

## NEWSLETTER

02/APRIL 2010

<b>Joint ILO Office - EESC workshop in Geneva .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Belgian Vice-Prime Minister meets with ILO's Director General.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Global Child Labour Conference, 10 and 11 May 2010 The Hague, Netherlands.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>UNDP Chief addresses the ILO Governing Body and supports Global Jobs Pact.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ILO at hearing of European Parliament on child labour on 27 April 2010 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Conference on EU trade policy towards developing countries .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>New steps in the ratification of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>National Labour Council calls for renewed efforts for ratification of ILO Conventions .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>World Day for Safety and Health at Work, 28 April 2010 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Global Jobs Pact website is now on line .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ASEM Employment High Level Forum .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>New Publications .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Scheduled meetings.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Contact us .....</b>	<b>4</b>

### Joint ILO Office - EESC workshop in Geneva



On 9 March 2010, the ILO received a delegation from the European Economic Social Committee (EESC) for a joint workshop organized in the framework of their December 2005 agreement to strengthen relations between the two institutions. It provided an opportunity to enhance cooperation on a number of key issues of common interest: responding to the global economic crisis, decent work, social dialogue, ILO conventions including fundamental rights and principles at work, labour migration and enterprise development. As a result of the workshop, the EESC and the ILO Office agreed to seek broader cooperation both inside and outside the EU, including, in the context of the increasing role of the EU as a global player and the reform of global governance for a more balanced, inclusive and sustained development. For more information, consult the [summary of discussions](#) of the joint workshop.

**Belgian Vice-Prime Minister meets with ILO's Director General**



The Belgian Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Steven Vanackere, and the ILO's Director General, Juan

Somavia, had an extensive exchange on 1 March 2010 in Geneva. They discussed the role of the ILO and the ILO's Global Jobs Pact responding to the global financial, economic and social crisis, the EU 2020 strategy and its interplay with the Belgian EU rotating presidency in the second semester of 2010. They also considered international trade and the role of decent work in the upcoming revision of the Belgian development cooperation law. The ILO's Director General underlined that Belgian constituents have a lot of expertise on employment, social protection and social dialogue in several regions, including in Africa. He hoped that this would also be reflected in the revision of the law and its implementation.

**Global Child Labour Conference, 10 and 11 May 2010 The Hague, Netherlands**



Ten years after the coming-into-force of the ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) a Global Child Labour

Conference will be held in The Hague on 10 and 11 May 2010. The Conference will be hosted and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, and is organized in close collaboration with the ILO. The main aim of the conference is to

reinvigorate, refocus and renew commitments to end child labour, in particular in its worst forms. An expected outcome of the conference is a Road map with concrete steps to achieve the goal of eliminating the WFCL by 2016. The event will also feature the launching of the ILO Global Report for 2010 on child labour. Child labour is not a phenomenon that can be dealt with in isolation, it is both a cause and consequence of poverty, and low levels of social protection. This conference aims also to mainstream the issue of child labour into the development debate. Particular attention will be paid to the situation of sub-Saharan Africa. The impact of the economic crisis on child labour, and the opportunities that the recovery process may provide will also be discussed at the conference.

**UNDP Chief addresses the ILO Governing Body and supports Global Jobs Pact**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) administrator, Helen Clark, made a speech to the ILO Governing Body, Working party on the Social Dimension of Globalisation on 22 March 2010. She underlined that the ILO Global Jobs Pact “paves the way” for countries seeking a “fair and just” way out of the global recession. She said that the creation of more and better jobs would be essential if we want to have a chance of achieving the first Millennium Development Goals by 2015 of halving extreme poverty and hunger. The decision of the UNDP Executive Board to integrate the ILO Global Jobs Pact into its operational activities, in collaboration with ILO, constitutes an important step forward. This support can also be very useful for other donor's such as the EU and EU Member states. The European Parliament is currently discussing a report on poverty and jobs creation in developing countries.

### **ILO at hearing of European Parliament on child labour on 27 April 2010**



On 27 April 2010, from 9:00 to 12:30, the European Parliament's Committee on Development (DEVE) is organising a [hearing on child labour](#), in co-operation

with the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on International Trade and the Committee on Human Rights. This very special hearing will address a large number of issues including the ILO conventions on eliminating child labour, development cooperation, policy coherence, best practices on elimination of child labour, human rights dialogues with third countries, trade agreements, GSP and GSP plus, trade related initiatives, Corporate Social Responsibility and public procurement. Constance Thomas, Director of the ILO Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), will intervene as a speaker. The hearing is part of ongoing efforts within the EP to promote decent work for all.

