

# LABOR

# *magazine*



## What solution for Latin America?



**DOSSIER  
THE 91ST ILC**

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**Picture**  
*Crisis in Latin America*

# PORTRAIT

Could you explain your professional journey to us?

I started my career in 1961, at the Christian Federation of Woodworkers and Building in French-speaking Switzerland, in Lausanne, until 1968. I then went to work with an NGO in West Africa, in Burkina Faso and in Côte d'Ivoire. We were doing adult literacy, working with women... Then in 1974, I joined the World Council of Churches in Geneva. Finally, in 1977 I started working at the WCL where I am currently.

How did you get into the Confederation?

I had established links with Bernard Matthey, who was in trade unionism in Geneva, between 1961 and 1968. I then met him again in Africa since he worked for three years, employed by the WCL, with the Pan-African Union of Christian Workers, regional organisation of the WCL, which had its headquarters in Banjul, the Gambia. On his return from Africa, Bernard Matthey who was trade

IF YOU HAVE ALREADY WALKED  
ALONG THE CORRIDORS OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE,  
YOU CERTAINLY HAVE COME ACROSS  
BEATRICE FAUCHÈRE, A VERY ACTIVE  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD  
CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR IN  
GENEVA FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW.  
THIS YEAR, HER LIFE WILL TAKE A  
NEW TURN. LET US RECOUNT HER  
EXCITING CAREER WITH HER.

## *Beatrice Fauchère*

union secretary for French-speaking Switzerland —continued to collaborate with Gérard Fonteneau at the WCL, then Deputy Secretary General of the WCL. In 1977, when he had to renew the team at the Geneva Office, Bernard Matthey contacted me.



What was your role then?

I started at the WCL as assistant to Gilles Frenette, who had come from the CSN (affiliate of the WCL at that time). Gilles Frenette—who was the permanent representative of the WCL in Geneva— and I started work at the WCL on 1 March 1977. From 1980 to 1991, I formed a team with Blaise Robel who was from Madagascar, Gilles having left the Geneva Office for the WCL General Secretariat in Brussels. Blaise went on retirement in 1991, and that year, the Executive Committee appointed me as permanent representative.

International trade unionism has really changed in 25 years...

At the time I arrived at the WCL, international trade unionism was very much influenced by the political situation of the blocks: the World Federation of Trade Unions (communist) the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (which was born in 1949 from the split from the WFTU) and the World Confederation of Labour. One of the things that had attracted me to the WCL, was its commitment to the right to development.

On the other hand, I have always appreciated the reflection of the WCL on the international trade union situation. In fact, during its 1977 congress, the WCL undertook to strengthen “the need for a renovation of world trade unionism” and proposed “renovated trade union action in the face of multinationals”. The Manila Congress (1981) and the subsequent congresses still emphasised the need to renew the international trade union movement, the fight against neo-liberalism and

*Continued on page 23*



# Priority to peace, development and jobs!

*This year's —91rd— edition of the International Labour Conference is taking place in difficult international circumstances. The end of the unilateral war of the United States and Great Britain is in sight. The World Confederation of Labour has always said that negotiations and diplomatic channels are the best ways to solve a conflict. According to the WCL, there would have been more chance of peace and stability worldwide if the huge amounts of money that were pumped in this useless war had been earmarked for the development of the peoples.*

*But that is not how the governments of the G8 are thinking! And even less the international financial institutions, International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Their policies are pervaded by the neo-liberal concepts. Despite major failures like in Argentina, this course continues to be followed, imper-turbably.*

*The result is obvious: an enormous concentration of wealth in the hands of a minority, whereas the number of people living below the poverty line is on the rise all over the world.*

*The World Trade Organisation, too, keeps swearing by its course. It continues to promote the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), even if it is general knowledge that this Agreement causes a rise in unemployment and makes a series of indispensable services inaccessible to the poor. Its Cancun meeting, next September, is of paramount importance in this regard. Anyway, the WCL continues its everyday struggle for more social justice.*

*This year the World Confederation of Labour will take, again, an active part in the 91rd session of the International Labour Conference, through its action in the Standards Committee and on issues like human resources development (cf the dossier).*

*We are also fully in the process of strengthening Trade Action, in line with the decisions of our Bucharest Congress. We developed a training programme for trade union leaders, and the first results are more than encouraging. The programme provides for more than four hundred activities in 28 countries to opti-mise the action of the WCL's eight international trade federations in sectoral negotiations.*

*The programme is also innovative in that part of the action is related to the informal economy.*

*That way we want to contribute to the creation of dig-nified jobs for everybody worldwide, regardless gender, race or religion.*



Willy Thys  
Secretary General

## SUMMARY

### NEWS - *Echo from the world*

4 Latin America, evolution of the situation



### UNDERSTANDING - *In all letters*

6 OECD/TUAC



### LARGE MAP - *Regions of the world*

7 Togo: CSTT and WCL organise women workers in the informal sector



### FLASH - *Instantaneous*

8 Europe · GATS



### DOSSIER

9 The 91st International Labour Conference



### TRADE UNION - *Echo from the sectors*

17 A four-year plan to strengthen Trade Action



### WORLD - *Crossed views*

19 BATU in favour of democratic sustainable development



### DEBATE - *Seen, read, heard*

22 Press review · Books and debates



### TRADE UNION *activities*

24 Migrant workers and informal sector in Indonesia: The SBSI is getting ready for action!

nr. 2 Labor



# Latin America, evolution of the situation

LATIN AMERICA, AND PARTICULARLY ARGENTINA AND VENEZUELA, HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY SEVERAL CRISES IN RECENT YEARS. HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN, AND WHAT DOES THE TRADE UNION SITUATION LOOK LIKE?

“ It is difficult to point to one single cause of this phenomenon”, says Eduardo Estevez, Deputy Secretary General of the World Confederation of Labour and in charge of Latin America. “ *The problems of the continent are of a cyclical and a structural nature*”. According to the trade union leader, the Latin American nations after the political independence of the countries were built in cycles. First, the industrial development took a late start in Latin America, except in a few countries such as Brazil and Argentina. The industrial development is comparable to the one in North America, Canada and Europe, but much slower. A heavy industry emerged (iron and steel industry, metal processing...), but its growth prospects were poor. This was one of the reasons to call on foreign investments.

## STILL DEBTS

Another factor underlying the present situation is the fact that the debts of the developing countries originate in the military dictatorships. “ *Not only did these regimes run into debt, they also promoted privatisation. All the analyses go to show that unemployment, poverty and insecurity have grown ever since*”, says Eduardo Estevez. The democratic regimes after the military dictatorship were hopeful in a few points, but they failed completely to alter the economic policy lines of their predecessors.

Latin America does not differ from the other continents as far as development is concerned. There are strong resemblances between policies and results. Some Latin American countries achieved a more or less high level of development, particularly in the field of health care and in some cases even at the industrial level. Nevertheless, the continent, where industrial development was a slow process, is still suffering from the consequences of this. The WCL points out that this policy served just one purpose. The countries had to exert themselves to pay off the enormous debts. Argentina is a good example of the result of such efforts. Until recently the country was regarded as the best student of the International Monetary Fund. Today it is completely anaemic.

## LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

A further evil is privatisation, which is still bringing about an enormous corruption. Even if it is hard to say who exactly is involved in this, there are no corrupt people without corruptors. Everybody must take up their responsibility. Also the consequences of corruption are disastrous for the population. It is obvious that corruption does not put an end to poverty and unemployment; what it does, is raising the embitterment and despair among the population, which inevitably undermines the confidence in the democratic system and its institutions.



