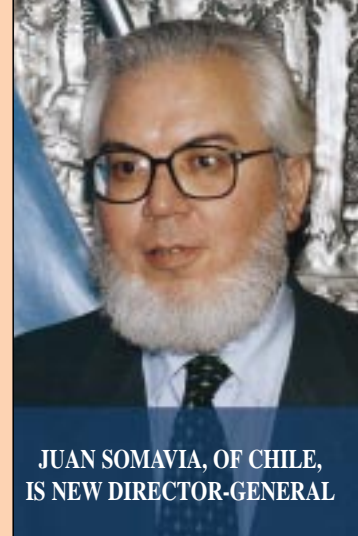


WORLD OF Work

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ILO

GOVERNING BODY
DISCUSSES
MYANMAR,
FREEDOM OF
ASSOCIATION AND
THE ASIAN
FINANCIAL CRISIS



JUAN SOMAVIA, OF CHILE,
IS NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL



International Labour Office

No. 29, April / May 1999

ILO CONFERENCE TO DEBATE KEY ISSUES: CHILD LABOUR, MATERNITY RIGHTS ON AGENDA



WORST WORK: The new Convention on the worst forms of child labour will benefit children in urgent need, like these children who work in a fireworks factory. Photo: David Browne, ILO

Eliminating The "Worst" Forms of Child Labour: Delegates to vote on final adoption

Issue Received First Consideration Last Year; Consensus Nearly Reached

GENEVA (ILO News) - In an effort to focus new attention on the worst forms of child labour, the 87th International Labour Conference (ILC) is to hold a second discussion on a new Convention that will address the intolerable exploitation of children in such work. The Conference hosted its first discussion of the Convention in 1998.

States which ratify the Convention following its adoption will have the basic obligation to take measures to secure the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour. These include all forms of child slavery, use of children in prostitution,

pornography, and illegal activities, and hazardous work that is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of children.

"Ending child labour is a goal in itself" Director-General Juan Somavia said in his inaugural address to the ILO Governing Body on 22 March. "It is also a powerful way of promoting economic and human development. Through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the ILO has a powerful operational arm to support its normative activities. I look forward to the approval of a new Convention on child labour next June."

(Please see inside for article)

NEW CONVENTION ON MATERNITY RIGHTS NEEDED TO FILL GAPS

Draft Convention to Receive First Consideration This Year

GENEVA (ILO News) - In just over 10 years, 80 per cent of all women in industrialized countries and 70 per cent globally will be working outside the home throughout their child-bearing years. As women's participation in the labour market continues to rise and women return to work after childbirth in ever greater numbers, the need for measures which enable them to reconcile their specific role in child bearing with their professional activities has become more evident.

In June, the International Labour Conference will undertake the first discussion of the revision of the Maternity Protection Convention No. 103 which was adopted in 1952, with a view to adopting more up-to-date international standards which take into

account changes in women's employment since then. The revised instruments may include fewer technical provisions which have proven to be obstacles to ratification in the past.

Important elements to be considered include: the extension of

coverage to all employed women; stronger protection from dismissal during pregnancy, absence on maternity leave and after return to work; and measures to remove maternity as a source of discrimination in employment.

(Please see inside for article)

PROTECTING MOTHERS: A new ILO Convention could provide more up-to-date standards reflecting modern working conditions.

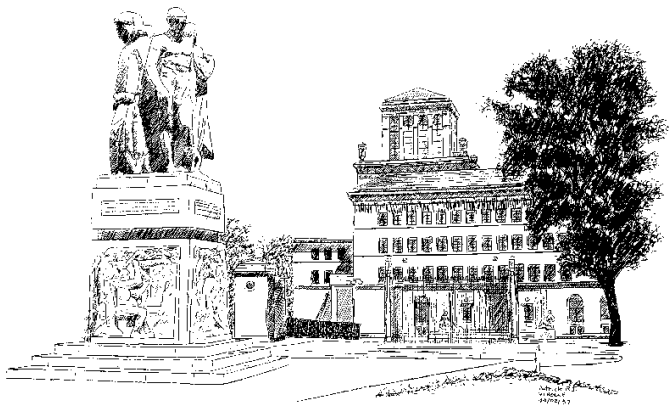


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The ILO in history

1919: An American paradox

As early as 1919, the United States – whose entry into the First World War had turned the tide – appeared to be the key power of the emerging new world. In January 1918, US President Woodrow Wilson had advocated the creation of a “general society of nations,” later to become the League of Nations in Geneva. And for their part, American trade unions had actively campaigned for years in favour of international measures for the protection of workers.

Among the 15 members of the Commission for the study of international labour legislation appointed on 25 January 1919 by the Peace Conference in Versailles were two Americans, including Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Gompers was to play a key role in the work of the Commission with his three-tiered responsibility – as trade union leader, representative of the United States and President of the Commission. Yet he was also to personify an American paradox: despite its passionate involvement in the creation of the new institution (the future ILO), the US faced the quasi-impossibility of becoming a member.

The difficulties were both technical and political. The basis for the Commission’s deliberations was a British draft proposal. The American problems would come to light during the examination of points in the draft related to the representation of States within the future ILO, and especially the ratification and monitoring of the application of future Conventions. Under the American Constitution, social laws were the domain of each individual State. Thus, Washington could not ratify a text in this area without obtaining the approval of the 48 States comprising the Union at the time. The entire system foreseen by the British draft under discussion was soon paralyzed.

Three Articles out of some 40 contained in the draft consumed nearly one-fourth of the time of the Commission – eight of their 35 meetings. From an American counter-proposal presented in the last days of the Commission, the idea was retained that the future organization could adopt less-restrictive Recommendations alongside the compulsory Conventions. The compromise thus obtained (along with other clauses) allowed Gompers to declare that he could henceforth

“conduct a campaign in favour of the draft”.

That wasn’t enough. Because of isolationist opposition to Wilson’s policy, the American Senate, on 20 November 1919, refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and along with it the Pact of the League of Nations. Ironically, the very country which had played such an important role in its birth would remain outside of the League of Nations for its life span – and, for the time being, the ILO as well.

Michel Fromont

Source: Report of the Commission on International Labour Legislation, Official Bulletin, No. 1, ILO.

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Created in 1919, the International Labour Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers and workers of its 174 member States in common action to improve social protection and conditions of life and work throughout the world. The International Labour Office, in Geneva, is the permanent Secretariat of the Organization.



Pledges “creativity and modernization”

Juan Somavia, of Chile, takes helm as new Director-General

Workers' rights, child labour, poverty, unemployment, gender discrimination and inadequate social protection to top agenda

Forecasting “a new stage of creativity and modernization” for the International Labour Organization, Mr. Juan Somavia of Chile was formally sworn in as the ninth Director-General in a special sitting of the Organization’s Governing Body in Geneva on 22 March. Mr. Somavia is the first representative of the Southern hemisphere to serve as Director-General.



“The central purpose of the ILO today is to promote opportunities of decent work for all people.”
– Juan Somavia

GENEVA – When the new Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO), Mr. Juan Somavia of Chile, took office in March, he spoke of both the historic accomplishments of the 80-year-old Organization, and the tasks it will face at the turn of the century.

“We have agreed internationally to promote open societies and open economies”, Mr. Somavia said as he took the helm of the Office in March. “That consensus will not hold if real benefits for ordinary people and their families are not put into the equation. I am proud of what the ILO stands for.”

“The Nobel Prize in 1969 acknowledged its contribution to peace”, he said.

“I have the responsibility to modernize and help steer the tripartite structure to make ILO values prevail in the new global realities.”

ILO’s historic role

In a speech following his taking the oath of office, the new DG underscored the ILO’s historic role in bringing social and political stability to industrialized countries since its founding in 1919, and declared “let us set ourselves the ambitious task of extending prosperity, rights and benefits to all working people in the world of the 21st century”.

“As the first Director-General of the ILO from the developing world, I rec-

ognize my special responsibility to ensure that the development dimension is integral to all ILO activities”, said Mr. Somavia, adding that finding solutions to such problems as child labour, poverty, unemployment, gender discrimination and inadequate social protection will be central to his mandate.

Mr. Somavia succeeds Mr. Michel Hansenne of Belgium who has served two five-year terms as Director-General since first being elected to the post in 1988. He expressed his appreciation for the work of the outgoing DG, whose tenure extended from 1989 to 1999 and “who defended the social values of the ILO through a decade of scepticism and challenge”.

Mr. Somavia said that “the end of the cold war ushered in a remarkable consensus based on open markets, a new spirit of competition and creativity and greater respect for human rights and democratic institutions”. However he added that “this positive evolution also obscured the social ends of economic growth, and the importance of healthy social institutions for healthy markets”.

A “profound spiritual bond” with his predecessors

Mr. Somavia said he felt “a profound spiritual bond with my predecessors”, receiving their legacy “with a deep sense of responsibility”. He spoke in the presence of former ILO Director-General Francis Blanchard and family members of the first five DGs (including Ms. Sylvie Junod, the granddaughter of Albert Thomas – the ILO’s first DG; Ms. Mildred Morse, the wife of David Morse, the first post-WWII DG; Ms. Jane Jenks, the wife of Wilfred Jenks – who was the author, together with Edward Phelan, of the Declaration of Philadelphia) and Mr. Jean-Jacques Oechslin, who served as head of the International Organization of Employers from 1980 to 1998.

Born on 21 April 1941, Juan Somavia earned degrees in law and economics from the Catholic University of Chile and the University of Paris. He is an attorney by profession and has had a long and distinguished career in civil and international affairs.

As Executive Secretary of the Chilean-Argentinian Chamber of Commerce he strengthened links between the business communities of the neighbouring countries. While Ambassador of Chile to the Andean Group and Chairman of its Governing Body, Mr. Somavia worked intensively in favour of regional integration. During the late 60s, while working in GATT, he played an active role in the participation of developing countries in the Kennedy Round. In the early 1970s, as Ambassador and Adviser to the Foreign Minister of Chile on Economics and Social affairs, he dealt with ILO-related issues.

Mr. Somavia actively participated in the restoration of democracy in Chile through holding the presidency of the International Commission of the Democratic Coalition in Chile and as founder and Secretary General of the South American Peace Commission 1986-1990. For his contributions to peace and human rights, he received the “Leonidas Proaño Peace Prize”,



Jacques Maillard

Juan Somavia (centre) with (left to right) former ILO Director-General Francis Blanchard, Mrs. Mildred Morse, the wife of David Morse, the first post-WWII DG, Mrs. Jane Jenks, the wife of Wilfred Jenks – who was the author, together with Edward Phelan, of the Declaration of Philadelphia, and Ms. Sylvie Junod, the granddaughter of Albert Thomas – the ILO’s first DG.

presented to him by the Latin American Human Rights Association.

As Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations in New York since 1990, he was twice (1993 and 1998) President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). As Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, he led the negotiations that culminated in the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995. He served twice as President of the United Nations Security Council, in April 1996 and October 1997.

He has also written and lectured widely on trade, labour and human rights, and holds numerous citations and awards for his work regarding peace, human rights, and social development.

New challenges to be tackled

He cited a number of challenges for the ILO, including economic liberalization, which has “altered relationships between the state, labour and business” and “changes in employment patterns and labour markets which have profoundly impacted on the ILO’s constituents.”

He said that “social change has led to new and powerful actors of civil society, many of whom are organized outside the production process” and that “social attitudes have changed, leading to greater individualism and narrowing of consensus on collective social responsibility”.

The Declaration

On the subject of *The Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, which was adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1998, Mr. Somavia announced his intention to

NEW DG’S FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- Promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work;
- Create greater opportunities for men and women to secure decent employment and income;
- Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and,
- Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.



Jacques Maillard

"We must seek to harmonize economic growth with social progress, efficiency with equity, freedom with order and change with stability."

– Juan Somavia

promote the Declaration "in the spirit in which it was adopted". He said that the Declaration was adopted as "a promotional instrument". In order for it to be effective and to enjoy the widest measure of support, "there can be no question of conditionality attached to the Declaration. Otherwise, it would risk the loss of its legitimacy in defining the minimum obligations incumbent on all ILO members."

The Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work reaffirms the commitment of the Organization's member States to "respect, to promote and to realize in good faith" the right of workers and employers to freedom of association and the effective right to collective bargaining, and to work toward the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the effective abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation.

Mr. Somavia urged wide support for the goals of the Declaration, which "should become a common objective of the multilateral system as a whole, including the Bretton Woods institutions. The ILO should seek to cooperate with all organizations in a common endeavour to best implement it. To this end, I would hope that all organizations should play a role. As an absolute minimum, they should

undertake not to pursue policies whose practical effect would be to actually ignore these rights in practice."

"Economic outcomes are influenced more by market forces than by legal norms, social institutions or state intervention", he emphasized. "The predominance of market-based development is making the enterprise a central architect of social change and the principal source of employment. It is essential for the ILO to engage vigorously and credibly with the business community to pursue our goals and promote our values."

"We must seek to harmonize economic growth with social progress, efficiency with equity, freedom with order and change with stability. We must be inspired by an approach that stresses dialogue and negotiations among autonomous and democratic social organizations representing the interest of all groups in the society", added Mr. Somavia.

Stress on globalization

In welcoming comments, employer, worker and government representatives pledged to work with Mr. Somavia to tackle the new realities of changing economies and globalization.

In his comments, Ralf Thüsing (Germany), the Employer Vice-Chairman of the Governing Body, said "You are taking

up your office at a difficult time of change. Many things have been transformed. Therefore, we have a fine path which has been sketched out before us. We want to take this path together with you, Mr. Somavia, and move towards the ideals and the objectives of the ILO that we are committed to in a mind open to change and fully mindful of what is feasible, what is possible."

Speaking on behalf of workers, Mr. Bill Brett (United Kingdom), Member, General Council Trades Union Congress (TUC) and Vice-Chairman of the Governing Body of the ILO, said, "The ILO should ensure that globalization of the world economy serves people, not the other way round. The ILO should become an authoritative pillar of social policy in the UN system. The ILO should take its rightful place alongside the Bretton Woods institutions and others in determining the economic and social future of this world. We believe you have the qualities to do that."

Mr. Renaldo Rivera of the Government group of the Americas added, "Now, the ILO has to take up new responsibilities and challenges, and it must make its presence felt particularly in those countries where the phenomenon of globalization has generated and led to considerable concerns, expectations and greater risk of marginalization." □

ILO CONFERENCE TO DEBATE KEY ISSUES: CHILD LABOUR, MATERNITY RIGHTS ON AGENDA

Child labour

Eliminating the “worst”
forms of child labour:
Delegates to vote on
final adoption

*The spectre of girls and boys toiling in mines, being sold for prostitution, forced to work, exposed to hazardous substances and working conditions, and otherwise exploited has propelled the issue of child labour to the top of the international agenda. This article reviews the content of a proposed new Convention and Recommendation on the worst forms of child labour, and highlights major issues likely to dominate the debate at the International Labour Conference in June.**

The past two years have seen significant action against child labour both within and outside the ILO. In 1997, two high-profile international meetings were held in Amsterdam and Oslo. This interest continued and gained momentum in 1998; the Global March against Child Labour organized by non-governmental organizations, trade unions and human rights groups vividly demonstrated the growing worldwide movement and commitment against child labour.

