

Committee on the Application of Standards

C.App./PV.12

Commission de l'application des normes

10.06.17

Comisión de Aplicación de Normas

106th Session, Geneva, June 2017

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13th sitting, 10 June 2017, 10.06 a.m.

13^e séance, 10 juin 2017, 10 h 06

13.^a sesión, 10 de junio de 2017, 10.06 horas

Chairperson: Mr Washington González

Président: M. Washington González

Presidente: Sr. Washington González

Work of the Committee

The Committee adopted PVs 0, 2, 3 and 4, as amended.

Travaux de la commission

La commission a adopté les PV 0, 2, 3 et 4, tels qu'amendés.

Trabajos de la Comisión

La Comisión aprobó las actas 0, 2, 3 y 4, en su tenor modificado.

Discussion of individual cases (*cont.*)
Discussion sur les cas individuels (*suite*)
Discusión sobre los casos individuales (*cont.*)

Sudan (ratification: 1970)

Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
Convention (n° 122) sur la politique de l'emploi, 1964
Convenio sobre la política del empleo, 1964 (núm. 122)

A Government representative (Mr ISAMIL) expressed appreciation for the work of the Committee in examining the implementation of international labour standards. The speaker confirmed his Government's commitment to comply with international labour standards and indicated that it had taken considerable efforts to comply with Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Convention No. 122. These efforts included the development of a roadmap for the formulation of a national employment policy and the definition of its guiding principles and strategic goals in consultation with the social partners. Following the Government's request, an ILO/UNDP project had been concluded for the development of the roadmap as well as a project to strengthen technical and vocational skills of men and women, which was based on seven working papers drawn up by international experts in 2013, based on visits, meetings and roundtable workshops with the competent officials. These activities had resulted in important recommendations to guide the development of a national employment policy. In 2014, a 35-member working group of the High-Level Advisory Committee was established by Ministerial Decree No. 33 (2014) of 28 August 2014 and tasked with the development of a national employment policy, with the technical assistance from the ILO. A national expert was appointed to draw up the principal guidelines for the elaboration of the policy. The High-Level Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the ILO, had finalized a draft national employment policy by the end of 2016, which aimed to contribute to lowering the unemployment rate and alleviating poverty in Sudan, for submission to the competent authority, the Council of Ministers, for approval in January 2017. The speaker reconfirmed his Government's commitment to its international obligations and its renewed efforts to achieve the goals of the five-year Economic Reform Programme (ERP) 2015–19.

Information was also provided on the following measures: microfinancing programmes; the provision of decent work opportunities to ensure productive employment in conditions of dignity; the establishment of effective employment policies in line with the needs of the labour market through improvement of the investment and employment climate for small enterprises, in addition to self-employment projects, employment programmes in the service sector and employment-intensive projects; linking educational policies and programmes with employment policies and plans, in line with the needs of the labour market; the submission to the Minister of Labour and Administrative Reform of a final draft of a national employment policy developed in consultation with the social partners for transmission to the competent authorities; the re-nationalization of the wheat-growing sector in the Blue Nile and Northern regions leading to effective production and employment creation; the establishment of agricultural projects in the Blue Nile region resulting in the activation of more than 2,000 farms; and public-private partnerships to reactivate the textile sector, leading to the creation of jobs for over 3,000 workers. The five-year ERP, 2015–19, contained additional elements, including plans for export products and a programme to revive Sudanese cotton cultivation and agriculture in the Blue Nile region, involving 2,400 farms. The Government had adopted a comprehensive employment policy through a national dialogue process, which was expected to have a considerable impact on organizational and political structures, including on the entities responsible for implementing the necessary policies that required coordination, such as the Ministry of Finance. This led to the establishment of an Agency for Indicative Planning, which would revise some of the economic policies that had a direct impact on employment creation at the national and local levels. The speaker recalled positive developments in Sudan's foreign relations, including expectations regarding the lifting of the economic embargo next month, which would require the Government to reset its priorities, especially its investment plans, which had a direct impact on employment opportunities. Finally, the speaker expressed the hope that he had provided the Committee with the necessary clarifications.