Eduardo Estevez, WCL Deputy Secretary General in charge of Latin America



*“During one of the first meetings between the WCL and the IMF we told them that the structural adjustment programmes unbalance the vulnerable democracy in Latin America. At the start of those programmes we were told that an economic policy was necessary to overcome the crisis in countries like Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. As a result of this policy part of the population has landed in poverty. This is unacceptable”, says Estevez.*

#### TRADE UNIONISM IN LATIN AMERICA

The trade union movement in Latin America has been strongly influenced by the one in Europe. The main differences are caused by the fact that in Latin America a high percentage of the workers is not salaried. Policies, privatisation, relocation... they are all challenges to the Latin American trade union movement.

#### ANOTHER KIND OF WORKERS

In the past fifty years, workers from the public sector, education, banking and insurances... joined the trade unions. These trade unions exist, though it is not easy to be a trade union activist in Latin America. On the other hand, the informal economy is constantly expanding in this continent and in the other developing countries. This economy has created another kind of workers, who are not protected by social security, have no permanent jobs, benefit from no protection whatsoever... This evolution has compelled organisations like the Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores (CLAT – regional organisation of the WCL in Latin America) to look for alternative solutions, other structures and other organisational forms. The WCL wants to protect all the workers, whether they work in the informal economy or not. Hence the importance of a social workers' movement.



*Latin America prey to several crises in recent years*

#### AWARE OF THE CHALLENGE

In the present circumstances, among which the crisis in Argentina, there is much work to be done by the trade union movement. The trade unions are aware of the challenges confronting them. *“The WCL is no advocate of a paternalistic trade unionism. We want to organise people so that they are able to strengthen their organisation and to stand up for themselves. That way, we think, they can overcome their difficulties. The strengthening at the national and the regional level must go hand in hand with an active presence in the big international institutions to make progress with a fair and equitable world governance”.*

MD



## OECD/TUAC



The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was created in 1961. Its political secretariat is established in Paris. The Organisation has thirty member states\*. The two official languages are English and French. The OECD succeeds to the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, whose task it was to distribute as efficiently as possible the aid from the United States and Canada to Europe after the Second World War. A country that applies for membership of the OECD must fulfil two requirements: it must adhere to the principles of the market economy, and its political system must guarantee pluralist democracy. The OECD is financed by the member states. The membership fee of each member is calculated according to a formula that takes account of the country's economic strength. Donald J. Johnston has been the Organisation's Secretary General since June 1996.

It is the task of the OECD to strengthen the market economy, to develop free trade and to contribute to the growth of the industrial countries and the developing economies. The Organisation offers governments a framework within which they can study, work out and refine their economic and social policies. The OECD is also known for following up non-binding instruments such as the guidelines for multinational companies. Thanks to the debates within the OECD, the governments are better informed, can act in various public fields and can better measure the impact of the national policy on the international community.

The governing body of the OECD is the Council. The Council has decision-making authority and is composed of representatives of the member states plus a representative of the European Commission.

The Council meets on a regular basis at the level of the ambassadors to the OECD, in order to give the Organisation general guidelines on the tasks ahead. Once a year it meets at the level of the ministers. They deal with the current issues and define the priorities for the following year. The Council controls the activities of the OECD and approves the decisions, recommendations and annual budgets. The countries also meet at the level of the committees to exchange information. The committees are composed of representatives of the national administrations or of the standing delegations of the member states with the OECD.

### TUAC

The Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) acts as an intermediate link between trade unions and the OECD. It is not an international trade union as such, but it has the advisory status with the OECD and its committees. The TUAC was set up in 1948 as an advisory body at the time of the Marshall Plan. When the then Organisation for European Economic Cooperation was transformed into the OECD, the TUAC continued in the new Organisation to deal with labour issues.

The present role of the TUAC is to ensure that the world market has a social dimension. The TUAC coordinates and voices the views and positions of the trade union movement from the industrial countries. It also coordinates the trade union action during the annual economic summits of the G8. It represents 56 national trade unions from the thirty OECD member countries, seventy million workers in all.

\* Germany, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, South Korea, Denmark, Spain, the United States, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.



# Togo: CSTT and WCL organise women workers in the informal sector

The situation in Togo is far from rosy: Togo is one of the least developed countries in the world. The socio-political problems in the late 1990s caused a huge drop in buying power. The measures originating in the structural adjustment programmes cost a lot of Togolese, among whom many women, their job. Two-thirds of the population is affected by poverty.

The *Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Togo* (CSTT) has decided to join, with support from the Women and Work Department of the World Confederation of Labour, issue with the poverty affecting an increasing number of Togolese women. The CSTT and the WCL have started up a joint pilot project to organise women workers, the "relief fund for women in the informal sector of the CSTT" (FAFSI/CSTT). The national women's committee of the CSTT has taken several actions for informal sector women affiliated at the grassroots level. What are the two main aims of this project? One aim is to organise informal sector women in a trade union that satisfies their needs, the other is to broaden the trade union's basis. The participation of women has grown thanks to this project. The project started in 1999 with training sessions for the members of a steering committee. It took concrete shape under the coordination of the WCL's Women and Work Department and with funds of *Wereldsolidariteit*, the NGO of the Belgian Christian workers' movement. Also the international solidarity campaign "11 11 11" sponsored the project. This support made it possible to grant loans to around eighty women who are active in a dozen cooperatives or groups affiliated to the CSTT. This was a concrete response to a real problem confronting the women, ie the difficult access to credits. It goes without saying that this can improve their living and working conditions. The project will benefit not only the women but also their families. The loans are granted to members of cooperatives who are trained in the management of micro companies, particularly to hairdressers and seamstresses.

## TO DEVELOP THEIR INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY

A considerable advantage is the fact that these loans are granted at a fixed interest rate of 6% per year, whereas the common rate in Togo is around 14%. The loans are paid off in ten months' time. To this day, the loans have been almost completely paid off, which enables the initiators to let additional women's groups benefit by the project. The FAFSI/CCST project meets the real needs of the informal sector women of the CSTT. It therefore deserves support. At this moment, at least ten other associations, groups and cooperatives from the grass-roots level of CSTT have applied or intend to apply for support. "In organising the informal sector women, the CSTT hopes to enable them to take up the social challenges - ILB, Sept.-Oct. 2001".

*MD and Claudine Asiba Akakpo,  
Confederal Secretary of the CSTT*

## WHERE DO THE WOMEN WORK?

Chiefly in the rural areas, where they are employed in agriculture. Some of them have started a micro business. Despite the low wages, these women contribute to livelihood of the families, a task that is increasingly shouldered on women.

Also in the urban areas, particularly in the informal sector, in which women are strongly represented. A small minority is employed in the public or the private sector.



*Act to fight the poverty affecting Togolese women*

## THE COUNTRY

**Capital:** Lomé

**Population:** 4.5 million inhabitants

**Population density:** 74 inh./km

**School attendance:** 50%

**Life expectancy:** 60 years

**Infant mortality:** 79.7%

**Guaranteed minimum wage:** CFA F 13,757



## ● EUROPE Mass Demonstration for Press Freedom in Basque Country

On 22 February, the streets of the Basque cities of San Sebastian, Bilbao and Vitoria in the north of Spain were black with people. Tens of thousands of sympathisers, social organisations and politicians took to the streets in protest against the close-down of the newspaper *Euskaldunon Egunkaria* and the arrest of ten former and current editors. The Spanish Supreme Court had ordered the close-down and arrests on the basis of alleged ties of the editorial office with the terrorist separatist movement *Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA), which stands for “Basque Country Fatherland and Freedom”. The ETA has conducted since 1968 bloody bomb campaigns for an independent Basque State.

Spokesmen and arrested editors deny categorically any link between *Egunkaria* and the ETA. They regard the close-down of the newspaper as an attack on freedom of the press, on the dissemination of the Basque cul-

ture and on the use of the Basque language. *Egunkaria* is indeed the only Spanish newspaper that appears entirely in Basque.