The normative work of the ILO on child labour also advanced in 1998. ILO member States showed a renewed determination in the fight against child labour by making the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour the focus of new standards. The 1998 Session of the International Labour Conference made substantial progress toward a new Convention and Recommendation on the worst forms of child labour by completing its first discussion and adopting the text of the proposed instruments.

The Conference will debate the instruments for a second time and vote on their final adoption in June, 1999.

(continued on p. 8)

*This article is based on a report prepared for submission to the International Labour Conference which summarizes the comments from governments, and employers' and workers' organizations on the texts of the proposed instruments and several related questions.

Maternity protection

Proposed revision of
Convention No. 103
to get first discussion

In June, 1999, the International Labour Conference will hold its first discussion on the revision of Maternity Protection Convention (No. 103), which was adopted in 1952. The Convention is being revised to take into account changes which have occurred since its adoption and to bring it up-to-date.

Since 1950, women's participation in the workforce has risen dramatically around the world. Not only are more women working, but more women remain employed throughout their childbearing years than ever before. In the last half-century, maternity protection has been marked by progress in law, an evolution in workplace practices and rising expectations regarding the rights of working women. Nonetheless, uneven patterns of protection are evident in many countries, with some women enjoying good benefits, while others are left wholly or partly unprotected.

The most basic elements of maternity protection include the right to maternity leave, and the right to cash and medical benefits.

- A period of leave before and after childbirth is essential to protect the health of the woman and her child.
- Cash benefits replace a portion of the earnings otherwise lost during the leave period and thus enable the woman to recuperate fully from childbirth before her return to work.
- Medical benefits, including prenatal, confinement and postnatal care, are the third essential element.

Some of the questions to be explored at this year's Conference concern these three aspects of maternity protection. For example, what should the minimum standard be regarding the length of maternity leave? Should any portion of that leave be compulsory? What standard should be set regarding the level of income replacement during leave? How should cash and medical benefits be financed?

(continued on p. 10)

(Continued from p. 7 col. 1)

Need for new standards

The ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) is the fundamental international standard on child labour. The number of ratifications has been on the increase over the last couple of years. Currently, 72 States have ratified the Convention.

The ultimate goal of Convention

No. 138 is the total abolition of child labour. However, it is widely recognized that this will take time. A growing international consensus has emerged stressing the need to immediately proceed with the abolition of "*the most intolerable forms of child labour*", namely the employment of children in slave-like and bonded conditions and in dangerous and hazardous work, the exploitation of very young children, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

These children cannot wait for longer term developmental issues to be resolved

before they are freed from their intolerable situations. This has prompted the development of new standards on the worst forms of child labour to ensure that these forms are the priority for national and international action. The new standards will:

- identify priority areas of action;
- focus on the worst forms of child labour in one Convention;
- ensure that immediate action is taken, irrespective of the level of development;
- ensure special protection for younger children and girls; and
- call for global cooperation and action.

Mobilization around the new standards will also provide continued momentum for action. Focusing on the worst forms of child labour has the additional advantage that policies designed to reach the children in most need are likely to benefit other working children, and attention to the most socially repugnant examples can help maintain the necessary social commitment and consensus. At the same time, Convention No. 138 remains the bedrock of national and international action for the total abolition of child labour. Its accompanying Recommendation, No. 146, also provides comprehensive guidance for the elimination of child labour and the development of national policies which meet the needs of children and their families.

The first Conference discussion reflected near unanimous support for new ILO standards. The comments since then also reinforce the overwhelming support from governments, employers' and workers' organizations for new ILO standards specifically focused on the worst forms of child labour. The replies indicate that the current texts of the proposed Convention and Recommendation are a good basis for discussion during the June, 1999 Session of the ILC. Nevertheless, amendments have been suggested on several points and there is a divergence of opinion on some key issues.

The major outstanding issues relate primarily to the requirement for the "immediate" elimination of the worst forms of child labour (determination of hazardous work, the denial of access to education as a worst form of child labour and explicit inclusion of children in armed combat or military activities); and the role of NGOs and other concerned groups in the Convention.



ILO/E. Giannotti

The expression “worst forms of child labour” comprises:

- all forms of slavery and practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, forced or compulsory labour, debt bondage and serfdom;
- the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances;
- the use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs;
- work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of children.

Content of the proposed Convention and Recommendation

The proposed Convention and Recommendation apply to all children under the age of 18 in conformity with the general age stipulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the minimum age for hazardous work in Convention No. 138. The basic obligation of ratifying States is to take measures to prohibit and immediately eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

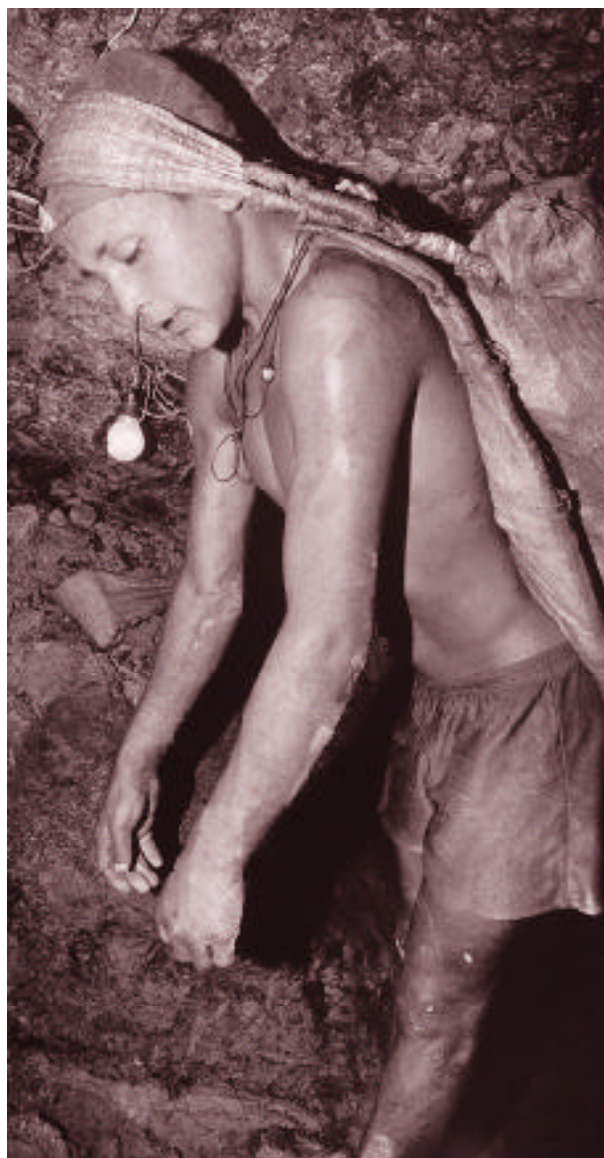
Countries are to design and implement programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. In addition, all necessary measures are to be taken to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions of the Convention, including the designation of appropriate mechanisms to monitor implementation and the provision and application of penal sanctions or, as appropriate, other sanctions. Other significant measures to be taken by ratifying States are those to prevent the entry or return of children into the worst forms of child labour, to remove them from such labour, and to give them the assistance necessary for their rehabilitation and social reintegration. Certain groups of children are in need of special protection and thus particular attention is given to the special situation of girls and other children at special risk. Finally, the proposed Convention promotes international cooperation and assistance by requiring member States to take steps,

as appropriate, to assist one another in giving effect to the provisions of the Convention.

Relationship between the proposed Convention and the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

The proposed Convention seeks to achieve the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour. In doing so, it focuses on a part of child labour covered primarily by Convention No. 138, but also by the ILO's Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), other international instruments aimed at the abolition of slavery and practices similar to slavery, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It selects “the worst forms” as a priority for immediate and particular kinds of action. As presently drafted, the proposed Convention is more specific and goes further than Convention No. 138 in some respects.

In summary, the proposed Convention concerning the prohibition and immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour differs from existing standards in that it focuses on the worst forms of child labour, requiring priority action in the form of immediate elimination; explicitly lists some of these worst forms with flexibility at the national level to determine which hazards bring other work into the category of the worst forms; provides for monitoring mechanisms and programmes of action; requires measures of prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration; requires giving special attention to children at special risk and the situation of girls; and calls for international cooperation and assistance. The proposed Convention has a singular mission to put an immediate stop to the worst forms of child labour.



ILO/P. Lissac

The debate on the new ILO instruments will be concluded by the International Labour Conference in its 87th Session in June, 1999. Once adopted, a new Convention and Recommendation will help to prioritize action and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to bring about the immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The new standards will advance the commitment to ensuring that children are protected at least against the worst hazards as part of the transition towards the total elimination of child labour as called for in ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138). □

– Adapted from a paper by Michele Jankanish, Senior Legal Officer, Working Conditions and Environment Department, ILO.

(Continued from p. 7 col. 2)



Canadian International Development Agency

Medical benefits, including prenatal, confinement and postnatal care, are one of the essential elements of maternity protection.

Core elements

These core elements of maternity protection cannot be viewed in isolation. Since many women have access to benefits through their employment, the question of job security arises. The right to leave and the right to return to her job after her absence for childbirth are one aspect of this. Cash benefits as well are often dependent on the woman's employment status, particularly if they are provided by the employer directly. Job security can also ensure greater continuity in a woman's contributions to social insurance schemes, through which cash and medical benefits are frequently provided.

A further important element in maternity protection involves the conditions in which a woman works. These need to be safe and healthy at all times, but particular attention needs to be paid to the needs of women workers during pregnancy and the nursing period. Dangerous or arduous work, or indeed any work which might pose a threat to the health of mother and child should be avoided and, whenever possible, alternative arrangements made.

Finally, the elimination of discrimination in employment, whether in terms of recruitment, access to training, or the possibility of career advancement, is an integral part of maternity protection,

ensuring women the right to work on equal terms with men.

Leave, benefits, employment security and non-discrimination are among the topics likely to be discussed during this year's Conference. Health and safety considerations, nursing breaks and related forms of leave, such as parental leave provisions, are also on the agenda. Among

the new elements proposed for discussion are methods to encourage countries at all levels of development to gradually improve maternity protection at the national level, for example; by periodically reviewing the length of leave and the level of cash benefits they provide.

Procedures

At this year's International Labour Conference, delegates from governments, and employers' and workers' organizations will hold wide-ranging discussions on the content of the possible new ILO standards. Following this year's deliberations, draft instruments will be drawn up for consideration and possible adoption in the year 2000. The new international standards which are foreseen would usher in a new era of maternity protection for the next century.

The ILO reports prepared for this year's deliberations are available over the Internet to anyone who might wish to have further information on maternity protection. They can be found by going to the ILO home page at www.ilo.org, clicking on "Conference", then "87th Session - 1999", then Reports V(1) and V(2). The Proposed Conclusions, which will provide the basis for discussion this year, can be found at the end of Report V(2). □

— Prepared by the office of Ms. F-J. Dy-Hammar, *CONDI/T*



Jacques Maillard

A woman should work in safe and healthy conditions at all times, but particular attention should be paid to the needs of women workers during pregnancy and the nursing period.



Africa works

ILO helps turn development into jobs

By the year 2015, half the population of the developing world may be living in urban areas, seriously exacerbating current living standards. What solutions can be found to address this challenge – and improve living conditions, while creating jobs at the same time?

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania – When floodwaters swept through the low-lying area of Hanna Nassif, four kilometres from here, rapid population growth and unplanned urbanization made the damage worse. As a result of over-population in this city of 3 million, the sprawling flood plain of Hanna Nassif had become an unhealthy and dangerous place to live.

“The first influx of dwellers came here over 20 years ago”, says Alfred Mwenisongole representing the Community Development Association (CDA), as he surveys

the Hanna Nassif community of 20,000 low-income inhabitants. “The flat plain continued to develop rapidly as an urban unplanned settlement. Since dwellings were constructed haphazardly, many caused an obstruction to the free flow of water.”

Serious flooding swept through Hanna Nassif regularly in the 1980s and worsened in the 1990s. Following heavy rains which caused extensive flood damage to the settlement in 1991, emergency action was called for. The City Council networked with the ILO Area Office, ILO/ASIST and UN Habitat, and in consultation with them introduced a Hanna Nassif pilot project to potential donors.

The result was a plan to enable the free flow of water without demolishing dwellings, by adapting ILO experience in rural labour-based community programmes to an urban setting through the construction of water channels, drains, roads and culverts.

Not “just” development

Yet, the example of Hanna Nassif is not just development of “new infrastructure”. What emerged from the project was the lesson that development can also

create jobs, and in the process help alleviate the poverty and unprecedented rates of urbanization which provoke severe flooding, property damage, impassable roads, unhealthy living conditions and clogged drains.

Although emergency relief and assistance programmes provide temporary solutions to help poor populations, they do little to improve their situation in the longer term. Investments which provide jobs and basic services, such as in roads, water, drains, housing and schools would contribute more towards their well-being and promote economic development; half of public investment in most developing countries is channelled into infrastructure.

Infrastructure projects have a vast job-creation potential, often untapped. Many projects are equipment-intensive, frequently using foreign contractors. This may be necessary for airports, motorways or heavy bridges. But employment-intensive alternatives are available, and offer major advantages for local populations.

For some years now, through its Employment-Intensive Programme (EIP), the ILO has been helping member States



An ILO-managed regional project, Advisory Support, Information Services and Training (ASIST), was established in 1991 to support labour-

based road construction and maintenance initiatives in Eastern and Southern Africa. This project has grown into a programme offering services to projects and programmes in 11 sub-Saharan countries in four distinct areas; namely labour-based road development, irrigation and environment, rural accessibility planning and urban works. ASIST Africa is now based in both Harare and Nairobi. The project provides a link between country-level activities, sub-regional backstopping and the Development Policies Department (POLDEV) at ILO headquarters. In 1998, a similar regional support programme for the Asia and Pacific Region was launched. Two other sub-regional/regional support programmes have also been initiated in west Africa and in Latin America.

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Serious flooding occurred regularly and the problem became more acute in the 1990s. Dar es Salaam.

ILO/ASIST



to maximize the impact of infrastructure investments on employment and local economic development. It has done this through what is known as the “employment-intensive approach” which uses labour as the predominant resource while ensuring cost-effectiveness and safeguarding quality. Particular attention is being paid to introducing relevant labour standards and fair conditions of work, using ILO demonstration projects and contractual procedures.*

Priorities and principles

In Tanzania’s Hanna Nassif, for example, community priorities were storm water drainage, solid waste management, road improvement, water supply and street lighting. Local inhabitants, both men and women, were mobilized. They started constructing drains under the supervision of an ILO-trained labour-based technology engineer. No heavy machinery

or sophisticated implements were used.

Following an extensive collaboration with the community in identifying and designing the interventions, it took some two years to build a total of 600 metres of main storm-water channel, 1,500 metres of side drain and 1,000 metres of road, plus two outlets, improved footpaths and 10 vehicular culverts. All work was implemented through community contracts.

