framework with the donor community by endeavouring to harmonize the various agreements with individual donors so as to ensure greater stability, predictability and consistency. It was in that context that the Committee reviewed, in November 2006, the progress made regarding the ILO strategy on resource mobilization, challenges encountered and options on the way forward.

The Committee was informed that, in 2005, new extra-budgetary approvals totalled US\$176,277,000 and the estimates for 2006 suggested a sum of around US\$200 million, an all-time record in annual voluntary contributions pledged to the ILO. Among other issues, the Committee discussed the following: new or expanded partnership agreements; greater coordination among donors; local resource mobilization; streamlining internal priority setting; promotion of tripartism and support to employers' and workers' organizations; mainstreaming gender equality; and DWCPs.

## **Follow-up to the resolution on technical cooperation adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 95th Session (2006)**

In June 2006, the International Labour Conference reiterated that technical cooperation must continue to be a major instrument and a fundamental means of action of the ILO in the fulfilment of its mission. It also emphasized that DWCPs, developed through tripartite consultations at the national level, were a key mechanism for delivering technical cooperation at the country level. In that context a number of conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made regarding a wide range of areas.

In November 2006, the Committee on Technical Cooperation assessed the action that had been taken immediately after the Conference, or was envisaged, to implement those conclusions and recommendations. The issues covered the following themes: integration of the Decent Work Agenda into the programming framework of the UN system; tripartism and social dialogue in the delivery of technical cooperation; developing partnerships and mobilizing resources for technical cooperation; and implications for ILO technical cooperation. The Governing Body, upon the recommendation of its Committee, subsequently called upon the Office to provide a mid-term implementation report to the Committee on Technical Cooperation for its November 2008 session to enable it to make

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an in-depth assessment of the progress made, provide guidance and thereby fulfil its governance function.<sup>53</sup>

## **Women's entrepreneurship and the promotion of decent work: A thematic evaluation**

The Committee on Technical Cooperation considered a thematic evaluation during its March session; in 2007, the theme was women's entrepreneurship and the promotion of decent work. The evaluation report presented by the Office was based on the findings of mid-term and/or final evaluation reports of a selection of ILO technical cooperation programmes and projects undertaken since 2001. Fifteen projects with a total budget of US\$26,444,804 (an average of approximately US\$1.7 million per project) were considered for the evaluation. The Committee deliberated on how women's entrepreneurship development contributed to the Decent Work Agenda. More specifically, considering the development objectives and targeted beneficiaries, it examined the strategies and interventions for achieving them. The Committee also reviewed the project design, results, ownership, sustainability and efficiency; and, based on the lessons learnt in implementation of the projects, considered the strategies and approaches that needed to be adopted in a number of specific areas for future work in the area.

## **Public-private partnerships for technical cooperation**

Having reviewed the role of the ILO in technical cooperation in June 2006, the International Labour Conference, in one of its conclusions, stated that public-private partnerships had potential as a source of funding and expanded knowledge base, and asked the Governing Body to establish and monitor the implementation of clear guidelines and criteria for such partnerships. Towards that end, a concept paper on public-private partnerships was prepared for the officers of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. At the request of the Officers, whose comments on the concept paper had been taken into account, a report<sup>54</sup> was presented to the Committee in March 2007. The Committee discussed issues that included: procedures for assessing and approving proposed partnerships; criteria for identifying partnership opportunities; and guidelines on the sequencing and setting up of individual partnership arrangements. There was an extensive discussion on the different components of the proposed point for decision. However, in the absence of a consensus, the proposed point for decision on the next steps was not adopted.

## **Enhanced programme of technical cooperation for the occupied Arab territories**

During the period under review, the ILO continued to collaborate closely with the Ministry of Labour, the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FPCCIA), in carrying out its technical cooperation programme, in responding to the challenges facing the Palestinian people, and to identify new technical cooperation initiatives to contribute to reducing the rising levels of unemployment and poverty.

The three main priorities of this programme are: emergency employment schemes for the Palestinian people; institutional capacity building of the constituents with a view to better influence social and employment policies at the national level; and promotion of social protection initiatives.