The solidarity demonstrations were organised by *Kontseilua*, the Council of Social Organisations for Basque Country. This group pursues official recognition of the Basque language and promotes collaboration between organisations standing up for the Basque identity. It also wants to involve economic and political leaders in this process. There was also international support for the mass protest action: Adrian White, Chairman of the International Federation of Journalists, which represents about half a million journalists from over one hundred countries, was on the Basque radio to call the Supreme Court to account on the close-down of *Egunkaria*.



[www.wctcsme.org](http://www.wctcsme.org)



Trade unions meet international institutions



A worker from Ivory Coast

## ● GATS: services sector under fire

The General Agreement on Trade and Services – GATS dates back from 1994. It provides that representatives of the 140 member states of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) organise regular negotiation rounds to see what parts of their services economy they can open to international competition. Considering that 60% of the total economic activity in the industrial countries consists of services, it is quite obvious that those in control of this sector can earn lots of money. And that's precisely the snag...

Companies wishing to compete and to maximise their profits will operate only the profitable parts of the market, bringing about a *social apartheid* in services. In other words, basic services like education, health care, culture, public transport and public utilities, eg water and electricity supply, will no longer be available for everybody. This is unacceptable to the WCL, of course. Together with several other social organisations it is campaigning for keeping such services out of the new GATS agreements, which the WTO will propose at the

end of 2004. The trade unions demand, further, that public, ecological and social aims —workers' protection on the labour market, for example— always have precedence over the free trade regulations. GATS also must pay attention to the link between international free trade and the basic workers' rights as established by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Finally, it must provide the possibility of taking services back out of the hands of private companies, if the privatisation proves to have disastrous effects on the human being and the environment.

The fact that the trade unions are serious about this appeared clearly from the large European demonstration against the GATS agreements, on 9 February in the streets of Brussels (Belgium), to bring up the threat the free trade doctrine holds for the services sector. Representatives both of the WCL and of the ACV-CSC (the General Christian Trade Union Confederation of Belgium) took part in the demonstration.



*According to annual custom, the International Labour Conference will assemble in Geneva in June. On that occasion the members of the workers' and employers' groups and the governments meet to discuss crucial labour issues. This dossier contains*

*the positions of the World Confederation of Labour on the themes on the Conference's agenda, which include employment relationships, human resources, seafarers, and safety and health at work. According to the WCL there is no doubt about it: the*

*ILO is an international institution that must be placed at the same level as the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO. This last organisation has to take account of the ILO conventions in its action.*

## SUMMARY

Employment relationships

Human Resources and Training

Safety and health  
Towards an integrated approach for the benefit of workers

Seafarers  
"identification"



# Employment relationships

THE ILO GOVERNING BODY DECIDED TO PLACE THE FIELD OF APPLICATION OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS ON THE AGENDA OF THE 91st INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE, WHICH WILL ASSEMBLE NEXT JUNE. AT THIS STAGE THERE WILL ONLY BE A GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT. IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO DEBATE ON A BINDING INSTRUMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THE THEME IS IMPORTANT FOR THE WORKERS...

Indeed, employment relationship entitles workers to adequate social protection, but also to trade union representation and to the right of protection by collective labour agreements that contain minimum regulations in the matter of wage and working conditions. The employment relationship protects the workers against the safety and health risks they are exposed to at work. The employment relationships are mentioned explicitly in some instruments and implicitly in others. Oddly enough, there is within the ILO no instrument that defines the “worker” and “employer” concepts, in other words that draws the line between self-employment and employment in a subordinate relationship.

## THE “LEGAL” SUBORDINATION

In any specific definition used in the national legislations, the term employment relationship refers to a generally accepted concept that is described in many cases as “legal” subordination. Legal subordination implies that the employer can give orders and that the worker must obey the orders and instructions of the employer. In compensation for this loss of autonomy the worker benefits from a specific protection to restore the balance between both sides in the employment relationship. Workers, who can supply no tools, materials or other capital, just their work, must be protected because they are more

susceptible and vulnerable to all kinds of abuses. In recent years the legal subordination concept changed several times in various countries. It did so under the pressure of several factors such as the observation that the labour market evolves as a result of economic demands in the field of productivity and flexibility, the massive advent of communication and information technology in the worker-employer relation or the open desire of some employers to save on the labour costs by violating the labour and social security laws. All the countries are confronted with this, the most industrial and developed as well as the most rural and least or underdeveloped countries.

## WHO IS LEFT UNPROTECTED BY THE LABOUR LAW?

In the introductory report to the general discussion, it is observed that a growing number of dependent workers is left unprotected by the labour law due to one of the following factors:

- The field of application of the Labour Agreement Act, which is marked by legal subordination, is too restrictive or is interpreted too narrowly.
- The law is badly worded so that the scope is ambiguous.
- It is a veiled employment relationship: false self-employment, for instance.
- The employment relationship itself is unclear, so that it is impossible to see whether legal subordination is involved or not!
- There is an employment relationship, but it is hard to identify the employers, which makes it impossible to determine who is bound by the employment contract: a triangular employment relationship, for instance, or intermediate links of subcontractors.
- There is a lack of means to enforce the law, or the law is ineffective due to the absence of sanctions. The question arises here if the labour courts are efficiently organised, if the courts are accessible and if there are supervisory bodies that watch over the application of the law and have sufficient resources to do so.

## A PROSPECT...

In view of the extent of the phenomenon, the ILO ought to work out a possibly efficient instrument to find a solution for situations in which protection is necessary. So to define these situations in a possibly pertinent manner and to ensure that an effective and binding instrument is developed in the coming years, a general discussion has to be conducted on the three questions below. The answers to these questions would make it possible, in addition, to draw a clear



line between workers in a situation of legal subordination and workers who are self-employed with full knowledge or who have created their job in complete freedom.

The three questions are: a) In what situation is the workers' employment relationship characterised by legal subordination? b) In what situation should workers who find themselves in a twilight zone receive an employment contract that is characterised by legal subordination? c) In what circumstances should workers be looked upon as workers with an employment contract that is characterised by legal subordination?

The first two questions bear upon concrete situations in which there

are some signs that an employment contract includes social protection.

The third question is chiefly related to employment relationships that are typical of the informal sector, in which identification of the employer is not a matter of course. The last question also involves a gender dimension, for women are concentrated in forms of work that lead easily to legal deviations.

#### COMMON DENOMINATORS

The meeting in June 2003 will not be the last one: it will discuss a report that contains information on a series of definitions used in various countries and seek to arrive at common denominators. These common denominators can be found on the

basis of shared definitions, but also of divergences resulting from differences in legal system, culture or economic and social reality. A modest but matter-of-fact possibility to get such a general discussion going is for the ILO to give the member states technical advice and to propose common lines on the theme under discussion through its expertise missions worldwide.

International standards have come about with patience, humbleness and perseverance: acting otherwise within the non-binding international context that characterises the texts of the ILO would only have perverse effects and, paradoxically, run counter to the interests of the workers who need protection... Indeed, it appears from research



work of the ILO that the matter is also related to the viability of the companies. Whereas it is clear to the workers' representatives that in the productivity-competitiveness relation and in the employment relationship the struggle against "social" insecurity in the broad sense of the word and the struggle against poverty must be to the fore, it is for some employers and some neo-liberal governments of countries with an emerging economy no matter of course to be even inclined to think that economic growth must go hand in hand with a strengthening of the protecting status of paid employment.

#### THE SUBCONTRACTING CONCEPT

Nor will it be the first one. The opposite tendencies became obvious during the first discussions in 1997 and 1998 already, when the ILC examined the matter under the name of "contract labour".