“There was almost total eradication of flooding,” says Dinah Nkuya of the CDA. “People could keep their shoes on, merchants could transport merchandise easily, children could walk to school and business picked up because access to the community improved,” she adds. Malaria, cholera and diarrhoea decreased, the spread of fungal diseases dropped. New ideas on how to keep the drains free of garbage and safeguard the environment started to take shape. (*See box below*).

The small stipend paid to the labourers on the project enabled them to channel

savings into opening small businesses. A credit scheme was set up to encourage business. There was a boom in renovation and construction which in itself generated employment and helped in poverty alleviation. A road toll at the entrance to the community generated enough money for upkeep of the constructed infrastructure. Other jobs were created in roads and drains maintenance by the City Commission. A second phase of the project is now underway to build additional drains and roads.

How is this approach being applied in other countries of the region? The ILO has been active in Africa and has created thousands of jobs with its labour-based approach. Here are some examples of projects combining development and work.

GHANA

A small contractor development project in Ghana provided comprehensive business and management training to the staff of 93 companies working on labour-based road rehabilitation projects. In addition, Government engineers and foremen were trained in labour-based works and contract management. A nation-wide expansion of the project resulted in the rehabilitation of over 1,500 km of roads and 3,500 culverts in the period August 1989 to December 1996. About 2,500 work-days of employment were created per km for 11,000 km. During the first 8.5 years of its implementation, the programme created some 4.4 million workdays (or 20,000 work years) of temporary employment, implying also, at an average wage rate of approximately \$1 per day, that some \$4.4 million was injected into the rural economies as direct cash wages. Substantial indirect spin-offs in terms of employment creation were obtained through investments in housing improvements, local production of hand tools, farm rehabilitation and social expenditure.

SUDAN

The 86 km Nyala – Id El Fursan road in the South Darfur State is to provide access to the regional centre, Nyala. These people are cut off during the wet season by impassable roads and flooded wadis. A major function of the project is to develop a viable local labour-based road

COMMUNITY WASTE MANAGEMENT CREATES INCOME

An enterprising group of women watched solid waste and garbage starting to clog the new drains for which they had worked so hard. Something radical had to be done. So these women of Hanna Nassif decided to tackle the job. They decided to collect garbage

from house-to-house, a couple of days a week and transport it to a nearby dump site.

They had no tools or implements. They needed robust reusable plastic bags to distribute to the chosen households, spades to collect garbage and push-carts to wheel the garbage to the

dump area. The CDA which was responsible for the drainage project lent them some tools. They met with voluntary groups in Dar es Salaam trying to undertake similar sustainability projects to study options.

An awareness-raising and sensitization workshop was undertaken within the community, with the ILO’s help, and

some households were convinced to pay a small fee for the removal of garbage on a trial basis. “We have registered ourselves as an NGO, Kimwoda, under the Ministry of Home Affairs”, says Leocadia Rugambwa, Chairperson. The ILO provided technical support (through its Entrepreneurship and Management Development Branch) to mobilize the whole community for solid waste management, and as the idea “took shape” more houses were added to the “collection” list.

As a result of their efforts, there are fewer diseases and better health and sanitation in the community. They are continuously mobilizing people. They involve local leaders to help convince people to pay for these services.

“This has been a real community effort by the women of Hanna Nassif”, says Saskia Bakker of the ILO. “They have carried it on their shoulders.”

As the news spreads, other communities are also showing interest, such as Kijitonyama which is currently replicating this project. The village leaders here, together with the authorities, have proclaimed it illegal for people to throw their garbage in makeshift dumps. Random burying of garbage caused constant seepage from harmful materials and terrible environmental damage. Says Fatima Hassan, a resident of Kijitonyama: “I prefer to pay a small sum for my garbage to be picked up. That way I don’t have ‘to sneak out’ to get rid of it illegally.”



Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman

contracting capacity and achieve capacity-building by training local contractors and consultants to effectively use local labour employed under decent working conditions.

SOUTH AFRICA

Technical cooperation – In the field of labour-based methods in construction, ILO/ASIST has been active in South Africa since the early 1990s. South Africa wants to learn from international experience, aiming to achieve 'best practice' with labour-based methods, optimizing employment without paying a premium price for infrastructure outputs. The ILO ASIST team is providing full-time advisory services.

MOZAMBIQUE

In 1997, the employment-intensive Feeder Roads Programme employed some 6,500 workers, of which 20 per cent were women. Since 1989, the programme has rehabilitated about 2,500 km of feeder roads and created additional employment for maintenance. The work is carried out through 29 labour-based "brigades" established in all provinces of the country. Each brigade employs 150 to 250 workers, is managed at the local level and works with a set of essential light equipment to safeguard quality.

MADAGASCAR

Using a macroeconomic model to measure the impact of labour-intensive investment projects on the economy of Madagascar, a study estimated the differential effects of employment versus equipment-intensive approaches on the principal economic variables; i.e., production, consumption, employment, public finance, foreign trade. The analysis clearly shows the superiority of the employment-based approach, which is 30 to 80 per cent less costly depending on the type of infrastructure, creates 2.5 times more jobs, increases national income and household consumption 2.5 times and saves 30 per cent of foreign currency requirements. In 1995, the employment-based sector actually created 12,000 direct and 23,000 indirect (equivalent full-time) jobs. These figures should be compared

NON-DISCRIMINATION: TARGETING GENDER ISSUES

Women are often over-represented among the poorest of the poor. They are also in many cases the sole provider for their children. Nevertheless, women are seldom offered remunerative employment. Therefore, the EIP has given great attention to the inclusion of women in employment-intensive infrastructure works, where in the past men have tended to predominate. For example, women's participation has reached 37 per cent in programmes in Botswana, 25 per cent in Madagascar and up to 60 per cent in Lesotho.

with the 17,000 jobs which exist in the free trade zone in Madagascar, or with the total of 77,000 jobs in the formal sector in the country.

SIERRA LEONE

The ILO has provided technical assistance in rehabilitating the feeder road network of about 200 km in the Mozamba district using domestic small-scale contractors; in equipping road rehabilitation brigades and in providing employment and training opportunities to a large labour force which would then be able to continue road rehabilitation and maintenance. The government expanded its labour-based programme into the Kambia, Port Loko and Tonkolili districts to rehabilitate seve-

ral hundred km of feeder roads by local contractors, with financial support by the World Bank and technical assistance from the ILO. Due to political instability in the country, the programme had to move towards emergency operations in 1998 and had to freeze activities altogether in early 1999.

RWANDA

About 250 km of communal feeder roads have been constructed/improved using labour-based light-equipment supported methods. A study showed that labour-based public works in the case of communal roads cost 30 per cent less than equipment-intensive works; they create two to three times as much employment, reduce import needs by one third, increase expenditures on local goods and services by 50 per cent, and benefit mostly workers from the poorest households.

UGANDA

Kalerwe is a low-lying, unplanned settlement in Kampala, Uganda, where the inadequate drainage network resulted in severe flooding in the rainy seasons. In addition to the damage to property, living conditions became very unhygienic, the drains provided a breeding ground for mosquitoes and diseases flourished. Labour-based methods and community contracts created jobs in this densely-populated area to build a main drain and improve living conditions.

Other labour-based projects in several African and Asian countries have been carried out. The ILO is extending this concept to the Latin American region.

Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman □

*A guide on this subject was recently published entitled *Employment-intensive Infrastructure Programmes: Labour Policies and Practices*.

ZAMBIA



ILO/ASIST

Improving living conditions with the help of the community and the Lusaka City Council. Women's participation is high and has reached 60 per cent in Zambia.

Small countries, big success

Europe's employment revival: How smaller countries create jobs

Can smaller countries teach employment creation to bigger countries? Apparently so, says a new ILO study* prepared for a high-level meeting** held recently in Geneva. Austria, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands have shown that "employment success is also feasible in Europe's welfare states". Factors explaining this success – social dialogue, macroeconomic policy and labour market policy – may provide new solutions to unemployment problems which have afflicted Europe over the past two decades.

GENEVA – Contrary to some of the bigger European countries, which still suffer from depressed labour markets with sometimes very high levels of unemployment, including youth and long-term unemployment, Austria, Denmark, Ireland and The Netherlands have been experiencing a remarkable labour market recovery or have maintained low unemployment over the long term.

In addition, some of the countries have

recently seen a rapid increase in employment and in employment rates. In most cases, gender gaps have been reduced, but remain large, the ILO study says. Youth unemployment has also continued to decline, as did long-term unemployment. The countries under review are small and account for around 10 per cent of European Union GDP and 7 per cent of its total labour force.

In November 1998, both Denmark (4.6

per cent) and the Netherlands (3.6 per cent) are, together with Austria (4.4 per cent), among the EU countries with the lowest unemployment rates. This is all the more remarkable, the ILO study says, as unemployment had reached 10 per cent in Denmark as late as 1993 and peaked at 12 per cent in the Netherlands in 1982. Denmark has also by far the highest employment rates (both in gross and in full-time equivalent rates). It is also the country with the smallest gender gap in employment rates.

To the contrary, the Netherlands has comparatively low employment rates in full-time equivalents, because of the importance of part-time work. This is also the reason for high gender gaps in full-time equivalent rates, as women work overwhelmingly part-time.

Even if Dutch unemployment levels come close to the traditional definition of full employment (3 per cent), none of the countries has yet reached full employment if qualitative criteria are also included, the study points out.

There is some way to go before one can speak of absolute and not relative success. However, while this employment success has been accompanied by a change in the structure of employment from permanent full-time jobs to a more heterogeneous pattern of jobs (such as part-time and temporary jobs), it seems not to have been at the price of a general fall in real wages and a sharp rise in inequalities.

While unemployment in Ireland has declined rapidly from its very high level (17 per cent in 1985), it is still relatively



Jacques Maillard

In some countries, gender gaps have been reduced, but remain large, the ILO study says. Youth unemployment has also continued to decline,

high (7.3 per cent) compared with the three other countries. However, it has now fallen significantly below the EU average of 9.8 per cent. Ireland is also experiencing a fast decline in youth and long-term unemployment; however, also from a high level. Austria, which has maintained low levels of unemployment over a long period, but had lately seen a small increase, has most recently succeeded in a small decrease. In addition it has both low youth and long-term unemployment. Austria is also one of the few countries which always had unemployment rates amounting to less than half the rate for the European Union.

The study concludes that "at least three of the countries, which belong to the northern and central European socio-economic model, produce less inequalities than those which are based on a free-market approach." This results from collective bargaining between the social partners within systems of "corporatist governance", but is also due to the efficiency of the social transfer system in poverty reduction. The latter is itself an outcome of the system of corporatist governance.

Common factors of success

The study shows that the relative labour market success of the four countries is mainly due to appropriate policies in three fields: social dialogue, macroeconomic policy and labour market policy.

● **Corporatist governance and social dialogue**, combining mutual information and discussions of issues at national levels with the ability to implement reforms on sectoral and enterprise levels, facilitating wage moderation and reconciling diverging interests of specific groups with the interests of society and the economy as a whole.

Three of the countries have strengthened the social dialogue, after experiencing economic hardship and high unemployment rates in the beginning of the 1980s, while Austria has maintained the dialogue throughout the post-war period. The dialogue has contributed to installing a climate of confidence between the partners and the moderate wage policy has been part of a stabilization-oriented macroeconomic policy. The social partners have also been engaged in reforms of social security, labour market policy and labour market institutions.

These reforms have not always been easy to accept by the social partners. For

Country-specific factors of success in the labour market

AUSTRIA: Strong and stable corporatist governance, coordinated macroeconomic policy, traditionally strong role of the government sector, temporary fiscal expansion along with a general background of fiscal consolidation, wage moderation, tax reforms, high LM flexibility, labour supply reduction policies, layoff system, (apprenticeship) training.

DENMARK: Renewed corporatist governance, coordinated macroeconomic policy, strong role of the government sector, temporary fiscal expansion along with background of fiscal consolidation, tax reforms, wage moderation, labour market policy (leave schemes, activation, early retirement) and a layoff system, labour market reform, (continuous) training, labour supply reduction.

IRELAND: Increasing corporatist governance and macroeconomic coordination, fiscal consolidation, wage moderation, tax reforms, foreign direct investment, European structural fund, active labour market policy, (university) training.

NETHERLANDS: Renewed corporatist governance, coordinated macroeconomic policy and fiscal consolidation, welfare reform, tax reforms, working time, labour market reforms, labour supply reduction.

example, trade unions agreed to changes which have not always been in the short-term interests of their members. That these changes (e.g., in social security administration and social transfer benefit levels), which were combined with moderate wage increases, have not been accompanied by social unrest, is certainly one of the achievements of social dialogue.

The ILO study finds that institutions which permit communication at high levels, are of particular importance for conducting the dialogue, while it is also imperative to have a dialogue at lower levels and this not only between interest groups, but also within them. In its absence, it is less likely that the rank and file members

will cooperate to implement top level agreements.

● **Macroeconomic policy oriented towards price, interest and exchange rate stability**, which also – in a limited but sometimes significant manner – provides fiscal stimuli to the economy against a general background of fiscal consolidation. The study estimates that countries which have reduced their deficits are recovering their ability to intervene anti-cyclically in the economy.

Unlike in the 1970s, when such public spending tended to go out of control, today governments seem to be able to use the beneficial short-term effects of fiscal expansion, but then revert to fiscal consolidation in the next round. In all four countries, but in particular in Austria and Denmark, government expenditure has been important for growth and employment, even though expenditure declined as a share of GDP. The question is, however, whether a government spends money efficiently, and if lower spending leading to lower taxes would have been even more beneficial for the economy. Arguments in favour of a "crowding out" of private by public spending have been put forward, but the ILO study has not found evidence to support this.

The study considers government spending and private activities to be mutually supportive, and, while fiscal consolidation is to be pursued, it rejects claims that "lean" government is the answer to all problems in the labour market of the European welfare economies. Fiscal expansion within some margins is important, when the economy is entering a recession, and fiscal consolidation should be required to re-establish the possibility of governments to intervene anti-cyclically in the economy, in line with the criteria established for the European Monetary Union.

● **Active and passive labour market policy and labour market reforms** have had an impact on the recovery of the Austrian, Danish, Dutch and Irish labour markets. The study sees labour market policy in the context of labour market regulations. Both "passive" income replacement schemes, and active labour market policy measures such as labour market training, are instruments which provide security for workers and adjustment flexibility for firms. Without such a buffer, firms would have to bear the brunt of the costs and the social consequences of adjustment, and workers would face high insecurity.



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Active labour market policy measures such as labour market training are instruments which provide security for workers as well as adjustment flexibility for firms.

The ILO study clearly shows, that labour market policy is one of the pillars of the European welfare states. While this does not preclude the necessity of further reforms – for example, to activate measures along the lines of the European Employment Strategy in order to prevent the rise of long-term unemployment – policy makers should be aware of the basic function of labour market policy and its interrelation with employment protection and the general functioning of labour markets.

Reforms in the delivery of labour market policies (e.g., through employment services) have contributed to the success of the countries, by making those policies more responsive to local and enterprise needs.

The efficient combination of policies and institutions

More than from isolated policy actions, labour market success seems to result from an efficient combination of factors. The ILO study offers some indications of how such interactions might work.

