



THIRTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Committee on Technical Cooperation

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 17 March 2009, chaired by Ms B. Naliaka Kituyi (Government, Kenya). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr L. Traore and Mr J. Gomez Esguerra, respectively.
2. The Committee had the following agenda items:
 - I. Trends in international development cooperation
 - II. The ILO's technical cooperation programme 2007–08
 - III. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
 - IV. Implementation of the tripartite agreement on freedom of association and democracy in Colombia
 - V. Other questions
3. The Committee began the discussion on the agenda items after a short video presentation on child labour. Several delegates expressed their appreciation for the video which reminded the Committee of the ultimate purpose of its deliberations.

I. Trends in international development cooperation

4. A representative of the Director-General, Ms van Leur, Director of the Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation (PARDEV), introduced the first paper.¹ The global recognition of the Decent Work Agenda, including the adoption by the International Labour Conference of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization; the General Assembly resolution on the same (A/RES/63/199); the General Assembly decision to make Decent Work for All a central theme of the Second United Nations Decade for Poverty Reduction; and the *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* were all evidence of the increasing demand for system-wide ownership of decent work as a

¹ GB.304/TC/1.

development strategy. She further recalled the resolution on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (A/RES/62/208), the Outcome Document from the International Conference on Financing for Development in Doha and the Accra Agenda for Action that was adopted at the recent High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. These important global resolutions had underlined the need to maintain or increase official development assistance (ODA) in a time of severe financial and economic crisis, and had reaffirmed the principles of country ownership, alignment of aid with national priorities, harmonized donor actions, results-based management and mutual accountability.

5. The Office was responding to the rapidly changing aid architecture by revising its overall policy to ensure a more coherent and integrated use of the ILO's means of action, including international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue, and technical cooperation. The aim was to increasingly integrate and align the various available resources – regular budget, the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) and extra-budgetary resources – and to direct these resources towards decent work outcomes in an integrated manner.
6. With regard to United Nations reform, Decent Work Country Programmes must be integrated in national planning cycles and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) to enhance system-wide coherence and to ensure adequate resources for decent work outcomes under the new “Delivering as One” United Nations coordination and funding mechanisms. It was of shared concern that the ILO as an organization had not yet been able to fully capitalize on its unique tripartite structure. Both the ILO's tripartite constituents and the United Nations would benefit from the enhanced participation of ministries of labour and the social partners in UN reform processes, which is why action was required to strengthen the capacities of the ILO's constituents to influence and further contribute to the implementation of development agendas at the national level.
7. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed his satisfaction with the recognition of the Decent Work Agenda by the international community. He pointed out, however, that the report did not provide a detailed analysis of the consequences of the financial crisis on the extra-budgetary resources on which technical cooperation was dependent, despite the Doha Declaration committing donors not to reduce their aid. He expressed concern at a possible dilution of the role of the tripartite constituents in the “Delivering as One” programmes, given that the ILO's participation had not ensured greater involvement of social partners or ministries of labour in the definition of national priorities. He regretted that the ILO had encountered difficulties in capitalizing on its tripartite structure in the context of United Nations reform. He nonetheless welcomed the establishment of One Budgetary Framework in the pilot countries, which had allowed for greater transparency with regard to un-earmarked resources and a reduction in transaction costs. The point for decision was endorsed on behalf of the Employers' group and the speaker drew the Office's attention to the importance of tripartism.
8. The Worker Vice-Chairperson expressed his concern at the fact that under the “Delivering as One” programme a series of consultations involving civil society had been held, which had not produced results in the UN reform process, given that the social partners had not really been involved. He pointed out that the Governing Body should respect consultative processes in preparing UNDAFs and should devise a strategy to ensure that the ILO's tripartite structure was incorporated.
9. He pointed out that it was apparent from the assessments of the eight pilot countries that the participation of the social partners in the process had been low. He emphasized that in only one – the United Republic of Tanzania – was reference made to workers' and employers' organizations. He requested that the Governing Body discuss the result of these

assessments and take steps to overcome the marginal participation of the social partners. Furthermore, the Worker Vice-Chairperson said that an analysis should be carried out of the benefits and disadvantages of UN reform.