The ILO Regional Office helped in the resource mobilization efforts through its continuous active contacts and coordination, with UN agencies with donor countries such

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as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and with regional bodies such as the Red Crescent Society, in order to seek extra-budgetary resources to ensure continuity of the programme.

The Red Crescent Society has contributed additional resources in 2006 in support of the completion of the construction of a Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Hebron project implemented by the UNDP. The construction of the Centre was due to be completed during the first half of 2007. The Office was able to mobilize resources to the tune of US\$550,000 from the Islamic Development Bank to equip the Centre and provide training, to allow the most disadvantaged groups to benefit from its services. A trust fund agreement is under preparation.

Technical advisory services were provided in legal aid counselling services to Palestinian workers employed inside Israel. An assessment of the social security needs was carried out with a view to establishing the Palestinian Social Security Institute in the occupied territories.

The capacity-building project on “Social and civil dialogue for reconstruction and reconciliation” continues to be implemented by the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin. Capacity-building courses were designed and conducted during 2006.

The ILO is in the process of developing a programme with “Young entrepreneurs Palestine”, a Palestinian non-governmental organization, to promote decent work through MSE development by young women and men in the West Bank and Gaza. The ILO initiated preparatory work to use remaining funds available from a technical cooperation project funded by Kuwait to promote income-generating activities targeting women and men in remote closed-off villages as an emergency response to the rising poverty and unemployment.

The Office continues to assist employers’ and workers’ organizations in organizing workshops and training seminars, in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin.

An ILO regional project on “Integrating gender equality and rights perspectives into the understanding of informal economies in the Arab States” was launched recently with the objective of promoting decent work for women and men in the informal economy, as a key pathway to reducing poverty and gender inequality and to achieving sustainable human development in Arab States.

## **ILO response to the post-crisis situation in Lebanon**

In November 2006, a report informed the members of the Committee on Technical Cooperation of the ILO action taken in response to the post-crisis situation in Lebanon. Following the ILO post-conflict needs assessment mission to Lebanon in September 2006, the ILO has been actively engaged in dialogue with its constituents, the social partners, public and private institutions, and the donor community for the implementation of an integrated post-conflict recovery programme in Lebanon. In order to respond to the most pressing needs, the ILO started the implementation of the programme “Employment creation and income generation through the development of micro- and small agro-industries in South Lebanon”. It has also completed the study on the *Conflict of 2006 and small and medium enterprises in Lebanon: Assessing impact and roadmap to recovery* and is participating in the finalization of the *Survey of war impact on households’ living conditions*.

The ILO is presently expanding its technical cooperation programme in Lebanon through the development of the project “Local socio-economic recovery of war-affected

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areas in South Lebanon”, which has been submitted to the Lebanon Recovery Fund and is expected to begin in the third quarter of 2007. In addition, the implementation of the programme on the “Withdrawal and prevention of children from the worst forms of child labour in the South” was recently launched within the framework of the ILO/USDOL<sup>55</sup> IPEC programme. These initiatives will lay the foundations for a more comprehensive ILO recovery and transition strategy for Lebanon, targeting public employment services, entrepreneurship development, vocational training, and the protection of women workers’ rights. The strategy will complement post-conflict recovery programmes developed by other UN agencies and will be based on strong inter-agency collaboration.

## **Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia**

The social partners and the Government of Colombia submitted the “Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy” to the Committee on the Application of Standards during the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference (June 2006). That document included, among other things, an agreement for a renewed ILO presence in Colombia and an undertaking on the part of the social partners and the Colombian Government to promote decent work and defend the fundamental rights of workers, their trade union leaders and their organizations, specifically as regards their physical integrity, trade union freedoms, freedom of association and of speech and collective bargaining, as well as free enterprise for employers.

In 2006, Office funds were used to contribute to three seminars involving the three trade union centrals of Colombia (the Single Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CUT), the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) and the Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CTC)). The purpose of those events was to promote the “Tripartite Agreement” and “fundamental rights”, in order to make the centrals’ members aware of the importance of the consensus achieved through this tripartite undertaking with regard to seeking to improve working conditions and the respect for fundamental guarantees of the workers. Again with the support of the Office, the National Association of Industrialists of Colombia (ANDI) carried out work to promote the “Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy” among its members at the Ninth Meeting of Industrialists, held in Bucaramanga at the end of October 2006.

