

ILO INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2008

BACKGROUND

The ILO has firmly established itself in the Geneva community as the regular host for a major event commemorating International Women's Day (IWD). Over the past years, ILO headquarters and field offices have held events, often highlighting the role and/or achievements of women in a particular field of work, or associating the events with the ILO's ongoing work in gender equity and in improving the situation of women in the world of work.

PLANNED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ACTIVITIES

In 2008, the slogan that will set the basis for ILO's International Women's Day is "Investing in Decent Work for women: Not just right, but smart", based on the overwhelming evidence that promoting equality is not only a matter of human rights, but it also makes good economic sense. Empowering women goes beyond the intrinsic value for women themselves, and has profound impacts on families, communities, national economies right through to achieving global goals such as all eight MDGs.

The ILO theme is also connected to the identified theme of the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women theme and the official United Nations IWD theme **financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women**. The slogan that will set the basis for the UN's IWD celebrations is "Investing in women and girls".

- As with previous years, a panel discussion at ILO headquarters is planned for **Friday, March 7** (as March 8 falls on a Saturday).

The panellists are:

~ **Ms. Evelyn Oputu** (Managing Director - Bank of Industry and the former Executive Director of First National Bank, Nigeria)



~ **Ms. Michaela Walsh** (Founder of Women's World Banking and the first woman manager of Merrill Lynch International, United States)

~ **Ms. Rupa Manel Silva** (Founder of the Women's Development Service Cooperative Society/ Women's Bank of Sri Lanka)

~ **Ms. Agnes Jongerius** (President of the Trade Union Confederation of the Netherlands, and Vice President of the ITUC)

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- An updated *Global Employment Trends for Women*, focusing on the situation of working women worldwide, will be made available in three languages (English, French and Spanish) on **March 7, 2008**. A press release discussing the report's main findings will be launched on March 6.

- A brochure focusing on Women and Microfinance and a Fact sheet on Decent Work for Women will be launched on **Friday March 7**. This material will be available online as well as in paper copy at the end of February.