10. He expressed concern at the analysis presented by the Office in paragraph 12, in which it was recognized that “the ILO still faces difficulties in bringing its tripartite structure fully to bear on the UN reform process”.
11. With regard to training activities for social partners, which were planned for the following biennium (paragraph 18), he requested more detailed information and pointed out that such activities were fundamental given the high number of UNDAFs which were to be rolled out. He stressed that given the importance of training, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP should collaborate closely in the design of those activities and the presentation of reports in that regard.
12. With regard to the preparation of Common Country Assessments and UNDAFs, he indicated that the integration of the *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* remained very limited given that there was no reference to the importance of social dialogue and tripartism in national processes.
13. Finally, the Worker Vice-Chairperson endorsed the two points for decision and expressed his support for the preparation of a paper on the pilot countries which would provide a detailed analysis of the reasons behind the lack of involvement of the social partners, as well as developing a strategy to ensure the recognition and participation of the social actors in the UN reform process. In relation to a previous point, the Workers’ group requested the Office to design a coherent training programme, in order to prepare ILO constituents and staff for the development of the new UNDAFs planned over the next three years.
14. Another Worker stressed the role of the developing countries in tackling the global economic downturn and expressed concern at the decreasing figures of development aid. In times of crisis, the Office should more effectively influence the World Bank and the IMF policies, as they often had a negative social impact. He expressed concern about tripartism not being sufficiently taken into account in the “Delivering as One” initiative, and underlined the need for stronger involvement of social partners and ministries of labour.
15. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, welcomed the ILO initiatives undertaken to promote South–South cooperation, as well as the efforts made in strengthening the appraisal mechanisms. She suggested that, when addressing the Field Structure Review, the Office should take into consideration the new funding opportunities resulting from the UN reform.
16. She welcomed the inclusion of international labour standards and the CEB Toolkit in the 2008 UNDAF guidelines. In this regard, she requested further information on common strategies and emerging issues facing the UN system, particularly the role of UNDG and the Working Group on Programming Issues. The ILO should promote the active involvement of the tripartite constituents in the UN reform process. Moreover, the Office should not seek overly ambitious or unrealistic results by claiming that it would “ensure” predictability and allocation of funds, as this was beyond the control of the Office. In conclusion, she proposed a number of amendments to the point for decision.
17. The representative of the Government of Uruguay, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, indicated that the recognition of the Decent Work Agenda and the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization by the United Nations was key to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on poverty reduction. He endorsed the content

of paragraphs 9 and 18–20 of the report on enhancing integrated mechanisms for the delivery of technical cooperation.

18. The representative of the Government of Mozambique, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, stressed that the international community should ensure no reduction in development aid. He called on the Office to secure resources for technical cooperation activities from “Delivering as One” programmes and funds. He supported the point for decision.
19. The representative of the Government of Japan supported the statement of the IMEC group and emphasized the need to continue promoting technical cooperation, particularly under the present economic crisis. “Delivering as One” was an opportunity to better deliver technical cooperation, as recently demonstrated by a project funded by his country in Viet Nam, involving both the ILO and WHO, in the area of occupational safety and health.
20. The representative of the Government of India stressed that country systems should deliver aid so that technical assistance fostered national ownership. He welcomed the call for donor countries to increase their voluntary contributions to the core funding of the United Nations, but adequate safeguards were needed to protect against aid conditionality, distortion of programme priorities and unpredictability. He also supported the alignment of donor funding with decent work outcomes, and the harmonization of interagency initiatives. Finally, he supported the point for decision, stressing that the ILO should ensure a strong role for the social partners and labour ministries in the “Delivering as One” agenda.
21. The representative of the Government of Nigeria supported the statement of the Africa group. The ILO needed to follow up with donors to deliver their ODA commitments. The social partners were crucial to any development efforts, and the ILO should strive to maintain its leading position in UN reform. He drew attention to a forthcoming tripartite National Employment Summit to be held in Nigeria and hoped for ILO technical support to facilitate this. He supported the point for decision.
22. The representative of the Government of Bangladesh hoped to see the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness reflected in the ILO’s technical cooperation programme. He also supported the Office’s move towards more un-earmarked voluntary funding. The point for decision should stress tripartism as the essential building block of the UN reform process.
23. The representative of the Government of Egypt supported the position adopted by the Africa group. The financial crisis should not lead to a reduction but an increase in ODA. He highlighted the importance of aid to the social partners and the greater involvement of the private sector. He supported the point for decision.
24. The representative of the Government of Jordan stressed that “Delivering as One” countries and UNDAFs should be evaluated, particularly in the light of the ILO’s tripartite nature.
25. The representative of the Government of Argentina supported the GRULAC position. His Government had just signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop a Decent Work Country Programme, starting in 2009.
26. The representative of the Director-General noted that there was general agreement on the importance of the involvement of social partners, as well as the ministries of labour in the UN reform process. More work was needed to ensure that decent work issues were reflected in UNDAFs. With respect to the revised UNDAF guidelines, the Office would

