



International Labour Organization



Arab Labour Organization

Regional Conference on Social Dialogue in the Arab States

14-16 December 2010

Rabat, Morocco

Background

The International Labour Organization in partnership with the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) are launching a Regional Conference on Social Dialogue in Rabat, Morocco in December 2010, convening tripartite representation from all 22 States of the Arab League. The conference will provide a platform for tripartite social dialogue between governments and the social partners, in a collaborative effort to advance social dialogue mechanisms in the Arab States.

The conference is conducted in follow-up to the Arab Employment Forum (AEF) in October 2009 and the AEF follow-up meeting in Cairo in May 2010. The Arab Employment Forum was organized by the ALO and the ILO in Beirut, Lebanon from 19 to 21 October 2009. Working under the broad headline "A Jobs Pact for Recovery and Growth," the Forum convened Governments, Employers' and Workers' Organizations from all 22 countries of the Arab League to formulate a decent work response to the economic and financial crisis in the Arab States region.

The Forum concluded with an Arab Action Agenda for Employment, based on the ILO Global Jobs Pact (June 2009) and the resolutions of the Arab Economic, Development and Social Summit (January 2009). The Agenda for Employment brought to the forefront six priority areas for action, namely:

- Decent employment, sustainable growth and recovery;
- Enhancing management of labour migration, employment and development;
- Building adequate social protection systems and protecting people;
- Strengthening international labour standards and workers' rights;
- Promoting social dialogue and tripartism for crisis analysis and response;
- Promoting sustainable enterprises for job creation and retention.

The Arab Action Agenda for Employment recommended as one of the main mechanisms for ensuring follow-up the formation of a technical tripartite committee, to be established with the support of the ALO and the ILO. The Committee's mandate, as per the Action Agenda, is to "translate the decisions of the Forum on the ground through the development, monitoring and evaluation of operational programs for this Arab Action Agenda for Employment."



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The Cairo meeting constituted the first meeting of the AEF Technical Tripartite Committee that was formed in direct implementation of the recommendation of the AEF Arab Action Agenda for Employment. Participants in the Cairo meeting emphasized the importance of convening a social dialogue conference hosted by the ILO and ALO with the participation of the social partners from across the Arab region. It was agreed to hold the second meeting of the AEF Tripartite Committee on the sidelines of the Arab Social Dialogue Conference.

Objectives of the Workshop

Building on the momentum of the AEF meeting in Beirut in October 2009 and the AEF follow-up meeting in Cairo in May 2010, the Regional Conference on Social Dialogue in Rabat shall seek to:

- i. Establish commitment among the social partners to tripartism principles and modalities of work toward the institutionalization of social dialogue mechanisms in the Arab States region;
- ii. Survey regional and global experiences in promoting social dialogue in order to identify best practice and lessons learned;
- iii. Develop a participatory action plan for social dialogue in the Arab States region.

Workshop Themes

The ILO defines social dialogue to include all types of negotiation, consultation and exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest. The Regional Conference on Social Dialogue in the Arab States aims to provide the platform for tripartite discussions around priority issues for decent work in the Arab States, with the aim of promoting consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work.

On its first day, the Conference will survey regional and global experiences in instituting social dialogue, taking Spain and Jordan as case studies. The Conference will then zoom in on social Dialogue and the Decent Work Agenda in the Arab States more specifically, providing a national overview of the experience of Palestine, Morocco and Oman.

On day 2, the Conference will address the social protection floor, taking stock of regional experiences from Algeria, Bahrain, and Jordan in implementing the social protection floor. The Conference will also examine Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) in the Arab States, showcasing the national experience of Kuwait/ Saudi Arabia, Tunisia



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and Syria. The last day will be dedicated to investigating modalities for institutionalizing social dialogue in developing countries, presenting the international experience of Brazil and South Africa. The Conference will conclude with recommendations toward developing an Arab Action Programme for Social Dialogue. Such a Programme will seek to advance social dialogue structures and processes, which have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, and boost economic progress.

Each panel will be followed by tripartite discussions opening the floor for constituents to discuss issues of concern. To enrich the dialogue process, the Conference will draw from national and international experiences, case studies, success stories and lessons learned to inform its discussions.

Participants

Senior representatives from the Labour Ministries of 22 Arab countries, in addition to employers' and workers' organizations will attend this workshop. An invitation will also be extended to experts and institutions with technical knowledge on issues of tripartism and social dialogue.

The Conference Venue

The Conference will be held in the Hotel "Golden Tulip Farah Rabat Hotel", during the period 14-16 December 2010.

Accommodation

Golden Tulip Farah Rabat Hotel
Place Sidi Makhoulouf
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Morocco

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Transportation Airport-Hotel:

A representative from the organizers of the Conference will meet you at the airport. Free transportation services will be available on from Casablanca's airport of Mohammed V to Rabat.

The Conference Secretariat

The full programme and all other supplementary information related to the Forum will be posted on the website: www.ilo.org/rabat2010

Any other queries on logistical arrangements may be directed to the ILO Cairo Office:

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