In March 2007, a progress report on the technical cooperation programme for Colombia was submitted to the Governing Body Committee on Technical Cooperation. Taking note of the latest developments, the Worker Vice-Chairperson thanked the Office and the Colombian Government for the steps taken so far but expressed her disappointment at the lack of progress in relation to respect for trade union rights in Colombia since the conclusion of the Tripartite Agreement. Referring to the reported information, according to which the Colombian army had been involved in killing civilians, she urged donor governments to contribute to the ILO and to social development, rather than providing military assistance to Colombia.

At a meeting held on 10 May 2007, the Attorney-General of Colombia announced that, over the preceding four months, specialist attorneys, together with 78 investigators, had managed: to open 20 inquiries; to initiate proceedings involving 44 people; to capture another 20; and to conclude the judicial proceedings in 25 cases, which were then brought to trial. Over the last three years, 37 cases had been resolved, with 59 individuals being found guilty.

In the field of social dialogue, the Office was a driving force behind efforts to encourage the Standing Committee for Joint Action on Wage and Labour Policy (a tripartite body) to discuss labour matters regularly. The Office had also backed the

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relaunch of the “Special Committee for the Handling of Disputes referred to the ILO”, a body established to address cases of labour disputes at a national level. The Committee was formally established at the beginning of May 2007 and would begin its work over the next few weeks.

The Government, at the request of the trade union centrals, had substantially raised the sums initially allocated to the “Strengthening of social dialogue, fundamental rights, freedom of association and collective bargaining in Colombia” project with an allocation of 4,500 million Colombian pesos (around US\$2,250,000) for the present year.

The Office continued to seek the support of donor countries in order to increase funding for technical cooperation activities within the framework of the Tripartite Agreement.

## **X. Financial questions**

### **Programme implementation in 2006**

In March 2007, the Governing Body considered the programme implementation report for 2006. While welcoming continuing improvements in the format and contents of the report, the Governing Body stressed the need for better indicators as well as a more objective assessment of difficulties encountered and lessons learned in achieving strategic objectives.

### **Audit**

In March 2007, the Governing Body took note of the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 2006 and of the report on follow-up action taken by the Office on the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 2005. The Governing Body also took note of follow-up action by the Office on the report of the External Auditor on the accounts for 2004–05.

### **Programme and Budget proposals for 2008–09**

In March 2007, the Governing Body considered the Programme and Budget proposals for 2008–09, whose main objective is to support and implement the Decent Work Agenda in countries, regions and globally. Acknowledging the difficulties many contributors faced in increasing their contributions to the regular budget, a zero real-growth budget was endorsed for onward submission at the 96th Session of the International Labour Conference. The budget reflects a commitment to respond to the Governing Body’s guidance on priorities, further decentralization, support to UN reform, streamlining of structures and improving efficiency and effectiveness. The Governing Body approved the creation of a Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) that would provide a facility for voluntary funding to priorities in the regions.

### **Terms of reference for the review of the ILO field structure**

In March 2007, the Governing Body adopted terms of reference for a review of the ILO field structure. The review aims to identify, within the context of UN reform, options for more effective and efficient arrangements at ILO external offices and at headquarters

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(including the ILO International Training Centre, Turin) for the provision of services to constituents and support the realization of the Decent Work Agenda in regions and countries.

## **Adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards**

In November 2006, the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee examined a paper which proposed the adoption of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The adoption was recommended to the Governing Body with a request that the Office provide a preliminary report at its next session on the implications for the Financial Regulations. In March 2007, an update was provided which explained that an initial review had led to the conclusion that no changes would be needed to the fundamental requirements of the Financial Regulations.

## **Human Resources Strategy**

The Governing Body endorsed the first annual report on the Human Resources Strategy in November 2006. The report indicated that during the first nine months of implementation, good progress had been made in laying the foundation for the achievement of targets, with focus on initiating/strengthening processes, establishing baseline indicators and creating “buy-in” by managers and staff. Enhanced staff performance assessment and reporting and the strengthening of the learning culture remained the centrepiece of reform measures adopted within the framework of the Strategy to better align human resources policies with the implementation of the Organization’s objectives.