continue to strive to integrate social dialogue and international labour standards. Nonetheless, it was a major achievement to have the CEB *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work* and international labour standards reflected in these revised UNDAF guidelines. With regard to One UN funding and the field structure review, she pointed out that the proposed decent work technical support teams would be working with “regional hubs”, and that One UN funding would be an important component for developing related technical cooperation. These issues were being dealt with in the UNDG working groups, notably the Working Group on Programming Issues (WGPI), of which the ILO was an active member. Moreover, the Office was embarking on a sizeable capacity-building programme in all regions to help align Decent Work Country Programmes with UNDAFs and to ensure the integration of tripartism, gender equality, international labour standards and results-based management. With regard to the point for decision as formulated by the IMEC group, she noted that the topics examined would also address the role of the Turin Centre and regional offices.

27. Another representative of the Director-General, Ms Ducci, Executive Director of the Office of the Director-General, noted that the UN Secretary-General had appointed the Director-General to chair the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), which had recently held its first meeting of 2009 “gathering all UN system organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO”. This HLCP meeting had centred on the response of the UN system to the financial crisis, and on policy coherence and joint initiatives. The Director-General had presented an analytical paper derived from UN agency contributions on how the crisis was impacting in their respective areas of work, and where synergies between agencies could be developed in the areas of finance; trade; employment, production and aggregate demand; environment; social services, empowerment and protection of people; humanitarian aid, security and social stability; and development and international cooperation. The paper was being revised and would be submitted to the CEB retreat, planned for 4–5 April 2009.
28. The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons endorsed the point for decision, as amended by the IMEC group.
29. The representative of the Government of Uruguay underlined that the topics examined in the proposed paper for November should also address the roles of the regional offices and the Turin Centre.
30. ***The Committee recommends that the Governing Body:***
 - (a) ***request the Director-General to continue to promote efforts to engage the ILO in international development trends, in particular, aid effectiveness and UN reform; and***
 - (b) ***request the Office to prepare a paper to be submitted to the Committee on Technical Cooperation at the 306th Session (November 2009) of the Governing Body on:***
 - ***issues, lessons learned and challenges experienced by the ILO constituents in the “Delivering as One” pilots to develop a strategy for ensuring attention to employment and decent work and better involvement of tripartite constituents in the UN reform process;***
 - ***in this connection, further developing a capacity-building plan and resource strategy, to prepare ILO constituents and staff for the 90 UNDAFs planned over the next three years, fully taking into account***

the integrated approach set out in the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the priorities of the Decent Work Country Programmes, and the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15;

- *enhancing the ILO’s technical cooperation strategy, including in relation to resource mobilization, to ensure that donor funding is aligned with the decent work outcomes and priorities as set out in the Strategic Policy Framework and programme and budget, and that, where possible, it is predictable and easily allocated to areas of greatest need, and with appropriately harmonized reporting requirements.*

II. The ILO’s technical cooperation programme 2007–08

31. The representative of the Director-General, Ms van Leur, introduced the paper.² Over US\$302 million of extra-budgetary resources had been approved in 2008, and she thanked donors for their generous support. There were currently nine multi-annual partnerships signed with donors, and it was hoped other donors would move in this direction. The RBSA funding modality had attracted significant donor interest and was having an impact on delivery of decent work outcomes, despite a few start-up problems and delays in the reception of funds.
32. The Employer Vice-Chairperson applauded the effectiveness of the resource mobilization strategy, which had made for an increase in approvals and the conclusion of new partnership agreements. However, he regretted that the document did not contain more information on the RBSA, in view of its increasing role in technical cooperation. Mr Traore stressed the usefulness of the meetings organized by the regional offices concerning the mechanisms for using the RBSA. He said that it was necessary to hold consultations prior to the allocation of RBSA resources to take account of constituents’ priorities and mobilize resources for the Turin Centre, social dialogue and tripartism. Meetings to review the execution of activities financed by the RBSA had also been requested and particular emphasis had been placed on the need to involve ACTRAV and ACT/EMP. He commended the amount of resources allocated to the employment strategic objective and called for technical cooperation to be adapted to respond better to the financial crisis. He welcomed the increased delivery rate in certain regions, especially in Africa and the Americas. This was comforting, particularly at a time of crisis. He also wished to receive more information on the management of the RBSA and on the differences in delivery rates between the regions. An explanation had been requested concerning the substantial increase in the share of “other sectors” in relation to the strategic objectives. The reference to increasing use of the Turin Centre had been well received. The participation of the Turin Centre in continuing the application of the Social Justice Declaration had been encouraged. Its contribution to the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programmes and to the reform of the United Nations system had also been underlined.
33. The Worker Vice-Chairperson said that information should be provided on the progress made with regard to previous decisions of the Committee on Technical Cooperation, and a monitoring mechanism should be established as a fundamental tool of governance of the Committee. He added that with respect to previous reports the quality of the information supplied had not improved and that a whole paragraph on the activities of the Turin Centre