Different across countries, effective combinations of the three factors – social dialogue, macroeconomic policy and labour market policies – have shown a positive impact. At the macroeconomic level, stability-oriented monetary policy, fiscal consolidation and wage-moderation

policies seem to have accommodated each other. Austria is a good example of how to introduce long-term stability by such a coordination of policies, without re-

DO SMALL COUNTRIES HAVE SPECIFIC ADVANTAGES?

The three factors of labour market success, a sound macroeconomic environment and policy, social dialogue, and labour market policy, might produce their effects also in larger countries, but there are distinct advantages of being small. First, these countries are open economies, well integrated into the world economy partly because of the small size of their domestic markets. At least for these countries economic openness and “globalization” seems to be paying off. Second, the small size of the countries under review may be an additional factor of success because of the smaller “power elite” circles. Their informality and closer personal relationships are an important condition for successful bargaining and consensus.

ducing labour market flexibility supported also by (passive) labour market policy. More specifically, in the labour markets of Denmark and Austria, weak dismissal protection (on the regulation side in Denmark and *de facto* in Austria) has been compensated for by relatively encompassing (income) protection. A significant part of workforce adjustment is thus shifted from the company to the societal level.

In the two countries, where small and medium-sized firms prevail, social protection systems seem to support the economy and the labour market, and add to flexibility, resulting in low shares of long-term unemployment and high employment rates.

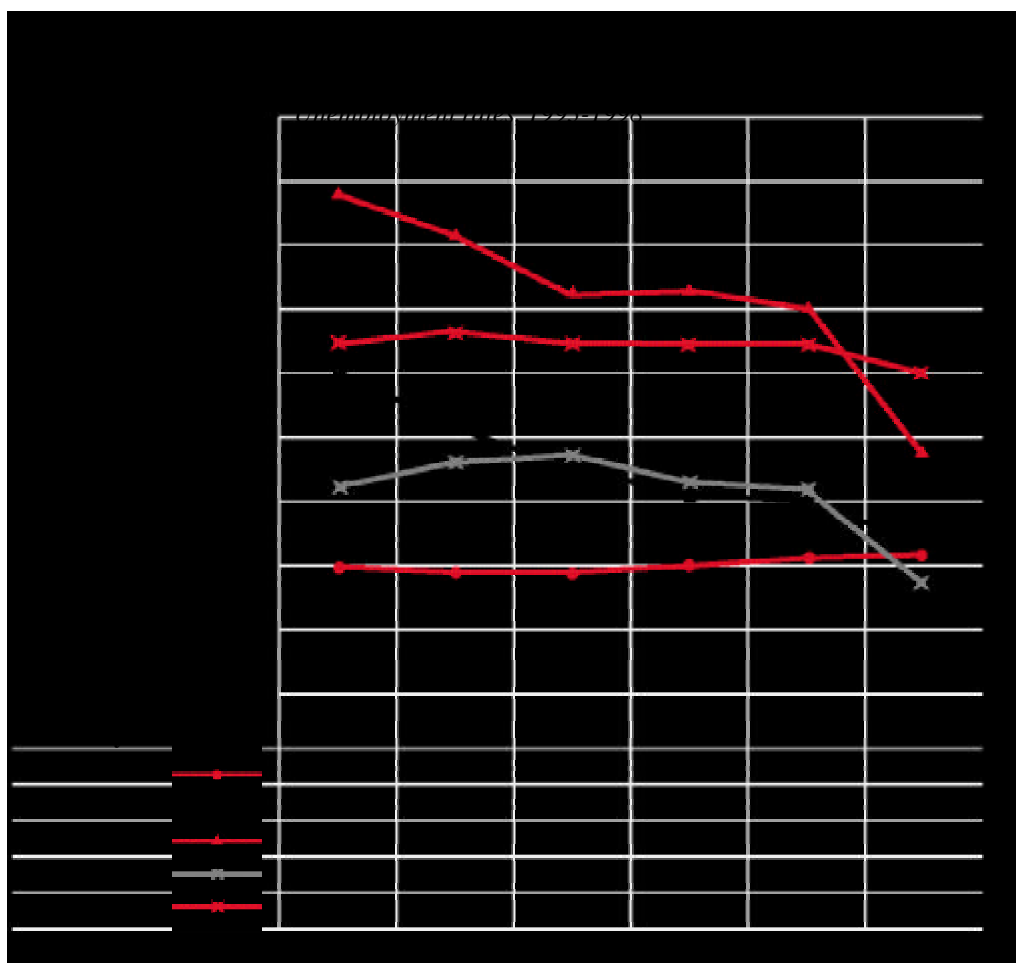
The ILO study cites other examples of successful policy combinations such as the temporary demand injection in the economy combined with a training-based job rotation scheme in Denmark, or the combination of part-time work, a basic pension scheme and placement activities of temporary work agencies in the Netherlands.

What can other countries learn from small countries?

The study acknowledges that the specific advantages of the small sizes of the four countries, as well as their different institutions, traditions and culture, make it difficult to transfer policies from one country to another. In particular, it might be difficult to adapt “democratic corporatism” to countries with a liberal, pluralist tradition. However, the ILO report notes that smaller countries can teach at least two lessons to larger ones.

While “democratic corporatism” per se is not the answer to all labour market problems, it seems to be a form of governance which is as efficient in running the economy as liberal pluralist (market-led) forms of governance. “Especially if equity issues are taken into account, corporatist governance shows clearly superior performance”, as can be seen by more equal distribution of income and lower poverty rates, the study points out. Up to now, the problem of corporatist governance countries was up to now their poor employment performance. With this problem solved, the countries seem to have developed into successful socio-economic models.

The second lesson is that economic openness pays off and that there seem



ILO-CEPR-database

RECENT KEY LABOUR MARKET DATA

	Employment Rate 1997	Full-time Equivalent Employment Rate 1997	Employment Growth 1992-1997	Unemployment Rate Nov. 1998	Long-term Unemployment Rate, 1997	Youth Unemploy- ment Rate Nov. 1998
Austria	69.9	65	0.95	4.4	1.5	6.3
Denmark	77.5	68.5	0.71	4.6	1.5	6.8
Ireland	57.8	53.7	3.63	7.3	5.7	10.3
Netherlands	66.7	53	1.47	3.6	2.5	6.3

Source: "Europe's Employment revival: Four small European countries compared". (ILO, 1999)

to be no longer-term negative effects of globalization on the labour markets of the four countries, or at least no such problems which remain unsolved. Besides these two major elements (form of governance and degree of economic openness), there are many other examples of policy elements from the four "success" cases, which might help some of the larger (European) countries to overcome their labour market problems.

The study sees no reason why larger

countries should not be able to introduce job-rotation schemes along the Danish lines or part-time regulations like the Dutch. A job rotation system (adapted from the Danish model) was, for example, recently introduced in Austria, which has institutions rather similar to Germany's.

It is almost certain that such convergence of policies and regulations will be stimulated by the European Monetary Union, which will inevitably lead to more

adjustment in various policy fields, the study concludes. □

* The study "Europe's Employment Revival: Four small European countries compared" is a follow-up of Commitment Three of the 1995 World Summit on Social Development, in Copenhagen and presents the results of ILO country employment reviews in Austria, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands. The four country studies have been reviewed and commented on by the social partners and the Ministries of Labour in the four countries.

** Social Dialogue and employment success, an ILO Symposium, Geneva 2-3 March 1999.



Working World

EQUALITY

● Preliminary results of an International Transport Federation (ITF) study of women transport workers has revealed transport employment to be very unfair to women. A trend of discriminatory practices in both recruitment and promotion was identified in the 253 questionnaires returned by women transport workers from 27 countries. The ITF Women's Committee has decided to launch a major global initiative and survey on conditions of work of women and discriminatory practices in this sector.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

● Delegations of European social partners, the European Trade Union Confederation, the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe reached an agreement on fixed-term, permanent contracts. This agreement foresees equal treatment of workers under fixed-term contracts and their colleagues who hold contracts which are of an undetermined duration. The text still has to be endorsed by the management of the three organizations and sent to the Council of EU Ministers for adoption. It will then become an enforceable directive in all member States. (*Social international and UNICE informations*)

● In **Lithuania**, the government, trade unions and employers' organizations have signed an update of a 1995 Agreement on Tripartite Co-

operation. By signing it, the government pledged to give information to all partners about proposed laws on labour, social or economic reform questions. For their part, the trade unions and employers' organizations agreed not to initiate collective disputes when the issues could be solved through tripartite discussions

covering, for example, minimum wages. (*ICFTU Online*).

● Social dialogue at the regional level has now made its appearance in the integration process in the **West African** region. "How to manage social dialogue at the West African Economic and Monetary

Union?" is the theme of the seminar to be held in May 1999 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) by ministers responsible for the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

SOCIAL PARTNERS

● The General Confederation of Workers (CGT), the largest French trade union confederation, was admitted to the European Confederation of Trade Unions (CES) as its 66th member. The CES boasts 58 million members in 28 countries. (*Le Monde, Libération*)

● The ICFTU has denounced the process foreseen in **Estonia** and **Belarus** for



KeyStone

● A general strike called by trade unions and the Patriotic Front (organization of indigenous peoples) paralyzed Ecuador in March. The reasons for the protest were the hike of 150 per cent in the price of fuel, a freeze in bank deposits and the speeding up of privatization. (*Le Monde*)

registering trade unions. Complaints have been lodged with the ILO that the measures in question are not in line with the ILO's dispositions against interference of the State in trade union affairs. (ICFTU Online).

● The 8th **Pan African** Conference of Employers' Organizations will be held in Dakar (Senegal) in May. On the agenda are the contribution of employers to the construction of competitive African economies, the promotion of investments, the strengthening of human capital, the strategy of employers' organizations, and the setting up of an "Agenda 2000" for future action.

LABOUR CODES

● The Government of **Hungary** has postponed Parliament's examination of labour code reforms following protests from trade unions which feared a weakening of collective bargaining and protection of workers. Amendments to the code would give special bargaining rights to enterprise committees, to the detriment of unions, and facilitate certain types of layoffs. (ICFTU Online)

● As part of a new wave of work-oriented reforms in **Africa**, labour laws are being revised in Botswana, the Central African Republic, Congo, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritius, Uganda, Tanzania and Zanzibar. In most of these countries, these revisions have led to tripartite consultations, with the ILO's assistance.

DEVELOPMENT

● In Tunisia, the number of persons living below the poverty line (about US\$ 2 per day per capita) fell from 75 per cent in 1956 to 20 per cent

in 1984 and below 6 per cent in 1995, according to the National Statistics Institute. Women today represent 20 per cent of workers against 6 per cent in 1966. The minimum wage is 175 dinars (about US\$ 150). (Jeune Afrique)

ECONOMIC CRISIS

● In **Brazil**, unemployment soared by 30 per cent in 1998 with the GDP increasing by only 0.15 per cent, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics. The announced unemployment rate is 7.6 per cent of the active



Keystone

population, but the unions challenge this figure. (Le Monde)

CONDITIONS OF WORK

● Telephone service centres are on the rise in Europe, and creating new jobs. The centres provide various services by telephone to clients, such as sales, call managing, or help-desk support. In Europe alone these centres today employ 900,000 persons and



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NEW TECHNOLOGIES

● According to the UN Economic Commission for Europe, a record level of investments was registered in industrial robotics in 1997. During that year, 85,000 robots were installed in the world. (Argus)

NUMBER OF ROBOTS PER 10,000 WORKERS

Japan	277	Finland	41
Republic of Korea	104	France	40
Singapore	93	Switzerland	39
Germany	88	Austria	38
Italy	63	Spain	27
Sweden	63	Australia	22
United States	42	United Kingdom	19
Benelux	41		

the figure is likely to rise to 1.3 million by the year 2000. However, work pressure in these centres is high – up to 300 consecutive calls – which leads to psychological problems. Frequent pauses should be made mandatory and ergonomic working conditions are indispensable. (Argus, FSP informations)

● A survey of the European Foundation on Conditions of Life and Work undertaken in 1998 revealed that 8 per cent of European workers; i.e., 12 million persons, declared that they had been victims of "mobbing" or acts of intimidation during the past year. (Argus)

PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS VICTIMS OF MOBBING DURING THE PAST YEAR

United Kingdom	16.3
Sweden	10.2
France	9.9
Ireland	9.4
Germany	7.3
Spain	5.5
Belgium	4.8
Greece	4.7
Italy	4.2



Postcard from Nigeria

As freedom of association grows wings, Nigerian trade unions rise from the ashes

Since January, Nigerian workers are realizing a long-held dream: the possibility of decent work, fair pay and better days. With the return of freedom of association under the country's new rulers, unions are functioning more or less normally again, says journalist Emmanuelle Marandez. Still, much remains to be done; following years of military rule, trade unions are beginning to rise again, but with difficulty.

YABA, Nigeria – The offices of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) reflect the situation of trade unions under the reign of Sani Abacha, whose death last June opened the door to the democratization of Nigeria. In this old yellow edifice situated in the heart of Yaba, a working-class neighbourhood of Lagos, the computers have disappeared, the furniture is rickety, the drawers empty of files. The till is empty; the “sole administrator”, appointed by General Abacha in violation of the rights of workers to elect their own representatives, left nothing in the various accounts consisting of members’ dues.

Since 27 January, Nigerian workers can once again dream of better days in this country of nearly 120 million inhabitants. Following the lifting last August of most military decrees curtailing freedom of association – and principally the work of their umbrella organization – a new President of the NLC was elected. Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole was born in 1953. He began his career at age 17 as a textile worker, before managing at 34 to begin studying labour economics and industrial relations at Ruskin College in Oxford, England.

“During that era, the Nigerian economy was still flourishing and our money (the Naira) was worth 1.5 [US] dollars”, reminisces Adams Oshiomhole. Today, the exchange rate is around 90 Nairas to the dollar, and from its status as the 48th richest country in the world in 1979, Nigeria has tumbled to the 13th poorest, the result of several years of military dictatorship characterized by unprecedented corruption.

“Rebirth 99”?

The theme of Adams Oshiomhole’s election campaign for the presidency of the labour union was “Rebirth 99”. At this year’s International Labour Conference in Geneva, Nigeria will once again find the place to which it no longer had



Adams Oshiomhole

the right because of its suspension of tripartite activities. “This will be an occasion to find once again old friends from around the world”, the new President exults. But between now and then, many battles remain to be fought.

The decree banning strikes remains in effect. Civil servants may not contest a dismissal before a tribunal. There is the question of recovering the NLC’s funds. Says Adams Oshiomhole, “It is a military government which had instituted the ‘sole administrator’. Therefore, it is up to the Government to assume the responsibility.”

Before transferring power to the civilian authorities on 29 May, as foreseen in the transition programme, the current rulers will also need to respond to the question of the minimum wage in the civil service. Before the Nigerian elections, which ended on 27 February with the vote for President, “we were subjected to a sort of blackmail: calling a strike would have been seen as an attempt to destabilize the transition. So we

were restrained”, explains the President of the NLC. Negotiations can now move forward. “The military created this problem; they must settle it. It would be unjust to burden the new civilian government with an agenda in progress.”