## **Establishment of an Independent Oversight Advisory Committee**

In March 2007, the Governing Body considered a proposal to establish an Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC). A decision on the establishment of such a committee was deferred and the Office was asked to continue consultations with a view to reaching consensus on the composition and work of such a committee.

## **Future development of the International Training Centre, Turin**

In March 2007, the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee endorsed the proposal of a tripartite working party which will further discuss specific measures to better connect the Centre’s activities with the ILO Decent Work Agenda. The working party will, inter alia, focus on options for a contributions mechanism that could reduce to a manageable level the current uncertainties and unpredictability of the Centre’s income, which is heavily dependent on extra-budgetary sources of funding. Its recommendations and conclusions will be discussed by the Board of the Centre in November 2007.

## **ILO accommodation**

In November 2006, the Building Subcommittee of the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee considered two papers regarding the renovation of the

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headquarters building and a paper providing an overview of ILO accommodation. In March 2007, in response to the request of the Subcommittee, the Office provided a follow-up to the technical study of the renovation of the headquarters building, particularly its financial implications. It was decided to authorize the Director-General to enter into negotiations on the possible transfer or sale of land owned and leased by the Organization in order to partially cover the costs of renovating the headquarters building.

## **Information and communication technology**

The Governing Body approved an Information Technology Strategy for the Office for 2007–09, subject to the receipt of an update in November 2007. During the year, major aspects of the Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS) were discussed, including lessons learned to date, benefits and advantages achieved, and the further deployment of IRIS functionality to the field.

## **Evaluation**

In November 2006, the Office presented an annual evaluation report which provided the Governing Body with information and analysis on ILO evaluation practices and the contribution of evaluation to improved transparency, effectiveness and organizational learning. The Governing Body noted the progress made in implementing the new evaluation policy adopted in November 2005. The Governing Body also discussed summary independent evaluation reports of the ILO DWCP in the Philippines, and the ILO strategy for employment-intensive investment.

# **XI. Decision-making bodies of the ILO**

## **The International Labour Conference**

### ***Resolutions in the International Labour Conference***

At the Governing Body's request, the Office prepared two papers<sup>56</sup> for information for the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards relating to the rules governing resolutions in the International Labour Conference, with a focus on those initially submitted to committees established by the Conference. To facilitate the Governing Body's discussion of the second paper, the Office assembled a complete list of all resolutions adopted by the Conference since 1919.<sup>57</sup> In addition, advice has also been provided by the Office confirming that the resolutions adopted by the 95th Session were done so in accordance with the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, and that a resolution of the type adopted at that session does not override a Convention.

### ***Follow-up to the resolutions adopted by the 95th Session (2006) of the International Labour Conference***

#### **Resolution concerning the employment relationship**

In November 2006, the Governing Body discussed the follow-up to the resolution on the employment relationship adopted by the 95th Session (2006) of the International Labour Conference.<sup>58</sup> The resolution invited the Governing Body to instruct the Director-General to provide assistance to constituents in relation to monitoring and

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implementation, collecting and disseminating information, and undertaking comparative studies and surveys. The Governing Body examined proposed actions to be undertaken by the Office to give effect to the resolution. These activities were intended to strengthen further the knowledge base developed during the preparatory phase of the standard-setting process and to improve the quality and availability of indicators, statistics and information on which national policies are based. It requested the Director-General to circulate the text of the resolution on Recommendation No. 198 and gather information on the current position of law and practice with regard to the employment relationship, taking the resolution into account when preparing the Programme and Budget proposals for 2008–09.

In response to the Governing Body's decision, the Office, in a first stage, engaged in research in order to maintain and update the knowledge base around the issue. The consequent collection of new laws, court cases and academic publications shows that developments regarding the employment relationship are moving rapidly, and the Office needs to track them so that technical advice to the constituents is of a high standard. Secondly, in order to support the Turin Centre courses on participatory labour law making, an annotated guide to Recommendation No. 198 has been developed using the extensive technical expertise of a group of experts from around the world. The guide will be translated into official ILO working languages and made available to the constituents, including publication on the web site and inclusion in training curricula. Thirdly, technical advice provided regularly in the context of labour law reforms in member States (under article 10(2) of the ILO Constitution) continues to use the Recommendation's guidance when reforms to provisions on the employment relationship are envisaged (Indonesia, Jordan, Namibia, Organization for the Harmonisation of Business Law in Africa (OHADA), Zambia). Lastly, advocacy and technical advice is provided to the constituents on request.