² GB.304/TC/2.

had disappeared. He asked for it to be added in future reports and that a report on the synergies achieved between Geneva and Turin be updated.

34. He asked for clarification on the statistics supplied in paragraphs 2 and 7, expressed his concern at the distribution of resources and requested a table of approvals disaggregated by strategic objectives. He thanked the donors participating in the Framework Partnership Agreements and encouraged other member States to initiate such agreements.
35. Partnership Framework Agreements had to be consistent with the resource mobilization strategy approved in 2004 and should stimulate the promotion of tripartism and support specific programmes proposed by employers' and workers' organizations and include resources for social dialogue activities.
36. He valued the Office's efforts to increase extra-budgetary resources and stressed the need for all technical cooperation resources to be analysed separately by strategic objective, also including data on the regular budget and RBSA. He requested further information on the RBSA regarding its achievements and challenges and the mechanisms enabling the social partners to be involved.
37. Despite positive trends in overall expenditure, he noted a reduction in the share of expenditure on social dialogue and social protection, and recommended that the Office use the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization with a view to re-balancing sectoral allocations. He also referred to the very small share of funds set aside for the promotion of freedom of association and collective bargaining. He recognized the Office's commitment to Africa and called for similar efforts with regard to the Americas, Central and Eastern Europe and the Arab States. He voiced his concern at delivery rates and asked that the Office present a strategy for improving them and also supply information concerning progress made on each strategic objective. Furthermore, he requested that the ILO be responsible for managing public-private partnership agreements.
38. The Worker Vice-Chairperson indicated that informal meetings of donors were due to be held after the Governing Body, not before it, so that the donors could take the Committee's deliberations into consideration, and also requested that ACTRAV and ACT/EMP be invited to the secretariat of the workers and employers.
39. Finally, the Vice-Chairperson expressed his concern at the projections for the Programme and Budget for 2010-11, particularly the funds administered by ACTRAV. The Workers' group requested the Office to prepare a report for the Committee on Technical Cooperation. The report should: contain a description of the outcomes achieved and the challenges regarding the RSBA; provide an accurate breakdown by strategic objective of the approvals for 2008; provide a breakdown of costs by each specific objective, setting out the regular budget data, extraordinary funding and the RBSA; provide the delivery rates by strategic objective; present updated information on the Turin Centre's technical cooperation activities; and increase the percentage of Framework Partnership Agreements involving the process of disseminating tripartism. In addition to underlining the importance of clarifying the observations made, he finished by saying that the Workers' group supported the point for decision.
40. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, congratulated the Office on its capacity to mobilize resources. In view of the financial crisis, it might be too optimistic to think that new procedures on public-private partnerships would automatically bring more. Multi-annual partnerships were a good way to ensure predictable programming since donors were able to provide un-earmarked funding through a multi-annual strategy. She noted that the overall RBSA target had not been met. She looked forward to the donor meeting in May on RBSA to better understand

the objectives and comparative advantages and impact of this funding mode. These meetings should be aligned to the Governing Body meetings to reduce overall travel costs. She asked for further information on how “One UN” funds related to other UN funds through the UNDP and if there was an expectation that there would be increasing consolidation towards the “One UN” funds.