The discussions were focused on the protection of some groups of "unprotected" dependent workers and were aimed at the adoption of a convention and a recommendation. The big mistake made at the time was that the "subcontracting" concept—the hypothesis of a triangular employment relationship in which workers execute a work or supply a service to other people within the legally defined context of an employment contract in accordance with civil law or of a trade

agreement— was included in the subject, whereas there is actually a strong dependence on the principal. It did not take the employers' representatives long to turn down even the possibility of a recommendation on account of the possible interference of the subject the ILC had in mind with the national laws on employment contracts in accordance with civil law or trade agreements and on account of the negative impact of this interference on the dynamics of the economic activity and job creation. On the other hand, quite a few workers' and government representatives pointed out that the proposal held the strong risk of creating a third workers' status, between the protecting status of a employment relationship in the narrow sense of the word and self-employment.

Such a new status can only go to the detriment of the more protecting status originating in the subordinate employment relationship; moreover, its lower cost makes a breach of which the advocates of flexibility and economic growth will certainly take advantage at any price. The efforts to reject a third status must be continued during the debates in June 2003.

Another element to be taken into account during the general discussion in June 2003 is the purport of the unanimous findings of a meeting of experts, which took place in Geneva in May 2000. They decided

that the ILO should help countries develop a policy guaranteeing that the legislation on employment relationships applies to workers who need protection. As WCL, we wish to bring to the fore two things:

- an employment contract characterised by legal subordination is relevant as a factor giving access to a recognised protection system that advances the workers' rights;
- the creation of a third workers' status is not relevant!

In any case the debates will be very technical, but the political stake is important!

The debates will be interesting for all the countries, including the most industrialised and technologically developed countries of the European Union, which are being faced with European Commission strategies in the matter of "modernisation and improvement of the employment relationships".

*Andrée Debrulle*

# Human Resources and Training

The ILO first of all prepared a preliminary report (IV-1).

This will serve as the basis for the first discussion. Accompanied by a questionnaire, it was sent to all the member States to be filled in, in consultation with representatives of workers' and employers' organisations. A second report (IV-2) was written based on the responses to the questionnaire, as well as the proposals put forward. It will certainly constitute the subject of discussion during the June ILC in Geneva.

## WHY RECOMMENDATION 150?

Although the revision of Recommendation 150 is envisaged, none of the parties concerned has shown interest in the revision of Convention 142 (on human resources development). In fact, it is still considered an adequate instrument to guide States in drawing up their training policies and systems. Recommendation 150 on its part was adopted in 1975. It reflected then the economic conditions and needs of the era. Furthermore, the labour organisation was still largely founded on the principles of Taylorism, employment was still available and mobility and instability hardly known. Today, things have changed. The development of economies and societies depend increasingly on knowledge and skills to produce goods and services. These are the reasons, which determine the aim of this revision:

adapting this tool in such a way as to reflect the economic, technological and social conditions of today.

## AIMS OF THE WCL

For the World Confederation of Labour, the new text that will result from this revision process, must respond not only to new economic realities but also to social realities and to the needs of each person. It must constitute real progress and not regression, compared to Recommendation 150, reduce exclusion in education and training, and finally, eliminate every form of discrimination.

Reports IV (1) and IV (2) already propose the guidelines of a text for the new Recommendation in the form of conclusions. A series of points caught the attention of the WCL, positively. Notably, those that concern taking into account the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and social dialogue as basis for the implementation of training policies put in place at all levels. It is also important to check the aspect of according equal importance to economic and social aims within the context of globalisation, as well as the aim of developing a society focused on knowledge and learning of skills, by putting the emphasis on balanced and sustainable economic and social development...



*Human resources at the centre of the debates*

On the contrary, generally, one deplores the fact that the conclusions of the 88th ILC (2000) session were not taken into account when drawing up proposed conclusions. For the WCL, a series of points pose a problem in the draft of the text. This has to do, among others, with questioning "Paid study leave" which constitutes a loss of a skill. Let us add the absence of the exact definition of groups with specific needs (like women or migrants), the rift between the highly and poorly qualified or even the non-consideration of the impact of policies of international financial bodies (IMF, World Bank) on human resources development policies. Let us end with the North—South rift that does not take into consideration the realities in developing countries and the risk of commercialising education and training.

For the WCL, the text should, among others, emphasise that education and training must follow aims beyond economic needs, which seek, above all, to mould free and responsible people, endowed with a critical mind and apt to integrate easily in society and the labour market.

IT WAS DURING ITS 280th SESSION, IN MARCH 2001, THAT THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE DECIDED TO INCLUDE THE REVISION OF RECOMMENDATION 150 ON TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, IN THE AGENDA FOR THE 2003 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE (91st SESSION). A SUMMARY OF THE CONTEXT OF THIS ISSUE, AS WELL AS THE POSITION OF THE WCL ON THE SUBJECT.



## SAFETY AND HEALTH

# Towards an integrated approach for the benefit of workers

“OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH” HAS ALWAYS BEEN AT THE CENTRE OF CONCERNS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION. THE GUIDELINES, CONVENTIONS AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS, WHICH THE ILO HAS CARRIED OUT RECENTLY FOR “EQUAL WORK FOR ALL” ARE PROOF OF THIS. A SIGNATORY TO A CONVENTION DOES NOT HOWEVER AUTOMATICALLY MEAN THAT IT IS RESPECTED. THIS IS THE REASON WHY A PROGRAMME OF ACTION IS CURRENTLY BEING FORMULATED IN GENEVA, IN ORDER TO ENABLE AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM.

“*Work is at the centre of concerns of each human being and plays an important role for stability in families and in a community. Reduction of poverty as well as growth in integration and social cohesion are indissociable from work. This is the reason why it is imperative to work under good working conditions. Equal work goes hand in hand with occupational safety and health*”, declared Juan Somavia, Director General of the ILO, in the speech he gave on the occasion of the “Workers Memorial Day” on 28 April 2002. However, to guarantee occupational safety and health for workers in the entire world, the ILO and the WCL are of the opinion that an integrated and global approach to the problem is indispensable. The approach is not limited only to the drawing up of standards. Employers, employees and the authorities must also realise the importance and substantial advantages of effective regulations. The latter must be assisted and encouraged to incorporate an authentic “culture of safety” among workers. A system of joint and homogeneous control of the respect of safety and health rules is, moreover, also necessary...

Details of this issue will be dealt with during the 91st International Labour Conference of the ILO (International Labour Office),

which will be held in Geneva on 3-19 June. The outcome of dialogues will constitute the basis of an ILO Programme of Action aimed at increasing coherence, relevance and impact of the regulations on “occupational safety and health”.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

“Occupational safety and health” constitutes effectively a relevant and important issue. Although available world statistics on the number of occupational accidents and illnesses are often not coherent, and it is difficult to obtain reliable statistics on the situation in developing countries, the ILO estimates that two million people die each year from occupational accidents. Add occupational accidents that have resulted in incurable wounds and illnesses, and the figure sends shivers down the spine, betraying the enormous impact of the issue at the global level. Human suffering caused by illness and accident is incalculable. These statistics also reflect the tragedy that comes into play with regard to sustainable development of countries. To start with, let us call to mind the huge economic loss that organisations and countries suffer when for example workers of great worth and experience are no longer there due to accidents and must, therefore be replaced, thus

obliging the systematic training of new collaborators or the interruption of production (and, as a result, interruption in the export of goods), for example. Nor must we lose sight of the damage caused to the environment when occupational accidents occur. The catastrophes of dioxin in an Italian factory manufacturing pesticides in Severo in 1976 as well as the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in 1986 speak for themselves.

### OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS AND INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

Though the data recently provided by the ILO and the World Health Organisation (WHO) indicate that the number of occupational illnesses and accidents in industrialised countries is generally declining, on the contrary it is increasing in developing or industrialising countries. A very large number of countries (including EU members) have moreover not yet ratified the ILO Convention on “Equal Work”, and several do not still have efficient systems to identify and list occupational accidents and illnesses.

With regard to occupational illnesses, cancers—resulting from exposure to radioactive or carcinogenic substances such as asbestos—are at the top of the list. In industrialised countries, the latter even constitutes

the primary cause of occupational mortality. In the second position, we find cardio-vascular illnesses among others due to stress, over-work or irregular lifestyle specific to night or teamwork. Contagious diseases are also a major cause of occupational illness. Think about malaria in tropical regions.

Whereas from a global point of view it is particularly older workers who are affected by these occupational illnesses and accidents, they often affect inexperienced children or young workers who all have a professional career ahead of them. The human and economic loss is still heavy here. Illnesses are often linked to secondary factors —such as hereditary, for example— occupational accidents, on the contrary, could very often be eliminated if all the necessary safety measures were taken. The positive results of the “zero accidents” policy carried out by a large number of companies in industrialised countries prove this.

#### FROM SENSITISATION TO SANCTION

How does the ILO intend to concretise this integrated approach? First of all, by sensitisation about the regulations on ‘occupational safety and health’, which is of real importance. Employers, workers and authorities must, in fact, be well informed about the guidelines before being able to apply them concretely. With regard to governments and appropriate authorities, the essential thing is particularly to put the emphasis on the importance and advantages of health standards, in such a way as to create common political will and get the necessary funding released. On the part of employers and workers, information and training are crucial. To this end, the ILO intends organising technical seminars and workshops.



Secondly, another crucial point of the integrated approach is the concrete application of regulations at the workplace. The employer must incorporate a culture of safety in his enterprise by making among other things, the processes of production safer and more ecological safe, by adopting realistic and humane planning and timetable, by providing safety equipment, drawing up emergency plans in case of occupational accident, etc. A long-term process in which employers, employees and authorities (inspection of the environment, for example) must be agreed on. Though this culture of safety is common in industrialised countries, elsewhere, the latter is practically non-existent. This problem affects mainly the informal sector, which has a myriad of mini-enterprises and micro-enterprises.

When guidelines and Conventions have been drawn up and launched, they must be respected. This is the reason why the ILO is making efforts to defend a system of uniform sanctions, enabling an update of infringements more effectively and without ambiguity. Govern-

ments and trade unions have the opportunity to play an active role. This requires total involvement in the uninterrupted process of action, evaluation and improvement.

#### PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE WCL

The WCL supports the integrated approach that the ILO intends to implement. WCL Trade Federations have a lot of experience in occupational safety and health. Trade Action will gather information for the preparation of the ILO plan of action. The WCL also intends to contribute actively in the implementation and the application of the existing regulations in order to enable workers to work efficiently, in safety and in good health!

*Source: ILO standards-related activities in the area of occupational safety and health – Draft report for general discussion based on an integrated approach at the 91st session (2003) of the ILC on 21 January 2003.*



# Seafarers “identification”



*A better system to identify seafarers...*

The seventh point of the Conference’s agenda is the *Improved security of seafarers’ identification*. The discussion will be a standard-setting action aimed to arrive at the approval of a protocol or another instrument.

The 11 September 2001 attacks induced the Assembly of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to pass a resolution on “Measures and procedures to prevent acts of terrorism jeopardising the safety of passengers, crews and ships”. The Assembly was followed by other meetings on the same issue, in which the ILO always took an active part. One of the findings at those meetings was that more maritime safety required a reflection on a better system to identify seafarers “*who are directly involved in international transport*

*of freight (including hazardous products) and passengers and who have access to the ports (including to the restricted zones)*. Seafarers should be in possession of documents that allow positive and controllable identification. Positive in the sense that the person in possession of the document is the one to whom it was issued, and controllable in that the authenticity of the document can be controlled at a given source”.

There is already Seafarers’ Identity Documents Convention (108), of course, but it dates back from 1958 and provides for a document that does not meet the present safety requirements. That is why the ILO wants to urgently update this Convention. Still, it remains necessary that the new provisions have to be easily acceptable to the largest number of countries possible.

## MORE INFO...

[www.cmt-wcl.org](http://www.cmt-wcl.org)  
[www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)  
[www.socialalert.org](http://www.socialalert.org)



## CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

# A four-year plan to strengthen Trade Action

A total of nearly 190 trade union officials are involved in the project, from about 24 trade federations, spread out in 28 countries in 3 continents: the project is ambitious and its preparation requires a lot of effort. Hence, the consultation stage which has occupied the Trade Action Secretariat of the WCL up until March 2002. During this period, the trade federations and Trade Action representatives for each of these continents have had the opportunity of offering suggestions on this Capacity Building programme. The WCL therefore planned, from the outset, to ensure maximum involvement of all participants

The outcome of the consultation period enabled the secretariat to establish a four-year plan, defining the practical aspect of the implementation of the project and the objectives to expect. *"We have watched closely so that the project objectives also tally with the objectives of political actions and activity programmes of relevant trade federations"*, declares Eric Aerts, "learning and training" project officer of the WCL Trade Action. *"We are expecting, as a matter of fact, to bring concrete and practical responses, corresponding with each country or continent involved in the programme. The trainers responsible for teaching the different modules will also have the opportunity to integrate their personal experiences in the training, with regard to these continents"*. An intermediate consultation as well as permanent contacts/evaluation should enable the programme to proceed smoothly.

### INTERNATIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

*"Trade federations and confederations defend the interests of workers in a particular sector. The effectiveness of trade union representatives does not only depend on their knowledge of the situation in their sector. The robustness of the network and the fluidity of contacts between the different trade organisations, as well consensus relating to the strategy to adopt, are indispensable"*, continues Eric Aerts. *"The Capacity Building project aims at strengthening the operation of Trade Action on all the continents,*

*consolidating existing structures and improving mutual co-ordination through training of trade union trainers, who will subsequently be able to retransmit their knowledge. The project must also enable services provided by WCL Trade Action to its trade member federations to be concretised and improved"*.

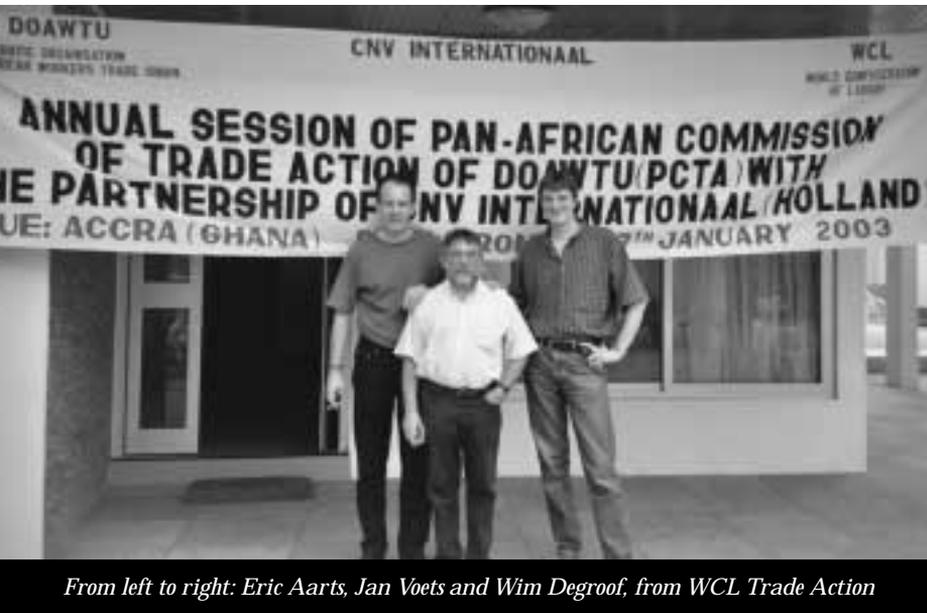
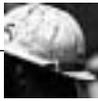
The practical organisation of the Capacity Building project undoubtedly requires major preparation. Tasks and responsibilities were consequently given to each one. To begin with, at the WCL Trade Action secretariat, comprising the deputy Secretary General of the WCL, Jaap Wiene, three project officers, including Eric Aerts, who is in charge of the Capacity Building programme, as well as an administrative officer. The Secretariat, which has its headquarters at Brussels, is responsible for the preparation of a four year plan, the preparatory stages of the Capacity Building programme and is in charge of general co-ordination, implementation as well as administrative work and complementary activities of the project.