In September, the current Government agreed to increase the minimum wage of the civil service by 300 per cent, setting it at 5,200 Nairas. But, invoking the collapse in the price of oil, it dropped the acceptable floor to 3,000 Nairas. “The public sector in Nigeria is organized but has no machinery for collective bargaining”, reminds Richard Kombo, ILO Director in Lagos. Therefore, the NLC decided to lead the battle of the civil servants.

Civil service employees also count on the NLC to defend them in the surge of privatizations shaping up under the new civilian government. “For the moment, civil servants are the worst paid of all workers in the formal sector. The infrastructure, such as telephones and electricity, are in a lamentable state, which undermines the economic development of the country. So we are not opposed to privatization, but it might lead to massive layoffs,” worries Adams Oshiomhole.

Hence, the urgency in resurrecting the Labour Advisory Council and the Labour Tribunal, which have fallen into disuse. “Now that the NLC has once again found a legitimate direction, it will be able to fight for those who will be left aside by privatization”, estimates ILO Lagos Director Kombo. “But financing of the self-employment programmes will require donor support.”

Adams Oshiomhole is not afraid of these challenges. “He [Oshiomhole] is pragmatic; the best choice for Nigerian workers”, says Frank Kokori, Secretary-General of the National Union of Oil and Gas, who was imprisoned for four years under General Abacha. Emmanuel Amadi, Deputy Secretary-General of the National Union of Textile Workers, the original

union of the new President of the NLC, believes no less and promises that "with Oshiomhole, it's going to be fantastic".

Adams Oshiomhole visited the ILO during the recent Governing Body and had meetings with worker members of the Governing Body and the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities to discuss future cooperation.

A tradition since 1914

"Honesty, sincerity and good work" is the slogan inscribed on the walls of the Reliance Textile factory in Ikeja, the industrial section of Lagos. To prove that these qualities apply equally to themselves as well as their employees, the owners of this textile mill set aside a room for the workers' delegates to serve as an office and meeting room. Here, the work on claims begins when a factory accident occurs. In general the claims are settled, thanks to the clout of the National Union of Textile Workers.

"I'd like to be better paid, but aside from that I can't complain", affirms Francis, 32, who is in charge of maintaining the mill's generator. He starts the machine whenever there is a power outage, which occurs several times a day. Working from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m., he is paid 4,800 Nairas (US\$ 53) per month, including all benefits, according to a salary scale which is the same for all employees. He spent two years in a vocational training school after obtaining his high-school diploma. He would have expected a better career than pushing a button and monitoring eventual breakdowns, but "it's the best I could find". Unemployment is a spectre which frightens all Nigerians.

Koye also had other ambitions. She went to a dressmaking school but here folds pieces of cloth eight hours a day. For seven years, it's been exactly the same, but she feels "fairly treated" by her employers. "It's only the economy of this country which is bad."

The textile workers feel that they are well protected, insofar as possible. The same holds true for the other branches of the formal sector in Nigeria. Trade unions have a long tradition there – the first one dates from 1914! – and it is not only under the dictatorship of General Abacha that their prerogatives were seriously limited. According to the new President of the Nigerian Labour Congress, the strength of the trade union movement could not be completely demolished by these sombre years: "This vitality is explained by the size of the country and by its diversity. Here, it is difficult to silence everyone at the same time." □

Training Palestinian women

ILO Turin Centre successfully concludes first phase of multi-year project

TURIN, Italy – The Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) has completed the first phase of a multi-year project designed to give Palestinian women from the Occupied Territories a greater voice in forging their own economic and social destiny, as well as in influencing the economic and social future of the West Bank and Gaza.

The graduation of a new class of 18 Palestinian women from the ILO Training Centre here concludes a unique, three-year programme which provided over 300 Palestinian women entrepreneurs and social activists training and education in such issues as the rights of workers, women in trade unions, employment promotion, entrepreneurship and vocational training.

"Women's access to paid work is not simply an issue of rights" said Mrs. Intissar Al-Wazir ("Um Jihad"), Minister of Social Affairs and Head of the Inter-ministerial

Committee for Women. "It has a crucially developmental role, and human development will not be achieved without the full participation and contribution of women and men on an equal basis."

The unique programme was first to provide economic, social training to some 300 women from West Bank, Gaza.

"The assistance of international cooperation in helping the Palestinian Authority in building its institutions and infrastructures is all the more urgent since the worsening economic situation in the

(Continued on p.31)



Training course at the ILO Turin Centre.

Jacques Maillard



Working in the “Zona franca”

Low-quality jobs for women: Opportunities or dead-ends?

New employment opportunities within so-called “free zones” and “export processing zones (EPZs)” can help women rebuild their lives as well as their country’s economy after wars or natural disasters. In the Dominican Republic and other developing countries, increasing numbers of women are finding work in the zones as well as through micro-enterprises and micro-financing. Still, a new job does not always imply a better life; new work is not always good work. This report examines the experience of one woman who found work, as well as other trends affecting low-quality jobs for women today.

SANPEDROMACORIS, Dominican Republic – Hurricane Georges was one of the most ferocious storms to hit the Caribbean in years. In a region that is regularly pummelled by natural and economic turbulence, the Dominican Republic saw thousands lose their homes and livelihoods in an instant. But Georges’ ferocious winds were quickly replaced by clouds of dust thrown up by thousands of workers on motorbikes, making their way amidst the debris back to work. The rush hour has resumed and for many here, the rush is to the *zona franca*.

Zona francas, free zones or export processing zones (EPZs) now lead the way to work for millions of women in production chains that reach from the Americas to Asia. Zone factories are given tax and other incentives in return for setting up in places that would otherwise not attract investment. EPZs are one of the growing areas of employment for women, along with labour migration, micro-enterprises and informal sector work,

as well as atypical work such as temporary jobs, homeworking, and subcontracting.

These employment options for women all share a common denominator; namely, their *low quality*. They tend to have a low skill content, low pay, low productivity, and low prospects for advancement. With limited access to development resources or workers organizations, such jobs are the first to go when economic disaster hits and the last to be covered under welfare, health or other social protection schemes. They may represent the bulk of new job openings for women today. But are they opportunities or dead-ends?

Monica’s story

“I wake up early every day to make breakfast for my children as well as to prepare bread and chocolate to sell in the factory”, says Monica Gimez. “Otherwise I wouldn’t earn enough for us to survive.”

Monica is a typical EPZ worker; a young female who must support her family

alone. She lost her home to Hurricane Georges and lives in temporary shelter provided by the government. Luckily her factory was able to reopen soon after the storm. Her job is to turn the glued upper shells of boots inside out by hand, in preparation for stitching by another worker. The boots are then exported for sale in other countries at a considerable profit for the employer. Meanwhile, Monica must supplement her meagre wages by selling breakfast at the factory.

EPZ work can be tough for women. Shifts are long and followed by hours of domestic chores. The production pace can be gruelling, using out-of-date equipment in unsafe conditions. Sexual harassment is not unheard of. Though EPZs have been called “vehicles of globalization”, it may seem at times they are taking women down a dead-end street.

“Zones tend to attract women workers into the low-skilled jobs”, says Aurret Van Heerden of the ILO’s Special Action Programme on EPZs. “Coming into that job, many of these women hope to acquire skills and to acquire training which allow them to graduate up the skills hierarchy. That’s one of the obstacles that needs to be removed because, for a combination of cultural and sociological factors which limit women’s advancement, the lack of education and training facilities available, and the lack of a human resources development strategy, women are getting stuck in those jobs”.

Some argue that it is better to be stuck in any job than to have no job at all. But it doesn’t have to be that way. Governments like Singapore’s have raised job quality in their EPZs by providing training and support for specific high-return industries like electronics. The Dominican Republic encourages employers’ groups, like the Association of Dominican Free Zones (ADOZONA) to provide child care facilities, housing and transport, which target the particular needs of women workers.

“After working in the EPZ for a while and learning some skills, a woman can advance in the company or switch to another company”, according to Luis Pellerano, head of ADOZONA. “Or, as happens in many cases, they can go back home and develop a business that draws upon what she learned in the EPZ.”

Monica’s informal breakfast business, selling bags of bread and cups of warm chocolate doesn’t use her EPZ skills. But it does make her a micro-entrepreneur, another fast growing economic activity for women. Informal work or micro-



“Moonlighting on the job”. Monica must supplement her meagre wages by selling breakfast at the factory.

ILO

business is attractive for women who cannot gain access to the formal sector, or need the flexibility to work around family and other job schedules. Women are entering it in ever greater numbers, amounting perhaps to 70 per cent of women worldwide.

Finding quality opportunities for work is a problem in the informal sector. Women tend to pursue ventures related to domestic skills like food preparation or sewing, which are the least remunerative. With less exposure to business practices than men and less access to credit sources, women are more prone to failure.

Though EPZs have been called “vehicles of globalization”, it may seem at times they are taking women down a dead-end street.

Still, micro-credit programmes, particularly those which target women for small loans, find that their repayment rates can be quite high. World Relief, an NGO which boasts a 99.3 per cent repayment rate from its 180 village banks

in Mozambique, focuses on women because they take care of their families and are less likely to default on loans. Women-run microenterprise is at the heart of the economic recovery of war-torn countries like Mozambique and Bosnia and economically strapped areas of south-east Asia.

Competing in the global economy

Atypical work, like temporary work, subcontracting or homework, is a growing and largely invisible phenomenon as more companies farm out production to remain competitive in the global economy. They are rarely included in government labor statistics. Yet, during an economic crisis in the early 80s, Philippine homeworkers contributed up to 70 per cent of family income. Germany and the Philippines now recognize homeworkers under their labour laws. Trade unions in Canada are taking them under their social protection umbrella.

Worldwide, more women are migrating for work on their own than ever before. The hidden risks in labour migration, especially for those who work in entertainment, are often not apparent to those desperate for a job. The majority of migrant women do domestic work which, because

it is done in private homes, is often excluded from the host country's labour laws. Bilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries and pre-departure orientation sessions for migrant workers, like those run by the Philippine Department of Labour can help make the process more transparent.

In combination or by themselves, these new trends in employment are likely to absorb greater numbers of women as the new century begins. □

This article is based on the video “HER WAY TO WORK (THE ROAD TO QUALITY JOBS FOR WOMEN)”, produced by the ILO Bureau of Public Information.

For further information, or to order a copy of the 29-minute video, contact Miguel Schapira, ILO Geneva at +4122/799-6575; fax: +4122/799-8577; e-mail: schapira@ilo.org

(Versions available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic).



News in brief

274th Governing Body

GB discusses Declaration on fundamental rights, Myanmar, Asian financial crisis

Considers programme budget proposals to sharpen focus of ILO activities

GENEVA—The ILO Governing Body, at its 274th session held on 4-25 March 1999, settled a number of outstanding technical questions related to the follow-up of the *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998. It also asked the Director-General to urgently contact the Government of Myanmar regarding a 1998 Commission of Inquiry finding that the use of forced labour was pervasive in the country, and it held a special symposium on the Asian financial crisis.

Mr. Juan Somavia, who was sworn in as the new Director-General of ILO (*See article, "Juan Somavia, of Chile, takes helm as new Director-General", p. 4*), underlined the promotional nature of the Declaration, insisting on its value for "ensuring respect for fundamental rights at work and acting as a powerful spur to national and international efforts to translate economic growth into social equity and employment in countries at all stages of the development path".

He promised reinforced ILO technical cooperation for countries working to ratify and implement the fundamental Conventions and the terms of the Declaration.

A first global report, on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, will be prepared for discussion at the International Labour Conference in June 2000. Similar reports on forced labour, the effective elimination of child labour and discrimination in employment will be produced in the years ahead.

The Governing Body also decided that a group of experts would be charged with

presenting the conclusions of the annual reports to the Governing Body: seven eminent persons will examine information compiled by the Office on the basis of replies from member States concerned, supplemented by information from employers' and workers' organizations. The Director-General was asked to nominate the group of experts for approval by the Governing Body in November 1999. Since the March 1998 session of the ILO's Governing Body, 33 new ratifications of the core Conventions have been registered.

● Myanmar: GB reacts

The GB expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of action to comply with the recommendations of a 1998 Commission of Inquiry which detailed "the pervasive use of forced labour imposed on the civilian population throughout Myanmar by the authorities". It asked the Director-General again to contact the Government to obtain information on any measures it might have taken and to repeat an offer of technical assistance in this regard.

The Director-General was requested to present his findings in a written report on or before 21 May, 1999 taking into account any information received from the Government as well as information from workers' and employers' organizations and from other reliable sources.

It also decided that the November session of the Governing Body will include an item entitled: "Measures including recommendations under Article 33 of the ILO Constitution, to secure compliance by

the Government of Myanmar with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry". Article 33 allows the ILO to consider any measures necessary to secure compliance with recommendations of a Commission of Inquiry.

● Budget proposals: Sharpening activities focus

A US\$ 481,050,000 budget for ILO activities around the world in 2000-01 will be formally submitted for approval to the next session of the International Labour Conference (1-17 June 1999) following a decision reached by the GB.

The current proposal increases resources for all the regional programmes, with greatest emphasis on Africa and Asia. In the 2000-01 budget proposals, net cost savings have enabled a small increase in real terms of US\$ 785,000 compared with the current 1998-99 biennium, a sum which will be applied to substantive programme activities.

The ILO's programme and budget sharpens the focus of ILO activities by setting out four strategic objectives for the ILO at the turn of the next century: to promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work; to create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income; to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

Under each strategic objective, a number of international focus programmes (InFocus) of high priority will concentrate and integrate activities already under

way while responding to new needs and demands. InFocus programmes cover the promotion of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the progressive elimination of child labour, reconstruction and employment-intensive investment, economic and social security in the next century, the boosting of employment through small enterprise development, safety and health at work, the investment in knowledge, skills and employability and the strengthening of the social partners.

The ILO will also develop a rapid-response capacity to address unforeseen events in order to be able to come quickly to terms with critical situations affecting the world of work, such as those unleashed by the Asian financial crisis in 1998.

● Social initiatives and social dimension of globalization on the agenda

Following its discussion at the November 1998 session of the GB, the Working Party on the Social Dimensions of the Liberalization of International Trade further examined the implications of private sector initiatives, such as codes of conduct and social labelling, for ILO research and operational projects.

After an extensive exchange of views, there was general agreement on the need for further and expanded research on private sector initiatives, to be developed in the 2000-01 programme of work. On the other hand, it was too early to envision the pro-active engagement of the Organization in verifying enterprise performance or in selecting and promoting recommended benchmarks.

The Working Party also discussed a series of country studies on the social impact of globalization. The ILO has completed studies in six countries (Bangladesh, Chile, Mauritius, Republic of Korea, South Africa and Switzerland). The reports show that the liberalization of trade holds the prospect of rising standards of living while substantial adjustment costs are involved in the process of globalization.

Among these costs are rising inequalities in most of the countries under study and a decrease of the demand for unskilled labour. There is also a real danger that short-term capital flows, instead of being a mere reflection of developments in the real economy, determine exchange rates, trade, and employment levels in

emerging markets. None of the countries under study, however, has expressed a desire to adopt protectionist solutions.

The studies also show that national governments are not powerless in the face of globalization. The ILO advocates action on four fronts: education and training, social safety nets, labour law and industrial relations, and core labour standards, and says that product-market reforms facilitating innovation and the creation of new enterprises are as important as labour market reforms.