41. The speaker noted that the ILO delivery rate remained low and she requested a long-term overview on delivery. It would also be useful to monitor delivery by strategic objectives, and to have information about expenditure by Decent Work Country Programme. She inquired about delivery problems, and how projects were evaluated. She supported the point for decision.
42. The representative of the Government of Mozambique, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, requested further information on obstacles to delivery and social partner involvement in evaluations. He supported the point for decision.
43. The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea supported the statement made by the IMEC group. Her country could consider moving towards a multi-annual partnership framework. The ILO should better communicate its comparative advantages in relation to other institutions. The ILO could foster more multi-annual partnerships by demonstrating technical expertise for quality services, excellent administrative support for efficient delivery, and thorough evaluation for improvement of future services. The Office should give special consideration to new or emerging donors in their efforts to consolidate or increase their contribution to the ILO.
44. The representative of the Government of India stressed that in view of the current crisis, priority should be given to employment and social protection. The objectives of technical cooperation projects should be aligned with decent work priorities and the MDGs. The ILO should take the necessary steps to increase the resource mobilization and allocation for the Asia and Pacific region. He emphasized the importance of stronger links between the regular and extra-budgetary programmes. He supported the point for decision.
45. The representative of the Government of Nigeria commended the ILO for attracting and sustaining more partnerships, which should focus on the core areas of its operations. The ILO should sustain and even step up its technical cooperation assistance to the African region, in view of the impact of the financial crisis. There was a need to improve on the delivery rate in the region. He commended the ILO’s efforts to ensure that its technical cooperation programmes contributed to UN system-wide coherence. He supported the point for decision.
46. The representative of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania urged the Office to continue consulting with the tripartite constituents and supported the point for decision.
47. The representative of the Government of Jordan inquired about the decrease in the delivery rate in the Arab States region. Speaking on behalf of the Arab group, he requested that the Office reintroduce an item on technical cooperation in the occupied Arab territories on the agenda of the Committee at each of its meetings in March and November.
48. The representative of the Director-General pointed out that the figures presented in the report were only preliminary figures and that a final and more detailed analysis would be presented to the Committee in November in a report on the implementation and evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes. She provided further clarification on data in paragraphs 2 and 7 of the paper.

49. With regard to the RBSA, a report on RBSA activities would be provided as part of the Programme Implementation Report in March 2010. There would also be a donor meeting on the RBSA on 4–5 May 2009 at the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin. In accordance with regular practice vis-à-vis donor meetings, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP would be invited. The ILO had faced a number of challenges with this new funding mechanism, including occasional late disbursement and allocation of resources and considerable exchange rate fluctuations. Nonetheless, systems and procedures were now in place for this new modality, and she was certain that the RBSA was on the right track and that the expected results would be generated, albeit perhaps with some delays. In this regard, she noted that some donors and member States had expressed concerns with regard to the proposed targets for RBSA contributions and extra-budgetary expenditure that had been put forward in the Strategic Policy Framework and the Programme and Budget proposals for 2010–11. She explained how the target for extra-budgetary funding was not a target for new approvals; it was rather a prudent estimate of expenditures on the basis of already, or soon to be, mobilized extra-budgetary funds in the 2010–11 biennium. With record approvals in recent years, it was not surprising that the expenditure forecast would rise. With regard to the RBSA, the ILO remained cautiously optimistic that donors and member States would scale up their support for the RBSA with un-earmarked contributions in support of decent work outcomes and Decent Work Country Programmes. In light of the global financial and economic crisis, such flexible and strategic support was needed now more than ever before.
50. With regard to questions about the delivery rate, a number of factors had impeded an even higher delivery rate, including overly optimistic planning, design flaws in projects, and external factors such as conflict and political changes. To address these issues, in line with the recommendations of the External Auditor, the Office had stepped up its efforts to oversee technical cooperation programmes and projects. New measures included the introduction of a quality assurance mechanism and appraisal of all new technical cooperation projects; an improved allocation mechanism; regular expenditure reviews; as well as systematic training and capacity building for ILO staff working on technical cooperation projects. The evaluation function of the ILO was also an important part of improved technical cooperation oversight. All projects with a budget of more than \$500,000 were subject to independent evaluation; projects below this budget level were subject to self-evaluation unless the donor requested otherwise. Technical cooperation projects were also evaluated as part of Decent Work Country Programmes. In 2010 the Office would evaluate an additional two Decent Work Country Programmes.
51. With regard to public–private partnerships, the Office was currently in dialogue with four such partners, and was further elaborating a promotional package for potential public- and private-sector partners.
52. In response to the comments made with regard to the importance of tripartism and social partners in technical cooperation, she stressed that all ILO projects would be appraised to ensure that they were consistent with the promotion of tripartism, including workers' and employers' activities, the application of international labour standards, and respect for gender equality and non-discrimination, and that they made use of the International Training Centre in Turin, while ensuring visibility and communication on results. While extra-budgetary funding was often allocated according to donor requests, the conclusion of partnerships and the increased funding of the RBSA would allow the Office to allocate funds to areas where technical cooperation was needed to achieve programmed decent work outcomes, including in the area of social dialogue and strengthening the capacity of social partners.
53. The Regional Director for the Arab States, Ms Al-Nashif, recalled that in 2008, the overall technical cooperation portfolio amounted to more than \$28 million, which was a fivefold