The Employer members (Ms ALSULAIMAN) stated that this was the first time the Committee had examined the application of Convention No. 122 by Sudan. This priority Convention required governments to formulate an active employment policy, in consultation with the social partners. Sudan was a country in transition from a conflict to a post-conflict situation that had encountered multiple challenges and with wide disparities in development between its different regions. The country had endured military conflicts and 20 years of sanctions, natural disasters, and struggles in terms of economic growth, especially in its productive sectors; all factors that had contributed to high unemployment rates and inflation. These conditions had clearly affected the development of a national employment policy. Nevertheless, the Government had taken steps towards the development of an active national employment policy. These steps had been supported by the ILO, UNDP and other international organizations, as well as by the social partners. In respect of Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention, many measures had been taken. In 2011, the Government carried out a Labour Force Survey with the assistance of the ILO to identify indicators for the formulation of a national employment policy. Moreover, a tripartite recovery programme envisaged increased funding for education for the poor; increased microfinance funding and increased funding for agriculture and industry; and measures to promote youth employment and reduce the number of workers in the informal economy. In 2012, the Government launched the National Rural Women's Development Programme and established the Department of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities. In 2014, the Ministry of Labour established a Coordinating Unit for Intensive Employment focusing on the creation of sustainable jobs for youth and vulnerable persons. In 2015, the Government approved the five-year ERP, 2015–19, which aimed to improve macroeconomic policies, investment opportunities and the competitiveness of national goods. In 2016, the Government had submitted a report showing the impact of these initiatives on employment. In relation to Article 3 of the Convention, the following actions were taken: (i) a tripartite National Advisory Committee for Labour Standards was established; (ii) the social partners were updating the National Jobs Charter to take new parameters into account and improve its implementation; and

(iii) the social partners, in collaboration with the Government, were working to implement the Paid Training Programme, a programme to train 400,000 graduates in all sectors of economic activity. The Employer members welcomed these initiatives to promote economic growth, eradicate poverty, create jobs and encourage investment. The private sector, as a driver of employment, required an enabling environment to increase trade, facilitate export, and support diversification of the economy. This would only happen when necessary reforms were realized to combat bureaucracy, corruption and illegal practices and build a more conducive, transparent regulatory system. Given the urgency of the situation in Sudan, the Employer members called on the Government to develop a coherent national employment policy, linking all social and economic strategies together. The Government was encouraged to implement a coordinated and transparent action plan which clarified the roles and responsibilities of the social partners to enable them to work together to achieve measurable goals. They also called on the Government to build the capacities of the social partners to work together to implement the national employment policy.

Les membres travailleurs ont rappelé que la promotion de l'emploi figure dans le mandat constitutif de l'OIT. En effet, le préambule de la Constitution de l'OIT mentionne que la lutte contre le chômage est une des mesures devant être prises pour améliorer les conditions de travail. Afin de mettre cette préoccupation en œuvre, l'OIT a élaboré plusieurs instruments, dont la convention n° 122. Les articles 1 et 2 de la convention imposent aux Etats Membres d'adopter comme objectif essentiel une politique active de l'emploi visant à atteindre certains objectifs et de prendre les mesures nécessaires à la réalisation de ces objectifs. Dans le cas du Soudan, la commission d'experts a relevé que le gouvernement a communiqué des informations concernant l'application de ces dispositions, dont une enquête sur la main-d'œuvre effectuée en 2011 et l'élaboration d'une feuille de route et des documents de réflexion portant sur l'élaboration d'une politique de l'emploi. Les membres travailleurs ont tenu à rappeler le lien indissociable entre le plein emploi productif et le travail décent. Il en résulte que, outre les objectifs quantitatifs tels que le nombre d'emplois

que le gouvernement s'est fixé, il convient également d'avoir des objectifs plus qualitatifs visant à promouvoir toutes les dimensions du travail décent. Le gouvernement est donc invité à donner suite à la demande de la commission d'experts quant à la communication de plus amples informations sur l'élaboration et l'application d'une politique d'emploi active, en tenant compte des dimensions du travail décent. Concernant l'application de l'article 2 de la convention, le gouvernement a fait état d'une enquête qui a été menée en 2011 dans le cadre de l'élaboration du programme quinquennal 2015-2019 de réforme économique et qui a permis de recueillir des données intéressantes, notamment sur le chômage dans le pays et sa répartition selon les zones rurales ou urbaines et selon le sexe. Par conséquent, le gouvernement est prié de poursuivre sur cette voie de sorte à disposer de données statistiques fiables et à jour. Enfin, en ce qui concerne la consultation des partenaires sociaux sur les politiques d'emploi, le gouvernement a procédé à la mise sur pied d'un comité consultatif national pour les normes du travail. Rappelant que la notion de partenaires sociaux inclut à la fois les représentants des employeurs mais également ceux des travailleurs, le gouvernement est invité à assurer dans l'organe cité une représentation équilibrée, incluant notamment des travailleurs qui exercent dans le secteur informel et dans les zones rurales. La convention ne précise ni la forme que doit avoir cette consultation ni le moment où elle doit avoir lieu. Toutefois, il est évident que la consultation visée doit intervenir à un moment où il est encore possible pour les différents partenaires d'influer sur le cours des mesures à prendre. Par conséquent, le gouvernement est invité à donner pleinement effet à la convention en répondant aux observations de la commission d'experts et aux conclusions de cette commission.