The Chairperson of this session of the Governing Body was Mr. Nobutoshi Akao (Japan), Mr. Ralf Thüsing (Germany) the employer Vice-Chairman and Mr. Bill Brett (United Kingdom) the worker Vice-Chairman.

The Governing Body, composed of 28 government members, 14 employer members and 14 worker members, convenes three times annually. It is the executive arm of the ILO and takes decisions on the implementation of ILO policies and programmes. Ten of the government seats are permanently held by major industrialised countries. The remaining members are elected for three years by governments, workers and employers, respectively, taking account of regional distribution.

● Asian Crisis: Social policy in view

A Symposium devoted to the Asian financial crisis highlighted the extremely

high social impact of the crisis, which has resulted in a substantial rise in open unemployment and underemployment, and a significant decline in real earnings concentrated mostly in sectors of the economy linked to international trade and financial flows.

Workers and the emerging middle-class in urban areas were the worst affected since the rural economy had been relatively insulated from the effects of the crisis. Among the victims of the crisis, vulnerable groups such as women, children, and migrant workers suffered most.

While there are now encouraging signs that currency and financial markets have begun to stabilize and that the preconditions for recovery are in place, complacency must be avoided. The crisis has forged a recognition that the deficiencies of the pre-crisis economic and social systems need to be remedied.

It was agreed that a common new vision for reform is emerging, which recognizes the importance of democracy as a guarantor of basic human rights, the value of social dialogue for sustaining democracy, and an open policy debate. At this stage, the highest priority should be given to the strengthening of systems of social protection. Possible measures include the introduction of unemployment insurance and the expansion of social assistance schemes to relieve extreme poverty.

The ILO and other agencies with a social mandate should work more closely together in order to be better prepared to deal with future crises.

In reviewing ILO action in response to the crisis, the symposium highlighted the following issues:



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♦ The ILO needs to strengthen its capacity to respond rapidly to major crises. This involves greater flexibility in re-allocating internal resources as well as an augmented capacity to mobilize external resources to put in place emergency programmes to deal with the most dire social problems during crisis situations.

♦ There should be a strengthened capacity to anticipate the onset of crises

in order to allow for preventive action and a greater degree of preparedness to mitigate the social costs of crises. This will involve an improved information system for the monitoring and analysis of economic and social developments.

♦ ILO action should be based on the clear recognition that policy reform and building new institutions are complicated both in terms of design and implemen-

tation. It requires sustained effort that is backed up by high-quality technical studies and policy advice.

♦ The ILO should act as a catalyst and facilitator to put in place well-designed programmes of training, retraining, job placement, and the promotion of self-employment targeted to the specific needs of retrenched workers.

– Source: Press Release ILO/99/8

Occupational safety

ILO estimates over one million work-related fatalities each year as workplace hazards evolve

SAO PAULO, Brazil– The Chief of the ILO's Health and Safety programme told delegates assembled here at the 15th World Congress on Occupational Safety and Health that over one million work-related deaths occur annually, and hundreds of millions of workers suffer from workplace accidents and occupational exposure to hazardous substances world-wide.

Dr. Jukka Takala told delegates in an opening address that deaths in the workplace exceed the average annual deaths

from road accidents (999,000), war (502,000), violence (563,000) or HIV/AIDS (312,000).

Approximately one-quarter of those deaths result from exposure to hazardous substances which cause such disabling illnesses as cancer and cardiovascular, respiratory and nervous system disorders. He warned that work-related diseases are expected to double by the year 2020 and that if improvements are not implemented now, exposures today will kill people by the year 2020.

In addition, he said that workers suffered an estimated 250 million occupational accidents and 160 million occupational diseases each year. Deaths and injuries, he said, continue to take a particularly heavy toll in developing countries, where large numbers of workers are concentrated in primary and extraction activities such as agriculture, logging, fishing and mining – some of the world's most hazardous industries.

According to the ILO, some 600,000 lives would be saved every year if available safety practices and appropriate information were used.

- Every year, 250 million accidents occur causing absence from work, the equivalent of 685,000 accidents every day, 475 every minute, 8 every second.

- Working children suffer 12 million occupational accidents and an estimated 12,000 of them are fatal;

- 3,000 people are killed at work every day, 2 every minute.

- Asbestos alone kills more than 100,000 workers every year.



Jacques Maillard

ILO estimates show that the fatality rate in advanced industrialized economies is almost half that of Central and Eastern Europe, China and India. In the Latin America/Caribbean region, the fatality rate is even higher, and in the Middle East and Asia (excluding China and India), the fatality rates soar to four-fold of those in the industrialized countries. Selected hazardous jobs can be from 10 to 100 times riskier. Construction sites in developing countries are ten times more dangerous than in industrialized countries.

Industrialized countries have seen a clear decrease in serious injuries as a result of structural changes in the nature of work and real improvements in making the workplace healthier and safer, including improved first aid and emergency care which saves lives in the event of accidents.



Mario Trajtenberg

However, the evolving nature of work is generating new occupational hazards, including musculo-skeletal problems, stress and mental problems, asthmatic and allergic reaction, and problems caused by exposure to hazardous and carcinogenic agents, such as asbestos, radiation and chemicals.

High cost of negligence

The economic costs of occupational and work-related injuries and diseases are rapidly increasing. The ILO expert said that "while it is impossible to place

a value on human life, compensation figures indicate that approximately 4 per cent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) disappears with the cost of diseases through absences from work, sickness treatment, disability and survivor benefits". The GDP lost in work-related injuries and diseases is more than that of the total GDP in Africa, the Arab States and south Asia together, and more than all official development assistance to the world's developing countries.

In addition to suffering material shortages and inadequate medical facilities, developing countries' problems are compounded by rapid industrialization

and migration to cities. According to Mr. Takala, in the context of globalization, industries are being set up – often informal and dangerous ones – engaging workers without previous experience in industrial work. The provision of adequate housing and premises frequently lags behind the development of new factories and industrial sites.

The need for infrastructure increases construction work, another hazardous occupation, in areas as diverse as housing, roads, dams and power and telecommunication facilities, bringing a host of benefits but also problems linked to modern industrial societies, including traffic, noise, stress, new products and an array of chemical and synthetic materials which may be hazardous if incorrectly used or improperly disposed of. Intense competition for scarce investment capital can contribute to disregard for safety, health and environmental considerations, as the large number of fires caused by toy, textile and similar kinds of factories in developing countries attests.

Coverage for occupational safety and health varies widely in different parts of the world, says the ILO, with, for example, workers in Nordic countries enjoying nearly universal coverage while only 10 per cent or less of the workforce in many developing countries is likely to enjoy any sort of coverage. Even in many developed countries, coverage against occupational injury and illness may extend to only half the workforce.

Strategies to improve safety

While arguing for the largest possible coverage of all workers, the ILO says different strategies to improve occupational health and safety are needed in light of the different circumstances countries face. For industrialized countries, priorities need to focus on psychological factors linked to poor workplace relations and management, the mental and physical consequences of repetitive, highly technical tasks, and information on handling new technologies and substances, including chemicals.

In industrializing countries, priorities must focus on improving safety and health practices in primary industries such as farming, fishing and logging, preventing industrial accidents, including fires and leaks of hazardous substances, and preventing traditional accidents and diseases, including those in informal workshops and home-based industries and



involving exposure to silica dust, which is extremely hazardous and results in a large number of unnecessary premature deaths each year.

"In countries at all levels of development, a large proportion of the deaths and injuries by workers can be attributed to inadequate safety and health information."

– Jukka Takala, speaking in Brazil

He cited a number of activities in developing countries, ranging from chemical safety programmes for small coal mines in China, to agro-chemical



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safety initiatives in Central America, and occupational health and safety information campaigns throughout Africa.

The ILO is emphasizing that key occupational safety and health Conventions, such as the framework of Convention No. 155 on occupational safety and No. 161 on occupational health services,

should be considered as minimum standards. In addition, the *Global Safe Work Programme* is being launched to provide knowledge, advocacy and services in occupational safety and health, and to place this high on the global, international and national agenda.

– Source: Press Release, ILO/99/9

Stronger push by ILO on gender issues

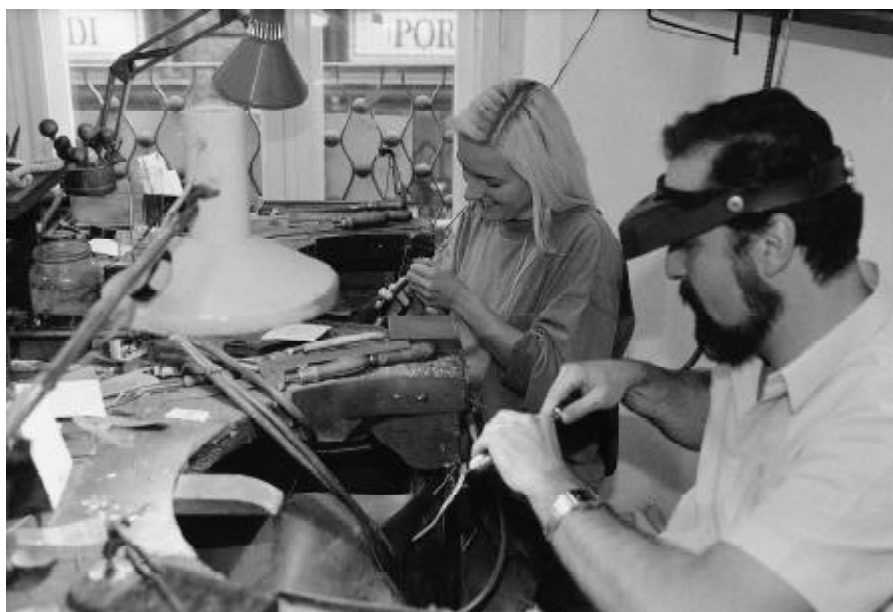
Somavia: Quicken pace and strengthen ILO's institutional commitment to promoting equality for women

GENEVA– Speaking to the first special session of the GB held to mark

International Women's Day, the Director-General declared that the ILO will

step up its commitment to gender issues, both within its own walls as well as through its global activities.

"While I recognize and laud the many serious efforts that have been made in recent years to move forward in mainstreaming gender in the Organization, I must share with you my intention to quicken the pace and strengthen the institutional commitment to this policy," Mr. Somavia said. "The ILO has lagged behind other international organizations in a number of indicators of gender equality. As an organization dedicated to social justice and well-being of workers, we must be in the forefront of this UN effort."



Jacques Maillard

"We must be leaders and not laggards."

Juan Somavia

"Promoting gender equality is not only the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do", Mr. Somavia said. "I therefore intend to give high priority to ensuring that the ILO is counted among the most progressive organizations in the field of gender equality. We must be leaders and not laggards."

Noting that the ILO had played a major role in the past eight decades in setting standards promoting equality for women workers, Mr. Somavia cited data indicating the ILO was lagging behind in its pursuit of gender parity within its own Secretariat.

Mr. Somavia also pledged to take a

number of other actions to augment ILO efforts on gender issues, including:

- Place gender at the “heart of the ILO agenda”, including mainstreaming of gender and development in the strategic objectives of the ILO in the proposals for the 2000-2001 budget.

- Integrating gender into technical work of the ILO by promoting gender sensitivity in research, advisory and operational work, and integrating gender aspects into programmes focused on the informal sector, small and medium enterprises, data collection, social security, promoting organizations of workers, training, employment-creation schemes, and proposing and evaluating standards, including in ILO branches, and regional and area offices.

- Urging member States, employers’ and workers’ organizations making up the ILO’s tripartite structure to make a “systematic effort to ensure a greater representation of qualified and experienced women” in their delegations to the International Labour Conference, the Governing Body and tripartite committees, seminars and training courses.

- Supporting establishment of a day-care facility within ILO headquarters in Geneva to “ensure that both women and men can be committed to their work without sacrificing efficiency, upward mobility or family contact”.

Gender equality has been written into the declarations and programmes adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna in 1993, the International Conference on Population and Development, in Cairo in 1994, and the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, both held in 1995.

“Renewing the commitment of human and financial resources to the goal of achieving gender equality constitutes a virtuous circle for the ILO”, Mr. Somavia said, adding that the case for promoting gender equality was “self-evident and compelling”.

– Source: Press Release ILO/99/5

Workers want more information and input

Chemical industry opts for voluntary initiatives on health, safety and environment

GENEVA – Although the chemical industry is in the forefront of corporate efforts to adopt industry-wide codes of practice on health, safety and environmental issues, the credibility of such initiatives remains hampered by public scepticism and generally low levels of workforce involvement, according to a new ILO study.*

The study notes that voluntary initiatives and codes of conduct in the chemical industry are proliferating, and while no definitive verdict can be given on their efficacy, they thus far “do appear to have had positive impacts in terms of improving company performance in health, safety and environment performance on an industry-wide basis.”

The trend toward voluntary initiatives includes measures targeting specific substances, such as coatings and pesticides, environmental agreements between government and industry, and improved environmental management systems, such as those of the European Union or the International Organization for Standardization.

Responsible care

The largest voluntary initiative, known as Responsible Care (RC), originated in Canada in 1985, and has expanded to include 40 national chemical manu-

facturers’ associations, whose members account for 86% of world chemical output. Though the specifics of Responsible Care programmes vary from country to country, they establish principles for manufacturers and distributors to continuously improve performance in all aspects of chemical safety, from the establishment of guidelines to the adoption of common logos and verification procedures. Adherence to RC principles is now a



Jacques Maillard



precondition for a firm's membership in the trade association in many countries.

However the ILO report notes that in spite of considerable progress and improved public information, "workers and their trade union representatives are neither widely involved in nor well informed" about the RC programmes. "Many European companies, in particular, do not use the RC terminology or trademark when communicating with their employees on health, safety and environment performance", the report says.

A study undertaken in the UK showed that "RC was effectively communicated only at the management level, with the result that there was little motivational benefit for the general workforce." The Chemical Industry Association of the UK, which acknowledges that there is a poor correlation of RC principles with otherwise strong awareness of health, safety and environmental management systems, "does realize the need for greater worker

recognition of, and involvement in, RC activities".

The same survey found RC awareness to be higher in Austria where, "there had been greater efforts to involve the workers."

A survey by the Italian Chemical Industry Federation showed that barely 25 per cent of industry employees have any experience with the RC programme and another survey showed that less than one per cent of the Italian population had ever heard of RC.

In the United States, by contrast, awareness among employees of the RC initiative has increased steadily, from 59 per cent in 1993 to 83 per cent in 1997.

Changing the face of the chemical industry

What is sure is that voluntary initiatives are changing the face of the chemical industry. Among the innovations, the ILO report cites increasing outreach pro-

grammes to inform and consult communities and interest groups in the vicinity of chemical plants. Large manufacturers have extended responsibility for health and safety along the supply line, from suppliers, clients, distributors and users of chemical products. The concept of "product stewardship", in which companies take a cradle-to-grave approach to manufacture, use and disposal of chemical products, is being adopted by much of the industry. Competing companies increasingly share technical information on matters such as the composition, handling and disposal of dangerous substances.