increase from 2006. This increase of resources, combined with a need to roll out a number of Decent Work Country Programmes, resulted in a strain on administrative capacity and a negative impact on delivery rate. Some projects were also implemented in countries affected by conflict, where implementation remained difficult. The recruitment process also represented a challenge. In order to overcome these constraints, the Regional Office was increasing its efforts to realistically plan annual allocations, improve capacity building of new staff and ensure timely support from headquarters units.

- 54. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body encourage the Director-General to continue to strengthen the ILO's technical cooperation programme to ensure that it effectively discharges the role foreseen in the implementation of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.***

III. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

- 55.** A representative of the Director-General, Mr Tapiola, Executive Director of the Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector, reported back on the 18th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee (ISC) on 16 March 2009. The year 2008 had been eventful. The global financial and economic crisis put progress in eliminating child labour in jeopardy. There was also evidence of the resolve of the world community, such as the adoption of new child labour statistical standards by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), and the adoption of an important resolution focused on child labour by the UN General Assembly. Donor support for IPEC, after a decline in 2007, once again returned to a level more consistent with recent years – resulting in \$66 million in new project approvals for 2008. Expenditures for the year 2008 reached \$61 million. Convention No. 138 reached 152 ratifications and Convention No. 182, 169 ratifications. The World Day against Child Labour (WDAKL) 2009, alongside its theme of girls in child labour, would also focus on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Convention No. 182. The WDAKL in 2008 had as its theme “Education: The right response to child labour”, and activities were held in more than 50 countries. IPEC was well on the way towards meeting its objectives under the programme and budget. Progress towards the goal of eliminating all the worst forms of child labour by 2016 would, in part, be measured through the new global estimates on child labour in 2010. In the field of tripartite cooperation and social dialogue, IPEC had truly enhanced the quality of its cooperation with employers and workers. The Implementation Report illustrated the enhanced focus on capacity building and reflected the recognition of the unique role of employers and workers. IPEC had also intensified its partnerships with several important actors, such as the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education For All. South–South cooperation continued to be pursued and an agreement in this respect was about to be signed with the Government of Brazil.
- 56.** The ISC general discussion debate had been rich, with 19 speakers from both donor and beneficiary countries. There was satisfaction with IPEC's work and the Implementation Report, and requests were made for further support to countries, as well as indications of support from some donors. While ways would be sought to make the presentation in the Report more results oriented, measuring impact at a broader level would require a major effort and would be reflected in the next Global Report in 2010. This year, more detail had been provided to the ISC on the allocations of funding to implementing agencies under IPEC projects. The delivery of direct services to children was costly and was often delivered through highly specialized organizations. But in no way should this be interpreted as the shifting of responsibilities for eliminating child labour away from

national authorities to others. The ISC welcomed the consideration that was being given by the Netherlands Government to hosting an international conference on child labour; a conference foreseen by the 2006 Global Action Plan. There was also broad appreciation for IPEC's contribution to the new ILO Helpdesk for company managers and workers and their organizations, managed by the Multinational Enterprises Programme. IPEC would also make an analysis of the functioning of the national steering committees.