The Employer member of Sudan (Mr ABBAS ELGURASHI AHMED) indicated that the employers' organizations in Sudan had repeatedly been consulted on the development of a national employment policy and workers' organizations had participated in various meetings in this regard. Sudanese employers were now engaged in consultations regarding a plan for the private sector. The Committee of Experts had noted the five-year

ERP, 2015–19, and noted that the reduction in several productive sectors had affected employment. In the past, Sudan was a successful wheat producer and the challenge was to revive this sector. Increased investment in cotton farming was called for and an injection of funds had been seen, particularly in the Blue Nile region. Employers were vital to employment promotion in this sector. Employment policies had helped certain manufacturing industries and had created employment opportunities in some sectors. In the state of Khartoum, the textile industry received funding, which had resulted in the creation of 2,400 jobs. Increased production in the oil sector resulted in the launch of several new industries and businesses. Moreover, there had been measures taken in relation to animal husbandry and agro-industrial projects. Several projects had also been introduced in the food industry to rehabilitate enterprises. Furthermore, mills to produce processed foods at reasonable prices had been established. A review of policies on technical vocational education and training were being carried out to ensure that areas that were not needed were not retained in revised training curricula.

The Worker member of Sudan (Mr ABDULGADIR) indicated that workers' organizations in Sudan had been part of the consultation process in relation to the development of a national employment policy. For instance, representatives of workers' organizations had been represented in the Higher Council for Employment and in the National Committee for the Civil Service. The speaker stated that the Government had provided support for microfinance initiatives and for the establishment of a labour bank for workers. The Government had also provided subsidies to ensure that workers' basic needs were met, in addition to providing support for housing and implementing social protection measures. In conclusion, the speaker emphasized that the Sudanese workers' organizations were closely associated with all measures aimed at the implementation of the Convention and they would continue to play their part in all efforts aimed at the socio-economic development of the country.

The Government member of Kuwait (Mr AL-ALI), speaking on behalf of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (CCG), welcomed detailed information provided by the Government of Sudan in connection with the most recent observation of the Committee of Experts on the application of the Convention. Technical assistance provided by the ILO was also welcomed. The speaker expressed the hope that such assistance would continue in order to provide the Government and the social partners with the necessary support to fully implement the provisions of the Convention. In conclusion, the speaker called upon the ILO and the Government to continue the dialogue and collaboration in this regard.

The Worker member of Nigeria (Mr ADEYEMI) said that employment participation was at the heart of dignity, well-being and shared prosperity for people, communities and economies. Referring to the definition of unemployment as persons who were currently not working but were willing and able to work for pay, currently available to work, and had actively searched for work, it was fair to mention that Sudan's 20 per cent unemployment rate posed a serious cause for concern. The effects of unemployment on individuals, households and communities were well known, especially in relation to poverty and inequality. The situation was worse for young people who were unable, through gainful employment, to unleash their potential and skills to better their lot and contribute to family and community well-being. It was desperation in some cases that pushed young persons to engage in dangerous journeys across the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea. The letter and spirit of the provisions of the Convention aim to help to improve opportunities for the creation of decent, gainful and productive employment through a well-articulated employment policy. The development of a roadmap by the Government demonstrated its willingness to achieve the goals set forth in the Convention. The Government was however urged not to delay the process of adopting a national employment policy.

Le membre gouvernemental de l'Algérie (M. DROUA) a remercié le représentant du gouvernement du Soudan pour les informations détaillées présentées sur l'application de

la convention qui reflètent clairement la volonté politique du gouvernement et ses efforts déployés en vue d'élaborer une politique nationale de l'emploi en tenant compte des capacités et des conditions économiques et sociales du pays dans l'esprit de la convention n° 122. L'orateur a rappelé les mesures prises par le gouvernement dans l'élaboration d'une politique nationale dans un partenariat incluant des experts nationaux, les partenaires sociaux et des instances concernées, tout en soulignant l'importance de l'assistance technique du BIT. Le gouvernement a été encouragé à poursuivre ses efforts pour élaborer et mettre en œuvre une politique nationale de l'emploi visant l'élimination du chômage et la création d'emplois décents.