— Source: Press Release, ILO/99/2

* Voluntary initiatives affecting training and education on safety, health and environment in the chemical industries. Report for discussion at the Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries. ILO, Geneva, 1999. ISBN 92-2-111352-3. Price: 17.50 Swiss francs.

Private utilities, public concern

Privatization and restructuring of water, gas and electricity services leads to job cuts

GENEVA – A new ILO study has found severe job cuts of up to 80 per cent resulting from the restructuring and privatization of water, gas and electricity utilities over

the last decade. Restructuring and privatization of water has been less extensive than for gas and electricity. Nevertheless, there have been significant employment reductions in water.

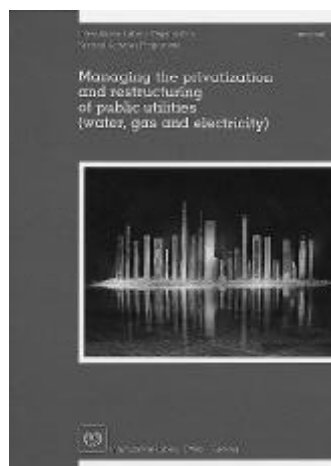
The study, "Managing the privatization and restructuring of public utilities (water, gas and electricity)", TMPU/1999, (see Media shelf, p.38 for details), found that privatization of water supply and sewage utilities in the Czech Republic has meant a 26 per cent reduction in employees. Large employment reductions accompanied the corporatization and restructuring of the Manila waterworks and sewage system in the Philippines with a workforce reduction of 28 per cent.

Privatizing water and sewage services through the granting of concessions in Argentina in the 1990s led to a nearly 50 per cent drop in the number of employees, the study says. Privatization

of water in Cartagena de Indias in Colombia similarly resulted in a two-thirds reduction of employees. Contracting out of Sydney Water in Australia also involved a reduction.

Privatization and restructuring in gas and electricity has been more widespread and practically always involved employment reductions. In the European Union countries there has been a 15 per cent decline in employment. The United Kingdom stands out as accounting for half the jobs lost in energy in Western Europe, with job levels in electricity down from 142,623 to 85,000 in the last decade, representing a 40 per cent reduction.

Trade unions have often resisted privatization of public utilities. Workers have usually been involved in consultations and negotiations on downsizing and redeployment measures, but have little say in decisions to restructure or privatize public utilities.



Governments, workers and employers have agreed at a number of ILO meetings that public sector reforms are most likely to achieve their objectives of delivering efficient and high-quality services when planned and implemented with the full participation of public sector workers as well as their unions and consumers of public services, at all stages of the decision-making process. The active participation of employee representatives and, for a number of matters, the users of water, gas and electricity services, is the key to solving or easing most of the challenges posed by restructuring and

privatization. The report says that this is an issue where achievements have so far fallen well below expectations. The global expansion of multinational utility and multi-utility companies where, for example, water for consumption is owned by companies the other side of the globe, calls for special attention with regard to regulation and social dialogue in the public interest.

Reports of grid failures and water contamination following large scale privatization inevitably provoke public debate about ownership. The report points out, however, that a causal link to

privatization is not evident. Ultimately, what is of prime concern to domestic and industrial consumers alike is the provision of efficient water and energy services at affordable prices, whether utilities are privately or publicly owned. Establishing coherent regulatory mechanisms and social dialogue are therefore central to this debate and were discussed at a tripartite meeting held in Geneva from 12 to 16 April 1999, on Managing the Privatization and Restructuring of Public Utilities (water, gas and electricity). □

Training Palestinian women (continued from p. 21)

West Bank and Gaza may have enormous implications for the Middle East peace process," Mrs. Al-Wazir said.

Among those trained were women business managers, trade unionists, trainers, administrators and members of non-governmental organizations. Following successful conclusion of the three-year programme, the Centre will participate in follow-up activities to evaluate the impact of the training and monitor progress in the Occupied Territories, the West Bank and Gaza. A new proposal for some US\$ 500,000 in funding is also being developed to strengthen education, including the women's technical college in Ramallah.

The training programme, funded primarily by the Government of Italy, concentrated on promoting Palestinian women as "active agents" in the de-

velopment process in the Occupied Territories.

"We have created a new core group of women decision makers who will be able to exert greater influence on improving the social and economic status of the Occupied Territories", said Mr. Abdel-Rahman, the Turin Centre's Manager for programmes targeting the Arab States.

Women in the formal economy

A number of factors have shaped Palestinian women's economic behaviour. According to reports published by Birzeit University,* the low quota of working women is due not so much to tradition as to the structural limitations of an economy which remains heavily depen-

Standard surveys indicate that women's participation in the formal economy is extremely low (approximately 10 per cent in recent years, compared to a regional average of 25 per cent and an average for developing countries of 39 per cent). Nevertheless, evidence shows that more women are economically active than standard statistics imply, because most women's work is intermittent, informal, unpaid and often not recognized as constituting work even by the women themselves.

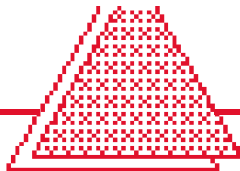
dent on Israel. The prolonged occupation, external trade barriers and financial restrictions have thwarted the growth of an independent Palestinian economy which could generate sustainable job options for both women and men.

The training courses were held in both the Occupied Territories and Italy. The advantage of training abroad is best expressed by course participant Doua Wadi, an official of a Dutch-funded NGO called CWEP (Centre for Women's Economic Projects) operating in Ramallah and Gaza City. "Besides the exposure to international experience and expertise, here in Turin we can meet our colleagues face-to-face and live together for two weeks or more. Back home, because of the numerous security check points, it is practically impossible to commute between our isolated territories without special permits to cross Israel. These are difficult to obtain. Even when we are given permits, they are only valid from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m." □

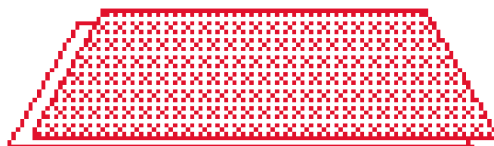


Besides the exposure to international experience and expertise, here in Turin participants can meet their colleagues face-to-face and live together for two weeks or more.

*Palestinian women: A status report. Published by the Women's Studies Program. Birzeit University, 1997.



AROUND THE CONTINENTS



A GLOBAL ECONOMY FOR WORKING PEOPLE

▲ In a radio address to the Nation, US President Clinton gave his support to the ILO "in its efforts to advance core labour rights – rights that are crucial to building a strong and stable global economy". He added, that "America will provide, for the first time ever, up to \$25 million to create a new arm of the International Labour Organization, to work with developing countries to put in place basic labour protection, safe workplaces, and the right to organize, so that workers everywhere can enjoy the advantages of a strong social safety net." The President also encouraged other nations to join this effort and to ensure that "the new global economy works for working people".

ENTERPRISE CREATION BY THE UNEMPLOYED

▲ The ILO Action Programme *Enterprise Creation by the Unemployed*, assesses the cost-effectiveness of self-employment and microfinance programmes in industrialized countries. Self-employment programmes helping the unemployed set up enterprises have been part of the active labour market policy since the end of the 1970s. Today, private initiatives like community-development banking and similar concepts are attracting attention. Programme activities cover Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, United Kingdom and the United States.

The Action Programme applies microfinance techniques and strategies from the South, to self-employment schemes in industrialized countries. In the biennium 2000-01, it is envisaged to replicate these approaches worldwide.

For more information, please contact the Social Finance Unit, Enterprise and Cooperative Development Department, at phone: +4122/799-6070; fax: +4122/799-6896; e-mail: SFU@ilo.org

A regular review of the International Labour Organization and ILO-related activities and events taking place around the world.

estimates that unemployment on the subcontinent in 1999 will reach a record 9.5 per cent shattering the previous unemployment record of 8.7 per cent set in 1983. On average, in 1998 Latin economies grew 2.3 per cent, less than half the growth rate of 1997.

ILO PREDICTS UNEMPLOYMENT RECORD FOR LATIN AMERICA

▲ Unemployment across Latin America in 1999 is likely to rise to record levels due to a regional economic recession, according to an ILO regional report (*Panorama Laboral 1998*). The ILO

MORE AND BETTER JOBS FOR WOMEN

▲ Mexico is one of the seven countries the ILO has chosen to test its programme, *More and better jobs for women* which seeks to incorporate more women into the labour force. At a meeting

THE ILO'S MICROFINANCE PORTFOLIO

▲ Some 50 ILO projects try to help globalization's "have-nots" gain access to financial services using microfinance as a means for enterprise action, employment generation, poverty alleviation, gender concerns or social protection. Microfinance is no longer a tool applicable only in the developing world. With social exclusion and unemployment reaching unknown proportions in many industrialized and transition countries, microenterprise promotion and microfinance are taking on global relevance. A recent ILO publication, *The ILO's Microfinance Portfolio*, prepared by the Social Finance Unit, now provides an overview and assessment of ILO microfinance activities.

For copies of the brochure, or more information, please contact the Social Finance Unit, Enterprise and Cooperative Development Department, at phone: +4122/799-6070; fax: +4122/799-6896; e-mail: SFU@ilo.org



Jacques Maillard

Discussing bank loans for the creation of cooperatives and microenterprises in Bolivia..

of the ILO's pilot programme in Mexico, US labor secretary Alexis Herman and her Mexican counterpart, José Antonio Gonzalez, agreed that Mexico and the United States should continue talks on the social dimension of the NAFTA agreement. Mrs. Herman told women labour leaders that the number of women workers in the United States more than doubled between 1971 and 1998, from 30 to 61 million, while women still get only 75 cents compared to a dollar earned by a man. The number of women workers in Mexico tripled in the last 20 years.

For further information, please contact Mr. Jean Maninat, Director, ILO Area Office for Cuba, Haiti and Mexico, phone: +525/250-3224; fax: +525/250-8892; e-mail: oitmex@mex.ilo.org.mx

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

▲ The Japan-funded ILO Asian Regional Programme on Expansion of Employment Opportunities for Women, sets up employment-creation schemes for disadvantaged groups, such as poor women in the informal sector and those laid off as a result of the current economic crisis. Activities in Nepal and Indonesia focus on both community-level action and policy reform and advice, combined with micro-credit, entrepreneurship-skills training and other essential services for employment creation and poverty alleviation. The same scheme was similarly implemented in Pakistan and Bangladesh from 1993 to 1997, where more than half of the project's beneficiaries were women from destitute families. Under the ongoing Project on Employment Promotion in China, women micro-entrepreneurs have also been targeted. Starting this year in Thailand, another Japan-funded project will assist women affected by the economic crisis.

For more information, please contact Ms. Carmela Torres, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, phone: +662/288-1710; fax: +662/280-1735; e-mail: torresc@ilo.org

UNITED KINGDOM RATIFIES ILO CONVENTION ON DISCRIMINATION

▲ Employment and Equal Opportunities Minister Andrew Smith announced

the British Government's decision to ratify the ILO's Convention (No. 111) on discrimination in employment. "Our decision to ratify sends out a clear message that the Government sees no place for any unjustified discrimination in today's workplace," the minister said. By the end of February 1999, 132 out of the 174 member States of the ILO had ratified Convention No. 111.

For more information, please contact the ILO's London Office, phone: +44171/828-6401; fax: +44171/233-5925; e-mail: london@ilo.org

CHILD LABOUR IN AFRICA

▲ Recent ILO estimates indicate that 32 per cent of the world's child workers (80 million) are in Africa. The continent has the highest incidence of child labour, with an estimated 40 per cent of all children between 5 and 14 years of age regularly engaged in economic activity. A recent ILO publication, *Definitions and legal provisions on child labour in Southern Africa*, attempts to find common ground among member countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for defining child labour and then acting against it.

For more information, please contact Mrs. Jane Hodges-Aeberhard, ILO Southern African Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (ILO/SAMAT), Harare (Zimbabwe), phone: +2634/781760; fax: +2634/759372; email: hodge@ilo.org

CHILD LABOUR IN TURKEY

▲ Turkey is one of the 34 countries which have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work with the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). Following an assessment of the IPEC programme in Turkey at the end of 1998, the ILO-IPEC programme will continue to operate in Turkey until 2001, at which time its operation will be transferred over to government and private agencies working against child labour. It was decided to prepare a comprehensive and time-bound "National Programme for the Effective Abolition of Child Labour in Turkey".

For more information, please contact

ILO-IPEC by fax: +4122/799-8771, or e-mail: ipec@ilo.org

INDISCO PROJECTS

▲ ILO-INDISCO supports self-reliance of indigenous and tribal communities through cooperatives and self-help organizations. A new INDISCO project in Namibia, funded by Denmark and launched on 1 January 1999, will support the San (Bushmen) community in harvesting and marketing of the "Devil's claw", a traditional medicine against rheumatism and high blood pressure which has become popular in recent years in Europe and the United States. Another INDISCO pilot project in the Philippines will assist the Aetas, victims of the volcano Pinatuba, in their rehabilitation efforts. The project will concentrate on several skills-training and income-generating activities in a culture-based participatory development approach. Another INDISCO project in Mindanao, Philippines, funded by AG-FUND (Arab Gulf Programme of the UN) assists indigenous handicraft producers since 1994. It has now been extended for an additional two years, during which marketing linkages will be established with European consumer cooperatives.

For more information, please contact Mr. H. Polat, INDISCO programme, phone: +4122/799-8742; fax: +4122/799-8572; e-mail: polat@ilo.org

UNDERSTANDING THE 'MOZAMBIQUE MIRACLE'

▲ Development experts hold up Mozambique as the latest example of the African economic recovery, citing high growth rates of around 7 per cent for 1993-96 after a long period of slow or negative growth. An ILO study argues that recent growth has been heavily dependent on very large inflows of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and that the long term outlook for the country is not clear. According to the study, the high levels of aid, averaging more than 100 per cent of the country's GDP for 1992-96, may result in distortions elsewhere in the economy. The study calculates that under the best conditions it would take Mozambique 28 years to achieve balanced trade.

For more information, please contact ILO/SAMAT in Harare (Zimbabwe), phone: +2634/759438; fax: +2634/759373; email: makaha@ilo.org □



in the press...in the press...in the press...in the p

New Director-General, Asia crisis, child "cyber-porn" dominate headlines

Daily Mail

24.2.99,
(Tanzania)

Workers want more information and input on chemical industry

By Mail Correspondent

ALTHOUGH the chemical industry is in the forefront of corporate efforts to adopt industry-wide codes of practice on health, safety and environmental issues, the credibility of such initiatives remains hampered by public scepticism and generally low levels of workforce involvement, according to an ILO study prepared for a tripartite meeting of industry experts from 23 countries which got under way in Geneva on Monday.

"Change of guards at the ILO"

ΑΓΡΕΥΣ: ΓΕΡΕΣΣΕΣ
DAILY "NAYTEMPIOPIKI"
H NAYTEMPIOPIKI
ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΚΗ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ



Αλλαγή σκυτάλης στην ηγεσία του ΔΟΕ

ΤΟ 4 ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ αναλαμβάνει τα καθήκοντα ο νέος γενικός διευθυντής της Διεθνούς Οργάνωσης για την Εργασία, Χουάν Σομαβία. Ουδέποτε πριν υπήρξε θέση αυτή επί μια δεκαετία. Χουάν Σομαβία αποτελεί τον πιο γνήσιο εκπαιδευμένο οργανισμό από τις ανεπτυγμένες χώρες οργανωμένος θητείας διετίας του σημερινού. Αποφοίτησε από το Γαλλικό Σχολείο (22 χρόνια) και το Γαλλικό Σχολείο (15 χρόνια).