- 57.** The thematic discussion on the consequences of the global economic crisis for child labour saw five fascinating presentations. An introductory presentation was provided by Mr Frank Hagemann, Chief of Research and Policy in IPEC. Interesting presentations were delivered by Ms Beatrice Kituyi, Permanent Secretary of Labour of Kenya, and Mr Mário dos Santos Barbosa, Special Adviser to the Minister for Labour and Employment of Brazil. Comments were provided thereafter by Mr Adyanthaya, Worker member of the Governing Body (India), and Mr Ashraf Tabani, Employer member of the Governing Body (Pakistan). A few important conclusions could be drawn. There was a real danger of setbacks in the achievements made in the fight against child labour and the erosion of progress had to be urgently prevented. Households in poor countries and countries with extreme poverty would be at the greatest risk of suffering severe setbacks. Many of the highly exposed countries were key IPEC partners, and urgent work was needed to stop the erosion of progress achieved over recent years, including work on how to support vulnerable households and to maximize the potential of the social partners in mitigating the impact of the crisis. Among the policy responses discussed were the re-prioritization of existing public spending patterns in order to ensure delivery of core services to vulnerable households ("social stimulus"). Mainstreaming of child labour in the work programmes of labour ministries and their coordinating role with other relevant parts of Government had to be enhanced. The collection of accurate data and information and the role of the social partners and social dialogue would be important to help governments fashion the right responses. Furthermore, in the face of adverse economic conditions, the pursuit of national plans of action and time-bound measures would be all the more important, as would be staying on track with "Education For All". Consistent educational policies aimed at providing free, compulsory education up to the minimum age for admission to employment had to be ensured. Another response would be to look into conditional cash transfers and access to microcredit, as well as intensified public works programmes. It would be critical to enhance assistance and support through the broad measures called for in Article 8 of Convention No. 182.
- 58.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the IPEC Implementation Report, and supported the statement made by the Employers' group at the ISC. He thanked the IPEC donor countries, in particular Ireland and Norway, whose contributions had been made specifically for work with employers and workers. Although there was an improvement in the collaboration between employers' organizations and IPEC, information on allocation of funds to implementing agencies should be provided in the Implementation Report and not separately. Since there was a need for more analysis of the impact of achievements, he welcomed the planned impact assessment in the next Global Report. The Employers requested more information regarding IPEC's situation in the current field structure review. They welcomed the focus on the global economic crisis and its impact on child labour. Economic problems should never be a justification for inaction on child labour and action was required so that all the achievements would not be undone.
- 59.** A Worker welcomed the Report, noting that it could have been more analytical. He thanked IPEC and the donors. In particular, he welcomed the training activities for trade union focal points and the recently adopted resolution on statistics. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Convention No. 182, efforts had to be redoubled to achieve its universal ratification, while the importance of Convention No. 138 should not be forgotten. It was important that IPEC move gradually to providing more policy support, in order to

ensure the sustainability of the results of the project work. The Workers were concerned about the level of allocation of funds to the social partners among implementing agencies, and requested that figures be provided next year in the Implementation Report. The global economic crisis should not be an excuse to do nothing in the fight against child labour. Instead, there should be a continued effort to ensure universal quality education up to the minimum age for employment. Donor support should provide support to the elimination of child labour, while stimulus packages should be geared towards strengthening social protection for children and their families.

60. The representative of the Government of Brazil stated that lately there had been a convergence of thoughts and action. It was now recognized that the fight against poverty and the elimination of child labour were inextricably linked. Brazil had set as a priority goal the achievement of socially inclusive economic development. Programmes such as Bolsa Familia or Hambre Cero had contributed significantly to this objective by allowing the withdrawal of working children and their insertion into school. The global economic crisis was threatening the positive results achieved and redoubled efforts were required to maintain withdrawal rates. The Government was working closely with the ILO Office in Brasilia and in consultation with workers' and employers' organizations for the implementation of the Decent Work National Action Plan, which had as a key priority the elimination of child labour. Brazil became a donor country in 2008, within the framework of South-South cooperation, and a number of countries had already received support. Brazil had promoted the integration of Latin American countries through MERCOSUR and UNASUR and positive results could be expected. In line with Convention No. 182, Brazil had published a second list of hazardous work for children under the age of 18. He commended the adoption of international statistical standards for measuring child labour and welcomed the financial resources to support technical cooperation programmes, such as the creation of a State free of child labour in Bahia.
61. In conclusion, the representative of the Director-General referred to the question regarding the possible effect of the field structure review on IPEC. There were currently child labour specialists located in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Dakar, Lima and New Delhi, and no changes were anticipated in respect of these positions. In regard to cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations in the implementation of projects, this was expected to grow. IPEC would continue to provide figures on this, even though they might become available too late for inclusion in the next Implementation Report. He praised the exemplary cooperation with Brazil, which shared a long history of collaboration with IPEC and had now become a donor country. This was an illustration of the direction of IPEC's work with all partner countries.

IV. Implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia

62. The Committee had before it a paper.³
63. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the impact of the Tripartite Agreement on improving the implementation of the 1998 Declaration and social dialogue in Colombia.
64. An Employer noted that the four projects listed in the paper were supported by donors at the national round table. There was currently support for bipartite consultation and social dialogue from the United States, Canada and Sweden. Current activities were being

³ GB.304/TC/4.

implemented with 54 per cent of the resources being made available, and included regional seminars and consultancies in labour investigations, as prescribed in the document.