The WCL regional organisations (DOAWTU for Africa, BATU for Asia and the CLAT for Latin America) have to be free with their advice on the contents of training and their preparation. Besides, they put their infrastructure at the disposal of international and regional federations in a manner to ensure a quick and efficient start of the project.

On their part, the international trade federations, in consultation with their regional colleagues and on the basis of actual changes in place, ensure a continual feedback on the programme. They are also responsible for the selection of participants and ensure a smooth start of complementary activities in the region. The regional co-ordinators of Trade Action are mainly responsible for the practical organisation, so to speak. We owe it to them to resolve and find solutions adapted to each problem.

The responsibility for all the teaching and trade trainers falls on the Slotemaker Bruine Institute, in the Netherlands (SBI). This organisation is specialised in

STRENGTHEN TRADE ACTION THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLAN OF ACTION BETWEEN 2002 AND 2005 – THIS WAS THE DECISION TAKEN DURING THE 24TH CONGRESS OF THE WCL, LATE IN OCTOBER 2001 AT BUCHAREST. THE PROGRAMME COMPRISES THREE COMPONENTS: MULTINATIONALS, INFORMAL ECONOMY SECTOR, AS WELL AS LEARNING AND TRAINING OR CAPACITY BUILDING. THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME AIMS AT PREPARING TRADE OFFICERS, THROUGH JOINT TRAINING OF TRADE UNION OFFICIALS, FROM LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA AND ASIA, TO TRAIN THEIR COLLEAGUES PERIODICALLY. THE WCL THEREFORE INTENDS TO STRENGTHEN TRADE FEDERATIONS, INCREASE SYNERGY AMONG THE FEDERATIONS AND CONFEDERATIONS WITH REGARD TO THEIR FUNCTIONING AND ACTIVITIES, AND INCREASE TRADE ACTION OF THE WCL.



From left to right: Eric Aarts, Jan Voets and Wim Degroof, from WCL Trade Action

the customised training of workers with the specific aim of strengthening the functioning of the organisation; which is perfectly in line with the Capacity Building programme objectives.

#### THEORY AND PRACTICE

What do the programme and content look like?

During the first phase of training, 36 trade union officers from different Latin American countries, as well as 24 officers from Africa and Asia undertook a one-week training on the acquisition of didactic aptitudes. At the end of this training, the latter will be capable of transmitting what they have learnt to their trade union member colleagues, in a precise and adapted manner. They must, in addition, be capable of organising activities themselves with the aim of strengthening trade action, in their countries or region. The training included, among others, the learning of didactic principles, teaching and learning methods for adults, fundamental principles of communication and feedback, learning how to plan activities, presentation principles as well as group dynamics and also the evaluation and preparation of training personnel planning. Practical exercises and examples accompany the theoretical principles. At the end of each module, the trainees undergo a brief evaluation. The first course on didactic aptitudes took place at Venezuela from 10th to 15th March; the other will follow in Costa Rica, Argentina, Togo, Cameroon and several Asian countries.

After participating in the course on “didactic aptitudes”, the group will be divided into two parties. The first half of trainees is invited to do training on the fundamental trade union themes, the other half, on “trade union aptitudes”. 18 Latin American trainees, as well as 12 trainees from Africa and 12 from Asia, will participate in the module on trade union themes. The first chapter deals with social dialogue, tripartite structures and institutionalisation. The others, on employment, labour market policy, education policy and career, working and health conditions, health services of the enterprise, social security, pensions and international institutions. At the end of the course, each participant will have to finalise an individual plan of action, which will be evaluated by a group of three. The commencement of training on trade union themes is scheduled for September.

18 participants from Latin America, 12 from Africa and 12 from Asia will take the other module on trade union aptitudes. This module will begin at the end of October this year and will cover, among others, the structure and democratic organisation of the confederation, the internal functioning of administrations, management of recruitment and administrative work, the system of dues, services to members, communication with member organisations, etc.

Besides these training, a specific training module entitled “Communication and advertising” will allow Trade Action officials to better understand how to communicate with potential members, the media and society. They will use this knowledge to advise, accompany and support Trade Action on this level. 3 training sessions have been planned in Latin America, 2 in Asia and 2 in Africa. They will each have 15 participants.

#### COMPLEMENTARY FIELD ACTIVITIES

Once the training sessions are completed, and all the specialists receive certificates, the moment for action would have arrived. In consultation with the Trade Action of the continent concerned, the trainers will organise a series of complementary activities with the support of the WCL, at the end of 2003, beginning of 2004. 6 activities will be organised, per annum and per participating country, and will be spread over a period of two and a half years, which in total represents not less than 420 initiatives. How this would significantly strengthen and expand WCL Trade Action!



# BATU in favour of democratic sustainable development

The situation has been assessed, and the findings are deplorable. Now that sustainable development is a number-one topic, the Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists (BATU), the Asian regional organisation of the WCL, has clarified the role that is reserved for the trade union movement in this respect.

According to the BATU, trade unions, and particularly those who claim to be part of the “social trade union movement”, must play a prominent part in building “a future of peace, justice, democracy, respect for the human being and sustainable development”. It is a task of the trade unions to help their members and to

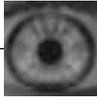
protect them against abuse and human rights violations. The BATU considers it important to use this collective force to stimulate sustainable development in three important fields, ie the ecological, the economic and the social field. The Asian trade unions are properly equipped to assume this role because they have a democratic structure in which social justice is pursued.

Through concerted action, for instance, through their struggle to enforce respect for the human rights and the freedom of association, or through active worker participation.

ACCORDING TO THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, ONE OUT OF THREE ASIANS IS POOR. THIS NUMBER WILL STILL GO UP AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASE IN POPULATION. IN CENTRAL ASIA A LARGE PART OF THE POPULATION HAS LANDED IN POVERTY BECAUSE OF THE SUCCESSIVE ECONOMIC CRISES.



*Poverty, reality in Asia*



#### BATU SEMINAR TO SENSITISE THE TRADE UNIONS FOR THE BASIC RIGHTS IN ASIA

With a view to promoting the ILO Declaration on standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, the BATU organised with support from the ILO a seminar on the "ILO Declaration of Principles: a new instrument to promote the fundamental rights". The seminar was held in Jakarta on 22-27 February.

The Declaration of Principles was ratified in 1998. It contains eight basic conventions, divided into four legal categories, among which freedom of association and collective bargaining, non-discrimination in employment and ban on child and forced labour. The Declaration was a big step forward. It was ratified by an overwhelming majority. Several countries, including some Asian ones, have not yet ratified it, however. Moreover, in practice numerous infringements on these conventions have been observed. The purpose of the seminar was to make the content of the Declaration and the mechanisms on which it is based accessible to the public at large. The participants also received the necessary information and advice in order better to use this instrument and better to contribute to the annual report and the overall report on this Declaration. Isabelle Hoferlin, head of the WCL Human Rights and International Labour Standards Department, and Hervé Sea, legal expert at the WCL Office with the United Nations in Geneva, took part in this seminar, which offered the coordinators of the norm network also the opportunity to assess their activities and to define future action priorities.