#### Resolution concerning asbestos

In November 2006, the Governing Body also discussed the follow-up to the resolution concerning asbestos,<sup>59</sup> adopted by the 95th Session (2006) of the International Labour Conference. The Governing Body decided to request the Director-General to circulate the text of the resolution in the usual way to the governments of member States, and through them to the national employers' and workers' organizations, and to take appropriate action to give effect to the resolution on asbestos, taking into account that the ratification of Conventions, including the Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162), and the Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139), gives rise to treaty obligations. The procedural issues concerning the adoption of the resolution on asbestos were discussed at the same session of the Governing Body by the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards.<sup>60</sup>

#### ***Follow-up to the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185)***

When the Conference adopted the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185), it made provision for two measures to be taken in order to enable the full achievement of the basic objective of the Convention, which is to provide seafarers with "positive verifiable identification" so that foreign countries can grant them temporary admission on their territories for the purpose of taking shore leave and performing their professional activities, such as joining ship. One of the two measures was the development of a global interoperable standard for the fingerprint template which is to be included in the new seafarers' identity document.<sup>61</sup> This standard was approved by the Governing Body in 2004, with minor revisions in 2005. However, the question remained as to whether the standard could in practice be implemented in a truly global and interoperable way, in the sense that fingerprint templates produced using a biometric

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product in one country can be accurately read by equipment using biometric products from suppliers in other countries. Prior to 2006, tests had shown that three biometric products were able to implement satisfactorily the standard in this interoperable way. After testing carried out during 2006, six more biometric products were found, so that the Organization now has a list of nine different products that have been found to meet the requirements of the Convention and the biometric standard.<sup>62</sup> This result provides additional confirmation of the technical viability of Convention No. 185.

### ***Date, place and agenda of the International Labour Conference***

#### **Date of the 97th Session (2008)**

In March 2007, tentative dates for the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference were proposed following the modified format adopted by the Governing Body in November 2006 for the 96th Session (May–June 2007) of the International Labour Conference, further to the recommendations of its Working Group on the International Labour Conference.<sup>63</sup> In accordance with this modified format, it was thus tentatively proposed that the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference should open on Wednesday, 28 May, and close on Friday, 13 June 2008.

Further to the decision adopted by the Governing Body in November 2006, these tentative dates are subject to the decision regarding the future format of the International Labour Conference to be adopted by the Governing Body in November 2007, on the basis of a review by its Working Group of the practical application of its proposals during the 2007 session of the International Labour Conference. They are also subject to the final decision to be taken by the Executive Board of the WHO in May 2007 as regards the dates of the World Health Assembly in May 2008.

#### **Agenda of the 98th Session (2009)**

Following its initial discussion on the agenda of the 98th Session of the International Labour Conference (June 2009) in November 2006, the Governing Body requested that the six proposals submitted by the Office in this regard be resubmitted at its following session for examination in greater depth.<sup>64</sup> In March 2007, the Governing Body decided to place the three following items<sup>65</sup> on the agenda of the 2009 session of the Conference, alongside the standing items: Strengthening national responses to HIV/AIDS in the world of work (with a view to the adoption of an autonomous Recommendation – double discussion); Employment and social protection in the new demographic context (general discussion based on an integrated approach); and Gender equality at the heart of decent work (general discussion).

### ***Proposals to improve its functioning: Working Group on the International Labour Conference***

Since its establishment in November 2005, the Working Group on the International Labour Conference has held four formal meetings, and a number of informal consultations have occurred. The Working Group has had the benefit of contributions from the Employers' and Workers' groups and Government regional groups regarding their priorities for the Conference and their views as to how the delivery of these priorities can be enhanced.