65. The Worker Vice-Chairperson thanked the Office and the international community for supporting the Tripartite Agreement signed in 2006 and requested more detailed information on the two projects financed by the Government of Colombia for 2009, particularly on the project aiming to promote social dialogue.
66. With regard to combating impunity, he acknowledged some progress and the usefulness of the database to monitor investigations, but regretted that the number of cases of impunity was still very high and that the Colombian Commission of Jurists had received threats.
67. With regard to the promotion of fundamental labour standards, he supported the recently established observatory and emphasized that respect for Conventions Nos 87 and 98 was very limited. He deplored the persistent anti-union behaviour and its consequences, as well as the various means used by employers to make working conditions precarious. As to the right to life, he said that even though the number of trade unionists affected had decreased, violent anti-union practices, death threats and forced displacements continued. He went on to state that it was perverse to simply compare figures for different years; no one should be killed for being a trade unionist, one case was as serious as one hundred, or one thousand.
68. Despite the progress of the Tripartite Agreement, and recognizing the seriousness of the Colombian situation, the speaker recommended strengthening the resolve to: (a) guarantee freedom of association; (b) ensure the integrity and protection of the lives of trade unionists; (c) end impunity; and (d) create the conditions for an effective climate for social dialogue. He insisted on the need to fully guarantee compliance with the fundamental ILO Conventions, to stamp out low-quality contracts, prevent the repression of anyone establishing a new organization, and for the inspection services to deepen their commitment in the fight against impunity.
69. The representative of the Government of Colombia reiterated her Government's stance against violence, and efforts to combat impunity, noting that there was a decline in the number of trade unionists killed. Nevertheless, the number of homicides was still high and the Government would continue to address the matter with the seriousness it deserved. She pointed out that in 2008, 76 cases were prosecuted by the State, which had resulted in 260 convictions.
70. She reiterated the commitment of her Government, through the office of the Attorney General, to enhance the protection of trade unionists, journalists and others. The Government had made budgetary allocations specifically to fund the protection of trade unionists. For 2009, \$45 million were under consideration for this programme. Since the programme had come into existence, no union leader under its protection had been assassinated.
71. The Colombian social partners had participated in the Coordination Committee on Wage Policies (Comisión de Concertación de Políticas Salariales) which, early this year, had held two meetings in which it was agreed that it would address unemployment in the economic and financial crisis.
72. With regard to legislation, the Government had enacted Decree No. 535, which allowed public servants to engage in negotiations over working conditions. Structures had been set up for handling grievances and dispute settlements for the social partners and to create a harmonious environment. Law 1210 had been enacted, which empowered judges to declare strikes illegal. The law also provided that when a strike was called, the parties in dispute were obliged to go to arbitration, in order to discuss their differences and reach an

amicable solution. This law responded to a number of comments made by the ILO supervisory bodies.

73. The speaker concluded by noting the four technical cooperation projects being implemented under the Tripartite Agreement in her country, in which the social partners were actively involved.
74. The representative of the Government of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union,⁴ requested further information on the outcome of activities carried out within the framework of the Tripartite Agreement. Recalling the recent murder of four trade unionists in Colombia, he encouraged the Government to speed up the investigations and to continue to combat impunity, and he welcomed the establishment of special investigation units and judges. He requested the Office to provide an assessment of the role of the ILO permanent representation in Bogotá and concluded by announcing the forthcoming meeting between EU Heads of Mission in Bogotá and representatives of the three Colombian union federations.
75. Responding to the debate, the Regional Director for the Americas, Mr Maninat, clarified that the Office was currently discussing the exact scope of the activities it would undertake in 2009 and highlighted the ILO's continued support for consultations on wage policies and activities facilitating the integration of women in the labour market. It was too early to assess the outcomes of these activities since the Tripartite Agreement was established in 2006 and activities under this agreement were part of a lengthy process.

V. Other questions

76. There being no issue under this agenda item, the Chairperson closed the meeting. In accordance with standard procedures, the report of the meeting would be approved on its behalf by the Officers of the Committee. They would also agree on the agenda for the meeting of the November 2009 session of the Committee.

Geneva, 20 March 2009.

Points for decision: Paragraph 30;
Paragraph 54.

⁴ Turkey, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Armenia aligned themselves with this statement.