

Updates on the Implementation of Follow-ups to the ILO High Level Mission on ILO Convention 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Collective Bargaining Convention, 1948

Summary:

After the High Level Mission conducted in September 2009, the ILO Country Office for the Philippines has organized a total of six major events that have provided awareness raising and training to improve application on international standards of Freedom of Association (FoA) and Right to Collective Bargaining, including their links to civil liberties. Many of these activities were undertaken during the Aquino administration, (in cooperation with the government). This covered for approximately following:

- 34 justices and 67 lawyers from the Supreme Court (SC) and Court of Appeals (CA) to improve the use of international labour standards (ILS) in the judiciary
- 51 DOLE arbiters, mediators, and conciliators to improve the use of ILS in settlement of labour disputes
- 30 PEZA officials, including key officials in charge of ecozone security, were given full training on techniques on conciliation, mediation, and arbitration
- Approximately 100 constituents from Mindanao, specifically from Regions 11, 12, and 13, were informed of the principles of FoA, collective bargaining (CB) and their links with civil liberties/human rights and were able to discuss strategies to advance investigation, prosecution, and conviction
- 100 representatives of government bodies from Cavite, Laguna, and Batangas – particularly Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) – and constituents representing Laguna, were informed on FoA/CB principles in the context of economic zones and were able to discuss issues and solutions, including constituents from Laguna an area covering one of the Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) cases
- 100 constituents and government officials (representing Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), PEZA, DOLE Regional Office, and Local Government Units [LGUs]) – and constituents representing Tarlac, Bataan, Subic, and Pampanga were informed on FoA/CB principles and links between FoA/CB principles and civil liberties/human rights in the context of economic zones. Tarlac was one of the geographical areas covered by a CFA case

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Post-high level mission activities supported by the ILO in cooperation with the government

1. A National Tripartite Conference on the Principles of Freedom of Association with the theme “Towards Fair Globalization and Decent Work” was conducted in Manila from 2-4 December 2009.

This National Tripartite Conference was organized two months after the ILO High Level Mission (HLM). Aside from reaching a wide range of stakeholders in awareness-raising on FoA/CB principles and issues on implementation, this was generally seen as an important first step in the commitment of the government and tripartite constituents in the Philippines.

2. The two conferences were held in 22-23 April and 26-27 April 2010 in Tagaytay City and Clark, Pampanga, respectively to maintain the momentum in the implementation of the recommendations of the ILO HLM.

- *Capacity Building Seminar on Freedom of Association, Collective Bargaining and Labour Law Implementation in the Philippine Economic Zones, PHINMA Training Center, Tagaytay City, Philippines, 22-23 April 2010*

The conference was conducted in Tagaytay City mainly about capacity-building for government covering economic zones – the staff of PEZA and DOLE in the provinces of Laguna, Cavite, and Batangas. Around 100 representatives of government bodies from Cavite, Laguna, and Batangas – particularly PEZA and DOLE – and constituents representing Laguna, were informed on FoA/CB principles in the context of economic zones and were able to discuss issues and solutions. Tripartite constituents from Laguna – a geographical area covering one of the CFA cases – had a separate workshop discussion to discuss issues and propose solutions.

- *Tripartite Seminar on Freedom of Association, Civil Liberties and the Enforcement of Labour Laws in the Philippine Economic Zones, Clark, Pampanga, Philippines, 26 -27 April 2010*

Around 100 constituents and government officials (representing AFP, PNP, PEZA, DOLE Regional Office, and LGUs) – and constituents representing Tarlac, Bataan, Subic, and Clark were informed on FoA/CB principles and links between FoA/CB principles and civil liberties/human rights in the context of economic zones. The participants also discussed issues and corresponding solutions, which included a separate workshop discussion for constituents from Tarlac – a geographical area covering one of the CFA cases.

3. Training on Conciliation/Mediation of Labour Disputes, April 28-30, 2010, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority

30 PEZA officials, including key officials in charge of ecozone security, were given full training on techniques on conciliation, mediation, and arbitration by trainers from the ILO Turin Training Center.

4. Back-to-back seminars for DOLE and the Judiciary on Improved Use of International Labour Standards (ILS) in the Judicial Decision-making and Dispute Settlement, November 8-12, 2010

ILO organized back-to-back seminars for those involved in the disposition of labour cases in the Philippines: (a) judges and lawyers from the SC and CA; and (b) arbitrators, conciliators, and mediators from DOLE. These sessions provide a comprehensive overview of the international labour standards system and its relevance to settle labour disputes.

The activities reached 34 justices and 67 lawyers from SC and CA to promote and improve application of ILS on FoA and CB in judicial decision making; and 51 DOLE arbiters, mediators, and conciliators to improve the use of ILS in the settlement of labour disputes.

5. Seminar Workshop on Freedom of Association, Civil Liberties, Labour Laws and the Issue of Impunity, 10-13 December 2010, Davao City

Approximately 100 constituents from Mindanao, specifically from Regions 11, 12, and 13 were reached in the initial awareness raising seminar workshop on FoA, CB, and human rights to discuss strategies to advance investigation, prosecution, and conviction.

Honorable Justice Robyn Layton, former Chairperson of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations was one of the international resource speakers in almost all these activities together with the expertise of ILO's international labour standards specialists.