In November 2006, the Working Group reached agreement on a series of proposals that it recommended for introduction on a strictly trial basis for the 2007 session of the Conference. These proposals, together with a schematic plan of work that presents them as

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a practical schedule, were attached to its report<sup>66</sup> and submitted to the Governing Body which decided that the proposals be recommended to the 96th Session (2007) of the International Labour Conference for application on a trial basis within the framework of the ILO Constitution. The Governing Body also decided to renew the mandate of the Working Group to permit it to further examine, in March 2007, the planning of the 2007 session of the Conference, and to undertake, in November 2007, a review of the outcome of the practical application of the proposals during the 2007 session of the Conference and to report on these matters to the Governing Body at that November session.

### ***Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference: Status of interim provisions concerning the verification of credentials***

In March 2007, the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards had before it a document<sup>67</sup> containing a proposal regarding the validity of the Interim provisions concerning verification of credentials of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference. On the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards, the Governing Body approved the proposal to extend the validity of the Interim provisions concerning verification of credentials until the end of the 97th Session of the Conference (2008). The reason was to clarify which rules would govern the verification of credentials during that session of the Conference, given that the evaluation of the operation of those Interim provisions by the Governing Body was supposed to take place in November 2007, as had been foreseen when the Interim provisions were adopted. The Governing Body therefore invited the Conference, at its 96th Session (2007), to extend the validity of the Interim provisions concerning verification of credentials until the end of the 97th Session (2008).

## **XII. Regional Meetings**

### **Sixteenth American Regional Meeting (Brasilia, 2–5 May 2006)**

In November 2006, the Governing Body examined and endorsed the report and conclusions adopted by the 16th American Regional Meeting, held in Brasilia from 2 to 5 May 2006. At that Meeting, there was broad agreement with regard to the operational, programmatic and action-orientated nature of the Report *Decent work in the Americas: An agenda for the Hemisphere 2006–15*, presented at the Meeting by the Director-General.

With respect to the content, particular emphasis was placed on identifying the challenges facing the region in terms of achieving the objective of decent work for all (economic growth to promote decent work, the effective application of fundamental rights at work, adequate social protection for workers, social dialogue and combating social exclusion and all forms of discrimination).

For the representatives of governments, workers and employers who participated in the Meeting, the issues considered and the proposal to base development policies on the generation of decent work represented the culmination of what the ILO had advocated at high-level government meetings in the region, and stemmed directly from the Fourth Summit of the Americas, which was held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 2005, on the theme “Creating jobs to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance”.

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This Regional Meeting has led to an increased high-level political commitment in the region to generating decent work as a means of tackling poverty, and led to the commitment undertaken by the countries of the region with other United Nations agencies.

Some of the central themes discussed at the Regional Meeting are now key labour issues on the agendas of governments, workers' and employers' organizations, international bodies and representatives of civil society in the Americas. They include issues such as the priority to be given to youth employment, democratic governance, the informal economy, migrant workers and their rights, and the importance of local development, which were discussed at the Meeting and for which, in the context of the agenda for the hemisphere to generate decent work in the Americas, objectives and targets have been set for 2015, in accordance with respective national circumstances and priorities.

The 16th American Regional Meeting and its conclusions marked the beginning of a Decade of promoting decent work in the Americas.

## **Fourteenth Asian Regional Meeting** (Busan, 29 August–1 September 2006)

The report and conclusions of the 14th Asian Regional Meeting were discussed and endorsed by the Governing Body in November 2006. The conclusions were intended to guide the Office in executing ongoing programmes and in preparing future programmes and budget proposals.

The participation of the President of the Republic of Korea, the Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka and Jordan, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as leading representatives of employers' and workers' organizations – including from the IOE and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) – reaffirmed the commitment of ILO constituents and key partners at the highest level towards the goal of building a framework for realizing decent work in Asia through social dialogue and tripartism, strategic partnerships, regional cooperation, and capacity building.