#### THE PROGRAMMES OF THE BATU

The BATU, which represents over three million workers in thirteen countries, is convinced of the importance of attaining democratic sustainable development by developing strategies through the six programmes below:

##### **Promotion and Protection of Labour**

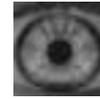
The first programme bears upon the very essence of the trade unions: the promotion and protection of labour and therefore of the workers. "The trade union promotes solidarity and must protect vulnerable groups such as children, women and migrant workers, groups facing precarious working conditions." To do so, it can use instruments: the international labour standards, for instance, or trade action through codes of conduct or similar tools. It goes without saying that information, training and communication play a role of consequence in the trade union capacity building within the framework of the social dialogue.

##### **Self-Reliance and Social Development**

The concept of "self-reliance and social development", says the Asian regional organisation, is based on the belief that human beings exist not for themselves but rather as parts of a community they help build. The development of social justice in this community requires the integration of the social development concept, in which human dignity is recognised and respected. In many cases women and migrant workers are excluded from this community. In this programme the BATU wants to provide them with the means to pull out of their difficult situation. Examples of this are the creation of alternative sources of income, the setting up of cooperatives or similar enterprises, credit systems and social insurances. In this respect, too, training trade union activists in the new technologies seems to be essential.

##### **Human Resources Development**

In this programme the BATU pursues two main aims: long-term training and encouraging the trade unions to organise their training activities themselves. "In this respect the BATU deems it important to develop training modules, to have good trainers and to overcome language barriers." The regional organisation is refer-



ring here to a real and efficient human resources department.

### Organisational Strengthening

The purpose of this programme is to build the internal trade union capacities and to create external bonds. The internal strengthening bears upon a variety of points such as logistics, administration, the financial status and information. The external bonds are related to international campaigns, joint actions with other trade unions and support actions that "strengthen the solidarity among the workers".

### Women Empowerment

The role of women can be strengthened by means of actions like recurrent training for women. This train-

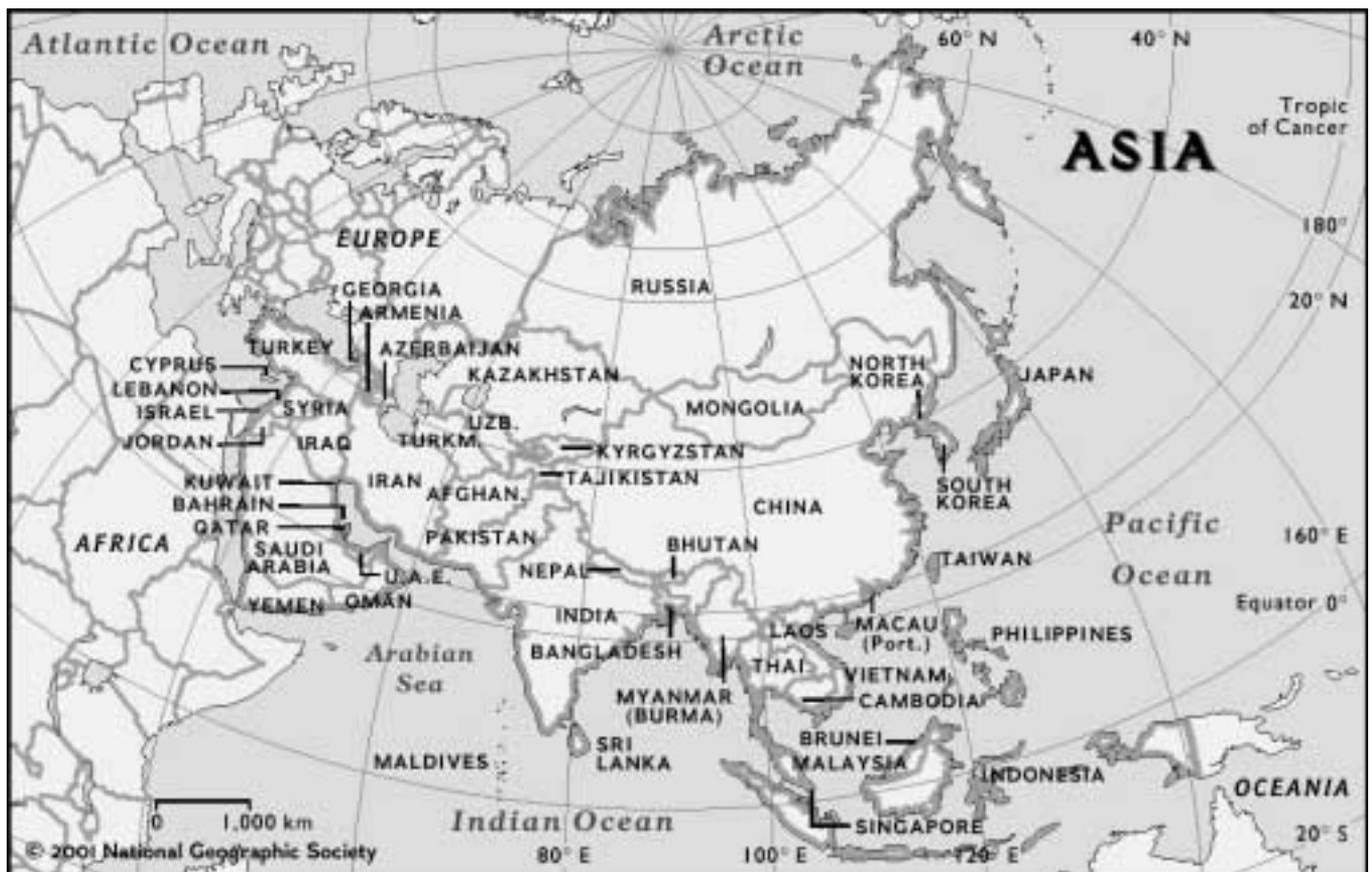
ing is about themes related to decision-making, policy, social dialogue...

### Strengthening of Trade Action

With this programme Trade Action wants to give an impetus to the autonomous functioning of the trade federations. According to the BATU, this should "increase the solidarity and participation of the workers and make it easier for the trade unions to achieve their goals".

MD

Source : BATU's paper « Economy for human development ».





## PRESS REVIEW



### THE NEW TAYLORISM

Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times* had immortalized Taylorism from a caricature. The scientific division of labour, the pace and worker turned robot on the assembly line, everything was there, in black and white, during the time of silent films. One would have thought that this world was revolutionised. It is not exactly the case [...] in adapting itself, it still carved a niche for itself in the most modern labour organisations, including in technologically advanced sectors. Above all, it has taken new forms and now has other areas of application. It thrives in the major distribution trade, for the cashiers, in the call centres, for those that one also refers to as the OS of knowledge; and extends to entire sections of tertiary services, like at MacDo. For a new Taylorism is born, which will precisely counterbalance this other trend whereby salaried workers should be polyvalent, more autonomous and responsible, indeed listening more to clients, in their work. Among the reasons, must be seen one of the effects of the logic of total quality, zero stock and tight inflows which all come together to impose stricter modes of controls on conditions of production, in industry, or the level of excellence in the provision of services....

Alain Lebaube, *The new Taylorism*, in *Le Monde Initiatives*, March 2003.