The Government member of Qatar (Mr AL-SIDDIQI) expressed appreciation for the information provided by the Government of Sudan, which confirmed its commitment to apply the provisions of the Convention. The speaker wished to commend the important steps taken by the Government of Sudan, which moved closer towards the adoption of a national employment policy, in consultation with the social partners. Reference was made to the measures that had been adopted by the Government, in consultation with the social partners, and national and international investors, to create decent job opportunities through programmes aimed at promoting full and productive employment. The Government was committed to implement the Convention. The speaker hoped that the Committee would take these efforts into consideration. In conclusion, the ILO was encouraged to provide technical assistance in support of these efforts.

The Government representative (Mr ISAMIL) thanked all the participants in the discussion and emphasized that his Government was committed to continue its cooperation with the ILO. A national employment policy would soon be adopted. A report on the application of the Convention would be submitted to the Committee of Experts in time for its next session, as well as reports on fundamental Conventions and other ratified Conventions. In response to the statements made, the speaker reiterated his Government's commitment to adopt and implement a national employment policy, in line with the

Convention. In a country that had an economy largely based on agriculture, the Government would continue to take measures to reduce unemployment as part of its poverty reduction strategies. Furthermore, his Government undertook to continue consultations with the social partners, including in the High-Level Advisory Committee, as great importance was attached to social dialogue. In fact, social dialogue was as the only way to implement an effective national employment policy. Data from the labour force surveys would be used to develop indicators for various regions of the country. The speaker assured the Committee that his Government was setting up a planning unit entrusted with ensuring equitable levels of development throughout the country. In conclusion, the speaker reiterated that his Government would continue to fully cooperate with the ILO and the social partners in order to effectively implement the Convention.

Les membres travailleurs ont remercié le gouvernement pour les explications apportées et ont exprimé l'espoir que les éléments qui ont été développés durant la discussion seront traduits par des mesures concrètes. Il importe que le gouvernement donne suite à l'observation de la commission d'experts concernant la communication de plus amples informations sur l'élaboration d'une politique active de l'emploi, en tenant compte de la notion de travail décent. En application de la convention, le gouvernement est tenu d'élaborer des méthodes lui permettant de recueillir des données sur le marché du travail de sorte à pouvoir élaborer des politiques cohérentes. Ces méthodes peuvent consister en des enquêtes régulières, à l'instar de l'enquête sur la main-d'œuvre menée en 2011. Une autre piste pourrait aboutir à la mise en place d'un observatoire permanent de l'emploi chargé de récolter les données à ce propos. Enfin, s'agissant de la consultation des partenaires sociaux, le gouvernement est invité à garantir un mécanisme approprié et pertinent impliquant l'ensemble des partenaires sociaux sur un même pied d'égalité.

The Employer members (Ms ALSULAIMAN) thanked the Government for the information it had provided in relation to steps taken in order to adopt a national employment policy and to help mitigate the impact of the current situation in the country. They noted the

information provided concerning the comprehensive economic and employment measures taken in order to declare and pursue an active employment policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment. They also took note of the information on positive employment data indicating that many initiatives were undertaken and jobs were created in the public and the private sectors. Employment happened when investment took place; the measure of whether an employment policy was successful or not was firstly whether it encouraged or discouraged investment, and then whether it encouraged or discouraged the creation of jobs. The Employer members called on the Government to:

(i) develop a more coherent strategy where all scattered initiatives were structurally linked together to reinforce each other; (ii) to develop a fair and effective governance that entailed processes, decisions and outcomes that ensured real solutions to local problems and secured sustainable development; (iii) to apply a more coordinated and transparent national action plan, where all stakeholders and social partners had clear roles and responsibilities to participate and work together to reach a more tangible and measurable goals; (iv) to build the capacities of employers' and workers' groups, through social dialogue and tripartite cooperation that will help in speeding up the process of adopting and implementing a national employment policy; and (v) to continue accepting ILO technical assistance to implement the above-noted objectives and achieve the expected results to fight poverty.

(...)

* * *

The sitting closed at 11.26 a.m.
La séance est levée à 11 h 26.
Se levantó la sesión a las 11.26 horas.