

**First Regional Conference of the Labour Inspectorates
in Southeast Europe, Azerbaijan and Ukraine
25-27 September, 2008**

SOFIA DECLARATION

We, the Executives Responsible for Safety and Health at Work Policies, representing the institutions participating in the cooperation process in Southeast Europe, Azerbaijan and Ukraine, and the representatives of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Association of Labour Inspection (IALI),

Reaffirming the ideas of the Declaration adopted at the High-Level Regional Conference on Human Resources Development held in Sofia on 25-26 May 2008,

Mindful of the expectations for further cooperation among our institutions,

Recognizing the considerable preparatory work, leading us to this Conference,

Acknowledging the need for approaches that are more holistic, integrating improvements to the work environment, with methods that seek to secure 'wellbeing at work' in its broadest sense,

Met under the chairpersonship of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria, Emilia Maslarova, at the invitation of the Bulgarian government,

To adopt unanimously this Declaration.

We are committed to furthering the regional cooperation in order to ensure safe and healthy working conditions, protect the labour rights of the working people and introduce uniform implementation of the legislation to avoid unfair competition, as an essential element of social policy, by promoting the active role of the participating institutions in the exchange of good practices and experience in integrated labour inspection, mutual learning, capacity building and working in partnership networks.

We are convinced that the ensuring of safe and healthy working environment has a decisive role to play in improving people's quality of life and in the achievement of economic growth and prosperity for our nations as well.

The challenges we are facing in the new century could be overcome to a great extent by increasing the investments in improving the working conditions and promoting decent work in the field of labour through measures designed to invigorate, modernize and strengthen Labour Inspectorates.

We are resolute to develop further the process of cooperation among our institutions:

- Following IALI principles and priorities on regional cooperation;
- Implementing ILO and IALI standards in the sphere of occupational safety and health;
- Having as a foundation the European Social Charter (revised), Strasbourg, 3 May 1996;
- Establishing mechanisms for regional collaboration in the field of integrated labour inspection.

We take up the responsibility, with the assistance of the respective national and international institutions, to focus our efforts on common problems, improving our safety and health policies, developing and strengthening our institutional and administrative capacity, promoting the professionalism of all aspects of labour inspection, as well as exchanging practical experience in the field of occupational safety and health.

We recognize that our success greatly depends on the addressing of regional challenges and problems, such as:

- How to ensure safe and healthy working conditions;
- How to decrease the rate of the occupational accidents and diseases;
- How to eliminate the illegal employment;
- How to speed the adoption of EU and ILO safety and health policy in the region, on the basis of specific labour legislation.
- How to develop safety and health culture and orientation on the workplace.

Developing the underlying ideas of the Initiative for Social Cohesion of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, keeping in mind the establishment of the Regional Initiatives Council, with the assistance of EU and ILO, and building on their experience, **we shall make strategic partnerships** and we shall promote effective follow-up action aimed at:

- Development of regular regional cooperation by annual meetings under the Regional Alliance of the Labour Inspectorates (RALI) in Southeast Europe, Azerbaijan and Ukraine;
- Definition of concrete activities of RALI in the field of research, vocational training, awareness-raising, and building and improving partnership networks for good practice dissemination;
- Provision of training on modern inspection methods, to improve labour inspectors' professional capacities;
- Development and implementation of ethical norms for labour inspectors, in line with ILO and IALI approved Codes of ethical behaviour;
- Implementation of joint regional inspection campaigns, to reduce the incidence rate of the occupational accidents and diseases;
- Involvement in mutual international technical cooperation projects.


To further develop the principles of this Declaration, and in order to enable coordination, exchange of information and observation of progress, **we agree** that every effort will be made, so that RALI be presided by every signatory on a rotation principle for one year and to organize this forum every year.

Our initiative is open for other labour inspectorates, sharing our aims, to join.


Sofia, 27 September 2008

Signatories:

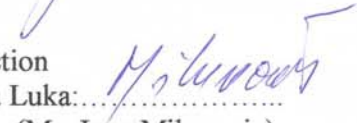
On behalf of the State Inspectorate of Labour, Tirana:


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(Mr. Thoma Mico)

On behalf of the State Labour Inspectorate, Baku:


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(Mr. Nabi Shukurly)

On behalf of the Labour and Occupational Health and Safety Inspection
within the Republic Administration for Inspection Activities, Banja Luka:


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(Mr. Igor Milunovic)

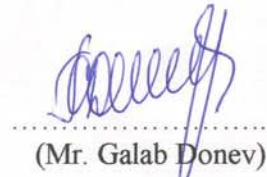
On behalf of the Labour and Employment Inspection
within the Inspectorate of the Brčko District, Brčko:


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(Mrs. Senada Garic)

On behalf of the Inspectorate of the Labour Inspection
within the Federal Administration for
Inspection Activities, Sarajevo:


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(Mr. Muhamed Pashukanovic)

On behalf of the General Labour Inspectorate
Executive Agency, Sofia:


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(Mr. Galab Donev)

On behalf of the Labour Inspectorate, Volos:


.....
(Mr. Alexandros Karageorgiou)

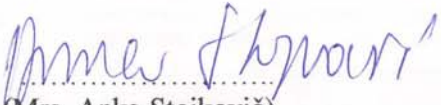
On behalf of the Labour Inspectorate, Skopje:


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(Mr. Zoran Apostolski)


On behalf of the Labour Inspection, Kishinev:


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(Mr. Dimitru Stavila)


On behalf of the Labour Inspectorate, Podgorica:


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(Mrs. Anka Stojković)

On behalf of the Labour Inspectorate, Belgrade:


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(Mr. Radovan Ristanović)

On behalf of the State Labour Inspectorate, Kiev:


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(Mr. Viktor Onischuk)

On behalf of the International Association of Labour Inspection:


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(Mrs. Michele Patterson)