The Regional Meeting adopted concrete, pragmatic and forward-looking conclusions and guidelines for action to address five common priorities of Asia: promoting productivity, competitiveness and jobs; eliminating child labour and promoting youth employment; improving the management of labour migration; strengthening labour market governance, particularly the capacity of the tripartite constituents to participate effectively in the governance structure; and extending social protection, in particular to the uncovered workers in the informal economy. Member States reaffirmed that the Decent Work Agenda could contribute to finding a sustainable route out of poverty, to addressing the growing economic inequalities within and between countries of the region and to the attainment of the MDGs. The constituents pledged to continue Asia's policy leadership in making decent work for all a central objective of relevant national, regional and international policies and made a commitment to implement an Asian Decent Work Decade (ADWD) up to 2015. DWCPs reflecting tripartite priority setting, engagement and ownership were welcomed as a means for delivering coordinated support to advance decent priorities at the national level, including by strengthening the role of the social partners and reinforcing social dialogue.

It was also agreed that priorities for national action would focus on practical measures and tangible outcomes through the implementation of time-bound policies and programmes, contributing to the interconnected priorities of decent work and poverty

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reduction. The conclusions placed emphasis on building regional cooperation frameworks to address common needs and called for regional initiatives and partnerships with regional and international institutions to share information, knowledge, experience and expertise to support the commitments undertaken by the constituents. The regional initiatives on the Skills and Employability Programme for Asia and the Pacific, the regional migration programmes to operationalize the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration and the regional database on decent work indicators were endorsed. Other new regional initiatives called for by the constituents would focus on integrated actions for promoting the implementation of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, 1998, core labour standards, the development of national employment policies, the strengthening of labour administration systems, the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, the establishment of benchmarks and good practices on extending social protection for all and the further development of up to date and reliable statistics and data for fact-based research, comparison and decision-making. The constituents also requested that a regional event be organized to share experiences and good practices for policy coherence in addressing the challenges of employment, growth and decent work in the context of a globalized world.

### **XIII. Relations with other international organizations**

#### **Developments in the United Nations system**

The Governing Body considered the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, *Delivering as One*, and their implications for the ILO.<sup>68</sup> In its discussion it identified UN reform as an opportunity to further mainstream the ILO Decent Work Agenda, particularly within the "One UN" country programmes. The Governing Body emphasized the importance of fully respecting the identity and special character of the ILO, marked in particular by international labour standards and its tripartite structure. Consequently the participation of employers' and workers' organizations and of ministries of labour in the "One UN" country programmes was deemed essential.

The Governing Body reviewed work undertaken in follow-up to the UN ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration of July 2006, which called on the entire multilateral system and donor agencies to mainstream the Decent Work Agenda in their policies, programmes and activities for the achievement of the MDGs and the wider, internationally agreed development goals.<sup>69</sup> The Governing Body noted the strong international consensus around full and productive employment and decent work as one of the keys to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/gb/index.htm>.
- <sup>2</sup> The compilation of annual reports by the International Labour Office, Mar. 2007, can be consulted at <http://www.ilo.org/declaration>.
- <sup>3</sup> GB.298/3.
- <sup>4</sup> *The end of child labour: Within reach*, Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, Report I(B), International Labour Conference, 95th Session, Geneva, 2006.
- <sup>5</sup> ILO: *Equality at work: Tackling the challenges*, Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, Report I(B), International Labour Conference, 96th Session, Geneva, 2007.
- <sup>6</sup> The first Global Report on discrimination, *Time for equality at work*, was discussed at the 91st Session (June 2003) of the International Labour Conference.
- <sup>7</sup> GB.297/8/1.
- <sup>8</sup> GB.297/8/2.
- <sup>9</sup> GB.298/5/1 and GB.298/5/1(Add.1).
- <sup>10</sup> GB.298/5/1(Add.2).
- <sup>11</sup> GB.298/5/2.
- <sup>12</sup> GB.297/9.
- <sup>13</sup> GB.298/6.
- <sup>14</sup> GB.298/LILS/4.
- <sup>15</sup> GB.298/9.
- <sup>16</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/manual.htm>.
- <sup>17</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/download/campaign2005.pdf>.
- <sup>18</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/amend/status.htm>.
- <sup>19</sup> GB.297/12 and GB.297/LILS/3.
- <sup>20</sup> GB.297/19/4 and GB.298/15/5.
- <sup>21</sup> GB.297/WP/SDG/1.
- <sup>22</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/English/bureau/dgo/selecdoc/2007/toolkit.pdf>.
- <sup>23</sup> GB.297/WP/SDG/2.
- <sup>24</sup> GB.297/WP/SDG/3.
- <sup>25</sup> GB.298/WP/SDG/1.