### EMPLOYERS HAIL NEW LABOUR BILL, UNIONS DIVIDED

An employers' association hailed on Monday the planned endorsement of the labour bill, but trade unions remained divided over the draft. Djimanto of the Indonesian Employers' Association said the final draft of the bill accommodated both employers and trade unions: "*Basically we welcome the new labour protection and development bill. It not only orders us to do many things but also regulates workers*", said Djimanto [...] Trade union gave conflicting reactions to the bill [...] Arif Sujito of FSPSI (Federation of All Indonesian Labour Union) said many articles such as workers still being paid during strikes, compensation for dismissed workers, sabbatical leave, and legal protection of temporary workers were good enough to accommodate workers' interests. But Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union (SBSI) head Rekson Silaban urged the House to delay the endorsement of the bill for one week to allow all unions to scrutinise it: "*We are worried that the latest bill does not entirely accept the understanding between labour unions and employers, so why does the House not hold a hearing with us for another week to see whether we accept it or not?*"

Moch. N. Kurniawan, *The Jakarta Post*, 25 February 2003.

### TRADE UNION REFORM IN ARGENTINA: PROMULGATION OF PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN UNIONISTS

President Duhalde enacted law 25.674 which stipulates a minimum of 30% women in trade union management [...] and a percentage of representatives in collective bargaining at work. This law concerns trade unions, federations and confederations and will also have to be applied by a trade union like the CGT. It includes CTA although women's participation in the trade union body managed by Victor De Gennaro is very important. One of its most important trade unions is the CTERA (teachers), which has a majority of women. The Minister of Labour will give trade unions 180 days for them to amend their statutes and establish the percentage of women.

The amendment to article 18 of law 23.551 on trade union associations will come into force during the same period; it makes provision for 30% representation of women in elected trade union positions "*when the number of women is equal to or more than this percentage of the total of workers*".

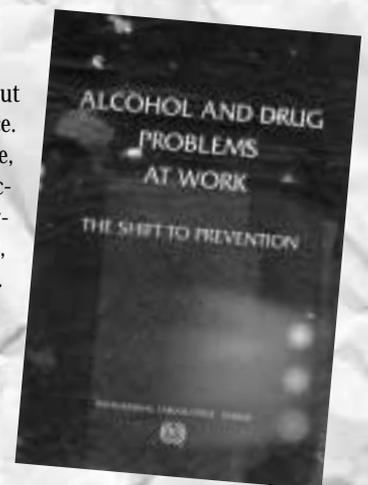
## BOOKS AND DEBATES



### ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AT WORK

The last publication of the International Labour Organisation tells us about an increasing incessant phenomenon, alcohol and drugs at the work place. How can businesses of all sizes develop programmes to check this scourge, the physiological effects of alcohol and drugs, demographic and social factors which come into play are related aspects in this work. Whilst citing several examples of campaign policies on alcohol- and drug-related problems, this book offers us solutions, like a prevention programme for example. Recommended to employers and trade union organisations by the ILO, this publication is undoubtedly worthwhile for anyone who wants to understand and analyse this terrible situation.

*Alcohol and drug problems at work*, International Labour Office, Geneva



# PORTRAIT

multinationals and again the right to development. For some years now, the ICFTU and its international trade organisations also have reflected on this. It is a challenge trade union organisations must rise up to if they want to be really capable of representing and especially defending, and making the voice of women and men heard at the international level, who each day “sell” their labour force, their skill for the good of all, but too often only so that they themselves and their families can subsist. This issue has always haunted me and continues to haunt me. From where we are, will we carry on the fight that can really defend them?

**Do you have a response to this question?**

A large majority of workers in the world does not belong to any trade union organisation. All the national trade union organisations, put together, affiliated or not at the international level, are not up to the 10% rate of unionisation in the world. This poses a great challenge to trade unionism. International trade unions must therefore work together, beyond what can separate them today, in order to find common converging actions at the level of authorities and international organisations. The challenge they have to rise up to is so important that they cannot fail in this task if they really want to assume their responsibilities and not to betray the confidence that millions of people have put in them. In our globalised society, in which we feel so powerless in the face of the power of money, it is indispensable that a real countervailing power is put in place and is capable not only of affirming, but especially of ensuring that the fact that the economy and finance are at the service of the human being is

respected. International trade unionism must devote itself to the means to rise up to this challenge. Otherwise, it will seriously fail in its responsibilities.

**You know the ILO well. What according to you is its importance within this globalised society?**

The ILO Constitution begins with these words: “Whereas universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice; and whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required; as for example [...] the recognition of the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, recognition of the principle of freedom of association.” these lines were written in 1919. They are still topical. The ILO must defend social justice and freedom of association at all levels: at the level of international financial institutions, IMF-WB (International Monetary Fund and World Bank), international trade (WTO), and also health (WHO), etc.; nationally, at the level of multinational companies: within governments and all their ministries – within businesses and employers so that they respect the commitments that their representatives make at the International Labour Organisation.

**Has the trade union organisation a place in this struggle?**

Without strong, credible, representative trade union organisations, workers will continue to be exploited in the world. When governments join the ILO, they undertake to “respect, promote and undertake in good faith and in accordance with

the Constitution, the principles on the fundamental rights which include right to collective bargaining, elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory work; effective abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in employment and profession.” The ILO must employ every means to convince each government that has not yet done so, to ratify and apply the conventions that refer to the above-mentioned rights. This is one of their fundamental tasks.

It is necessary to highlight the importance of the Committee on Freedom of Association to workers. Thanks to its existence, which offers trade union organisations the opportunity to lodge complaints in case of violation of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, several trade unionists have had their life unscathed and governments have been obliged to recognise trade union organisations in their countries. The ILO must also integrate in its structures on equal parity, women to positions of responsibility and appoint representatives from all the continents to management positions in an equitable manner.

Despite difficult times, intense international events... I wish to believe that the forces in life will be stronger than the others and that a more just society, in which each human being can develop, will continue to build itself in order that all children and grandchildren of fathers and mothers today can grow in peace and love.

*Interview by MD.*

# trade union activities

<<MIGRANT WORKERS AND INFORMAL SECTOR IN INDONESIA

## The SBSI is getting ready for action!

The economic crisis affecting Indonesia since 1998 has forced up the poverty figures. At present, forty million people or 20% of the country's total population are living below the poverty line. These alarming figures have caused a rise in the number of migrant workers. The explosion of the informal sector in Indonesia is certainly not foreign to the crisis.

### AN IMPORTANT CONVENTION

The SBSI, Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia, the Indonesian member organisation of the World Confederation of Labour, and other trade unions have called on the government to ratify the international convention on the protection and rights of migrant workers. More than two million people, chiefly women, are employed in neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. Unfortunately, only in Hong Kong they are allowed to join a trade union. The convention is important in that it provides that both countries—in this case Indonesia and the host country of the migrant workers—are to sign a bilateral agreement that protects these workers. It also guarantees trade union freedom, information and safety at work. Quite a lot of these workers are employed illegally. Six hundred thousand of them are domestic women workers, left without any protection. There would also be illegal trafficking to Malaysia. Women and children are forced to prostitute themselves and are ill-treated by their “employers”.



*Le SBSI, actif en Indonésie ?*

### A DEPARTMENT FOR THE INFORMAL SECTOR

According to official figures, around two million workers earn the legal minimum wage in Indonesia. Over 97 million are employed in the informal sector. The government has recently decided to “purge” the cities of hawkers and other traders from this sector. As a result, more than 80,000 people have lost their job in Jakarta alone. That is why the SBSI has set up a special structure for informal economy workers, so that they can make use of the trade union services. They receive vocational training and can call on the legal departments for protection. The Informal Sector Department of the SBSI gets support from ACTRAV, the ILO Office for workers' activities, through the International Labour Organisation project that encompasses the informal economy in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

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Source: Bismo sanyoto (International Department - SBSI)