### **Conference on EU trade policy towards developing countries**

The ILO Office has participated in the [conference](#) "EU Trade policy towards developing countries challenges and opportunities for the next years". The event was organised by the European Commission (DG Trade) on 16 March 2010 and aimed at receiving input from stakeholders on how EU trade policy could take better account of, or be tailored towards, developing countries' needs and wider sustainability concerns. Stephen Pursey, Director of Policy Integration Department of ILO, provided an historical overview of the interplay between trade, employment and decent work. He highlighted the

global consensus on the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation (2008). This text has updated the ILO mandate. Its Art. I, A, iv) states that the violation of fundamental principles and rights at work cannot be invoked or otherwise used as a legitimate comparative advantage and that labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes.

### **New steps in the ratification of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**

On 4 February 2010, Spain became the first EU Member state to ratify the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). Other EU member states are expected to follow this example this year, following a request by the EU Council to do so by the end of 2010. The MLC establishes a global social floor for seafarers and ship-owners. It also directly contributes to the attractiveness of the maritime professions. The European Economic and Social Committee organised, on 11 March 2010, a high level conference on how to attract young people into shipping and retain them. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, Director of International Labour Standards Department of the ILO, contributed to the conference and highlighted the importance of a speedy entry into force of the MLC by ensuring speedy ratifications. A number of developing countries, with large flags of convenience, have already ratified the MLC.

### **National Labour Council calls for renewed efforts for ratification of ILO Conventions**

[In its opinion Nr. 1730 of 16 March 2010](#) (French), the Belgian National Labour Council has called for renewed efforts by Belgium to ratify up to date ILO Conventions as a contribution to the social dimension of globalization, decent work for all and to EU calls on this. [The National Labour Council](#) consists of the most representative organisations of employers and workers.

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### **World Day for Safety and Health at Work, 28 April 2010**

Emerging risks and new patterns of prevention in a changing world of work will be the theme of the World Day this year. The ILO Report, promotional material, posters and other will be available on the [World Day for Safety and Health at Work](#) website.

### **The Global Jobs Pact website is now on line**

This regularly updated [website](#) will inform users of the latest developments on how ILO members and partner agencies are using the Pact to promote an employment intensive, sustainable recovery to the global jobs crisis. ILO welcomes your feedback, comments and story ideas at [jobspect@ilo.org](mailto:jobspect@ilo.org).

### **ASEM Employment High Level Forum**



On 30-31 March 2010, the European commission organised the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Employment High Level Forum (EHLF) in Brussels “From Bali to Leiden -

What lessons for ASEM from the jobs crisis”. It was preceded by the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEM Social Partners Forum on 29 March 2010. The ILO contributed to the High Level Forum with a presentation on the ILO Global Jobs Pact made by the Director of the ILO Institute for International Labour Studies, Raymond Torres. The ASEM is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation between EU and Asia. It has employment and social policy dimensions. The first ASEM labour ministerial meeting took place, in Potsdam, in 2006 and the second one in 2008 in Bali. This resulted into the inclusion of the decent work concept in the outcome document of the ASEM Summit that took place in Beijing in October 2008. The 2010 EHLF contributed to the substantive

preparation of the next ASEM labour ministerial meeting to be organised by the Netherlands, in Leiden, in December 2010 and to the next [ASEM Summit to be hosted by Belgium, in Brussels, in October 2010](#). The EHLF discussed the job crisis and recovery measures undertaken by ASEM together with topics related to the decent work agenda such as social protection, skills, CSR and occupational health and safety.

### **New Publications**

The ILO study **“International Labour Migration: A rights-based approach”** focuses new attention on adopting a rights based approach to meet the needs of the world’s 105 million migrant workers. It examines trends in international labour migration, its impacts on origin and destination countries, and the conditions of work experienced by migrant workers. The study also explores how standards can be used in the formulation and implementation of migration policies and practices. The report called **Women in labour markets: Measuring progress and identifying challenges** uses labour market indicators to measure progress or lack of progress towards the goal of gender equality in the world of work and identify where and why blockages to labour market equity continue to exist. A [press release](#) presents this new study.

### **Scheduled meetings**

[List of scheduled ILO meetings](#)

### **Contact us**

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International  
Labour  
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**ILO Office**  
*for the European Union  
and the Benelux countries*

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