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- <sup>26</sup> GB.298/WP/SDG/2.
- <sup>27</sup> GB.298/WP/SDG/3.
- <sup>28</sup> GB.297/ESP/6.
- <sup>29</sup> GB.297/ESP/7.
- <sup>30</sup> GB.297/ESP/1.
- <sup>31</sup> GB.297/ESP/4.
- <sup>32</sup> GB.298/ESP/2.
- <sup>33</sup> GB.298/ESP/3.
- <sup>34</sup> GB.298/ESP/4.
- <sup>35</sup> GB.297/ESP/3.
- <sup>36</sup> GB.297/19/2.
- <sup>37</sup> GB.297/19/5.
- <sup>38</sup> GB.298/15/2.
- <sup>39</sup> GB.298/MNE/2/1.
- <sup>40</sup> GB.298/MNE/2/2.
- <sup>41</sup> GB.297/STM/7/1, GB.298/STM/1, GB.298/STM/1/1 and GB.298/STM/6.
- <sup>42</sup> GB.297/STM/2.
- <sup>43</sup> Tripartite Meeting on Labour and Social Issues arising from Problems of Cross-border Mobility of International Drivers in the Road Transport Sector (Geneva, 23–26 October 2006) (GB.298/STM/3 and TMRTS/2006/11).
- <sup>44</sup> Tripartite Meeting on the Social and Labour Implications of the Increased Use of Advanced Retail Technologies (Geneva, 18–20 September 2006) (GB.297/STM/3/2, TMART/2006 and TMART/2006/11).
- <sup>45</sup> Meeting of Experts on Safety and Health in Coal Mines (Geneva, 8–13 May 2006) (GB.297/STM/3/1, MESHCM/2006/8, MESHCM/2006/9 and MESHCM/2006/10).
- <sup>46</sup> GB.297/STM/1.
- <sup>47</sup> GB.298/STM/2.
- <sup>48</sup> Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel, Ninth Session (Geneva, 30 October–3 November 2006) (GB.298/STM/4).
- <sup>49</sup> Report of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident (GB.296/5/1).

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<sup>50</sup> Second meeting of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident (GB.298/STM/5/2(Rev.)).

<sup>51</sup> Invitation by the IMO to the ILO to participate in the development of safety standards for small fishing vessels: Further developments (GB.297/STM/5).

<sup>52</sup> Progress report on the work of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding Claims for Death, Personal Injury and Abandonment of Seafarers (GB.298/STM/5/1); further developments in relation to the drafting of an international instrument on shipbreaking/ship recycling (GB.298/STM/7/1); and the Joint ILO/IMO/Basel Convention Working Group on Ship Scrapping: Further developments (GB.297/STM/6).

<sup>53</sup> GB.297/16(Rev.).

<sup>54</sup> GB.298/TC/3.

<sup>55</sup> Department of Labor of the United States.

<sup>56</sup> GB.297/LILS/4/1 and GB.298/LILS/1.

<sup>57</sup> This list can be consulted on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/leg/resolutions.htm>.

<sup>58</sup> GB.297/3.

<sup>59</sup> GB.297/3/1.

<sup>60</sup> GB.297/LILS/4/1.

<sup>61</sup> The other measure was the adoption by the Governing Body in 2005 of arrangements concerning the list of Members which fully meet the minimum requirements concerning processes and procedures for the issue of seafarers' identity documents.

<sup>62</sup> GB.297/19/6.

<sup>63</sup> See the subsection on the Working Group on the International Labour Conference (GB.297/4).

<sup>64</sup> GB.297/2.

<sup>65</sup> GB.298/2.

<sup>66</sup> GB.297/4.

<sup>67</sup> GB.298/LILS/2.

<sup>68</sup> GB.298/4/3.

<sup>69</sup> GB.298/4/1, GB.298/4/2 and GB.297/WP/SDG/1.

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