Handelsblatt

4.3.99 (Germany)

Arbeitsorganisation

Juan Somavia übernimmt ILO-Chefposten

Diario La Segunda

Jueves 4 de marzo de 1999 (Chile)

J. Somavía: "La OIT tiene tradición pero también hay que modernizarla"

LA TERCERA

5.3.99, (Chile)

Primer latinoamericano en 80 años de la entidad

Juan Somavía asumió como director de la OIT

● El cenciller José Miguel Insulza encabezará la delegación de gobierno que viajará a Ginebra para asistir a la primera participación pública del abogado chileno.

EL MERCURIO

5.3.99 (Chile)

Somavía Asumió en la OIT.— A un año de las elecciones que lo nombraron como nuevo Director General de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT), el diplomático chileno Juan Somavía asumió ayer sus funciones, en una sencilla ceremonia realizada en la sede principal de la OIT, en Ginebra. Por primera vez en la historia de la institución, la que fuera fundada en 1919, un diplomático venido del hemisferio sur accede al más alto cargo, lo que según manifestó Somavía constituye "un gran orgullo y también un importante desafío", porque, como aseguran sus más cercanos colaboradores, es un profesional muy sensible a los conflictos laborales de los países en desarrollo.

TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE

4.3.99 (Switzerland)

Le Chillon Juan Somavia prend le relais

Le chilien Juan Somavía, représentant son pays auprès des Nations Unies à New York, prend les nouvelles fonctions de directeur du Bureau international du Travail (BIT), a annoncé la merging de l'ONU installée

Neue Zürcher Zeitung

4.3.99 (Switzerland)

Juan Somavia
neuer ILO-Generaldirektor

Konzentrierung der Aktivitäten

19. März

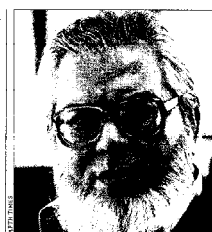
Mit Somavía erhält die ILO erstmals seit ihrer Gründung im Jahr 1919 einen Vertreter der Dritten Welt als Generaldirektor. Die Wahl Somavias war möglich geworden, weil sich die USA kaum für die Leitung der ILO interessierten und weil die Europäer in den letzten Jahren mit Renato Ruggiero bei der Welthandelsorganisation, Gro Harlem Brundtland bei der Weltgesundheitsorganisation und Mary Robinson als Hochkommissarin für Menschenrechte verschiedene wichtige Führungspositionen der Uno-Organisationen besetzen konnten. Ob Somavía die von ihm angestrebte Straffung und Reorganisation der Uno-Organisation gelingen wird, ist zurzeit noch nicht abzuschätzen.

Newsweek

INTERVIEW

GLOBALISM'S HUMAN FACE

A FORMER CHILEAN AMBASSADOR to the United Nations, Juan O. Somavía took office earlier this month as the new director-general of the International Labor Organization, a U.N.-affiliated body dating from 1946; the ILO was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969, its heyday. More recently, critics have taken to dismissing the ILO as ineffectual and even moribund. Whatever the merits of such claims, Somavía may be the right man to inject fresh energy into the organization. Many diplomats and foreign-policy experts consider him the "man" behind the 1998 Copenhagen Social Summit, at which nearly 100 heads of state—the largest gathering ever of world leaders—pledged to alleviate global poverty and joblessness. Currently, Somavía is preparing a five-year review of the summit, due out in 2000. He talked with Newsweek's Pranay Gupta recently at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland. Excerpts...



"Employment is the first step out of poverty. It's at the core of economic development and social stability."

—JUAN O. SOMAVIA

29.3.99 (USA)

Business Standard

5.3.99 (India)

Somavia takes over as ILO chief

Reuters
GENEVA

JUAN SOMAVIA, a Chilean lawyer and diplomat, took office on Thursday as the new director-general of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Somavía was elected to the post by the ILO's governing body last year. He takes over from Michel Hansenne, a former Belgian minister who spent 10 years at the helm of the United Nations body which works to promote social justice and labour rights. Somavía said in a statement he wanted to make sure the benefits of globalisation were felt in all parts of society.

"We have agreed internationally to promote open societies and open economies. That consensus will not hold if real benefits for ordinary people and their families are not put into the equation," he said.

...in the press...in the press...in the press...in the press...

LE TEMPS

4.3.99 (Switzerland)

IKAVAIL • L'organisation internationale doit se fixer des priorités pour le siècle prochain

Le Chilien Juan Somavia prend les rênes du BIT

Il y a un an, son élection avait provoqué un certain enthousiasme. «Latino-Américain, il est sensible aux problèmes des travailleurs dans les pays du Sud», déclare John Doohan, porte-parole au BIT. Avant de venir à Genève, Juan Somavia, 58 ans, était ambassadeur auprès de l'ONU à New York. C'est lui qui a piloté, en tant que président de la Commission économique et sociale de l'ONU, le comité préparatoire du Sommet social à Copenhague en 1995.

LE MATIN

20.1.99 (Belgium)

« Cybertraque » des crimes sexuels

Le Bureau international du travail a tracé pour sa part les grandes lignes d'un cadre juridique international pour protéger les enfants. « Les pays qui signeront ce traité devront pénaliser ces pratiques et punir les contrevenants », a précisé le directeur général de l'organisation, Michel Hansenne, qui espère que le texte sera adopté en juin à la réunion annuelle du BIT.

THE DAILY YOMIURI

20.1.99 (Japan)

Number of sexually abused children at emergency level, experts warn

Herald Tribune

19.1.99 (USA)

Child Pornography On Net Is Targeted

PARIS — The International Labor Office outlined plans Monday for an accord to help keep child pornography and other forms of child sexual abuse off the Internet.

"The countries which ratify the treaty would be obliged to outlaw such practices, to punish the offenders and to eliminate in practice such behavior," said Michel Hansenne, director-general for the ILO, speaking at a Unesco conference on pedophilia on the Internet.

Mr. Hansenne said that the measures would ban the sale and trafficking of children over the Internet as well as the use of children for on-line prostitution or production of pornographic material. (AP)

EL HERALDO DE BROWNSVILLE

19.1.99 (USA)

Conferencia de pedofilia en Internet

Por MARILYN AUGUST
The Associated Press

PARIS — La Oficina Internacional del Trabajo, OIT, anunció el lunes un plan para impedir que la pornografía infantil y otras modalidades de abuso sexual de menores invadan la red cibernética Internet.

MAINICHI Daily News

20.1.99 (Japan)

Experts: Internet facilitating child abuse and pedophilia.

...the International Labor Office (ILO) outlined plans for an accord to help keep child pornography and other forms of child sexual abuse off the Internet.

"The countries which ratify the treaty would be obliged to outlaw such practices, to punish the offenders and to eliminate in practice such behavior", ILO Director-General Michel Hansenne told the two-day conference.

...measures expected to be passed at the ILO's annual meeting in June, would ban the sale and trafficking of children over the Internet, as well as the use of children for online prostitution or production of pornographic material.

LE FIGARO. économie

3.3.99 (France)

POLITIQUE ÉCONOMIQUE

Chômage : la grande leçon des petits européens

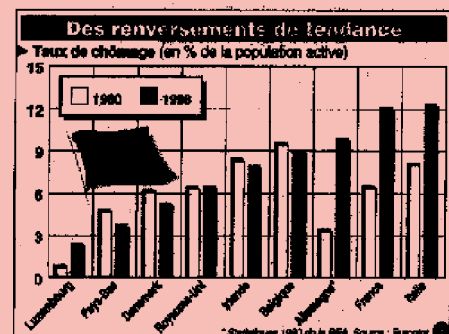
Un rapport du BIT explique comment l'Autriche, le Danemark, l'Irlande et les Pays-Bas ont vaincu le chômage alors que les grands, Allemagne, Espagne et France, patagent toujours.

GENÈVE :

Laurent MOISU

État providence et emploi ne sont pas antinomiques. C'est la grande leçon tirée par le Bureau international du travail (BIT) des succès remportés dans la lutte contre le chômage par l'Autriche, le Danemark,

l'Irlande et les Pays-Bas. Dans une étude comparative préparée pour une réunion tripartite à haut niveau convoquée cette semaine à Genève, les experts du BIT dégagent trois facteurs pour expliquer leur réussite : dialogue social, politique macroéconomique et réformes du marché du travail. ...





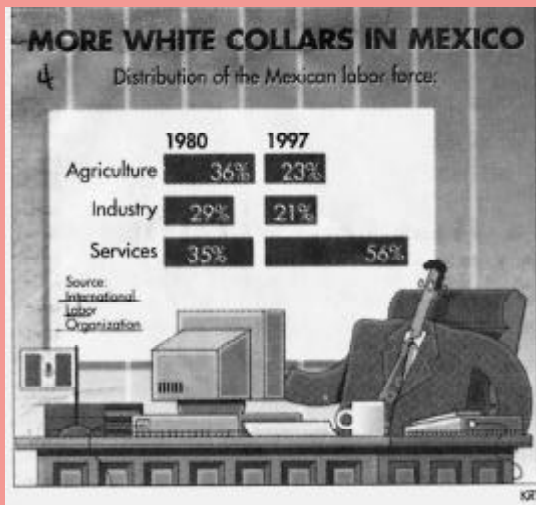
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MIAMI HERALD
(EL NUEVO HERALD)
11.12.98 (USA)

Aumentará el desempleo en América Latina

MARCO AQUINO
Reuters

Lima — La crisis mundial quebró abruptamente este año la tendencia decreciente del desempleo en América Latina y las perspectivas para 1999 no son alentadoras, dijo el jueves un funcionario de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo.



JOURNAL
NEWS
(RK EDITION)
NY, USA
29.11.98

De Financieel Economische Tijd 17.03.99 (Belgium)

Crisis in Azië: 24 miljoen arbeidsplaatsen weg

GENEVE (afp) - Door de crisis in Azië gingen er minstens 24 miljoen arbeidsplaatsen verloren, aldus het Internationaal Arbeidsbureau in Genève. Volgens het IAB gingen de arbeidsplaatsen vooral verloren bij faillissementen van bedrijven in de 'moderne' sectoren. Tussen 1996 en 1998 is de werkloosheid in Hongkong, China en de Filipijnen zowat verdubbeld. In Indonesië, Noord-Korea en Maleisië verdriedvoudigde de werkloosheid. De nieuwe directeur van het IAB, Juan Somavia, onderstreepte dat Azië nood heeft aan een nieuw 'sociaal contract dat weer aanknoopt met de economische groei en de versteviging van de democratische instellingen'. Somavia zei dat het verlies aan levenskwaliteit met dezelfde vinnigheid moet worden aangepakt als de zwakte van de beurzen.

Le Monde

18.3.99 (France)

La crise a supprimé 24 millions d'emplois en Asie

GENÈVE. La crise asiatique a supprimé vingt-quatre millions d'emplois rien qu'en Asie de l'Est, a indiqué mardi 16 mars le Bureau international du travail (BIT). Dans un rapport préparé pour un colloque sur « la capacité de réponses rapides pour les crises futures », le BIT souligne que la majorité des faillites et pertes d'emplois se sont produites « dans des secteurs modernes » de l'industrie de l'Asie de l'Est. Elles ont poussé un nombre croissant de travailleurs à rejoindre les secteurs informel ou agricole, où l'effectif est déjà pléthorique. Le chômage a doublé entre 1996 et 1998 à Hongkong, en Chine et aux Philippines. Il a triplé en Indonésie, en Corée du Nord et en Malaisie. Le directeur général du BIT, le Chilien Juan Somavia, a estimé que les baisses de niveau de vie engendrées par l'instabilité financière « doivent être traitées avec la même vigueur que celle employée pour endiguer la baisse des valeurs boursières ». - (AFP)

FIJI'S DAILY POST - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1999

ILO pledges \$480m to improve work conditions

PLANS to sharpen the strategic focus of International Labour Organisation activities is at the heart of a programme and budget proposal of US\$481 million for the year 2000-2001. This was presented by director-general Juan Somavia at ILO headquarters in Geneva this month.

ARAB TIMES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1999

KUWAIT

Renewed economic growth stressed

ILO to tackle Asia jobless crisis

The ILO once again called for a new social contract for Asia based on renewed economic growth and tripartite efforts between workers, employers and government.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1999

BUSINESS DAY

17.3.99 (Thailand)

ILO Claims 24m Jobs Lost in Crisis-Hit E. Asia

GENEVA - More than 24 million jobs have been lost in East Asia since financial turbulence began in the region, the International Labor Organization warned yesterday.

Most of the jobs had been lost in the modern, industrial and service sectors of the economies, where wages, productivity and working conditions tended to be higher than average, said the ILO.

...in the press...in the press...in the press...in the press...

Daily News

The Quality English Daily with the largest circulation in Sri Lanka

8.3.99 (Sri Lanka)

Juan Somavia, new ILO director general

GENEVA (ILO News) - The new Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO), Mr. Juan Somavia of Chile, took office on March 4, marking the first time a representative of the Southern hemisphere has headed this organisation. Mr. Somavia is the ninth Director-General of the ILO since its founding in 1919 and was elected by the ILO governing body on 23 March 1998.

"We have agreed internationally to promote open societies and open economies. That consensus will not hold if real benefits for ordinary people and their families are not put into the equation," Mr. Somavia said. "I am proud of what the ILO stands for. The Nobel Prize in 1969 acknowledged its contribution to peace. I have the responsibility to modernise and help steer the tripartite structure to make ILO values prevail in the new global realities".

The Guardian

www.guardian.co.uk

11.3.99, Tanzania

ILO Director General insists on gender intensification

By PST Reporter

THE Director General of the International Labour Office, Mr Juan Somavia, yesterday pledged to step up the commitment to gender issues of the ILO within its own walls as well as through its global activities.

Basler Zeitung

(Switzerland)

Burma: Zwangsarbeit

Genf. SDA. In Burma wird die Zivilbevölkerung weiterhin zu Zwangsarbeit rekrutiert. Der Leitungsausschuss der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation (ILO) beklagte am Donnerstag in Genf, das Militärregime in Rangun sei bisher Forderungen nach Abschaffung der Zwangsarbeit nicht gefolgt. Burma sei eine Frist bis zum 1. Mai gesetzt worden, um auf die ILO-Empfehlungen zu antworten, sagte der neue ILO-Generaldirektor Juan Somavia.

الوطن

AL WATAN

Wed. 17 Mar. 1999

KUWAIT

"In a Report by the ILO
24 million jobs have been lost since the East Asia
Financial Crisis"

في تقرير لمكتب العمل الدولي

٢٤ مليون وظيفة قضت عليها
أزمة شرق آسيا المالية

REUTERS

WORLD ALERT

Story: International Labour Organization – Child Weavers

Release: 19 Februry 1999

Story Summary: The ILO announced a new deal for up to a million Pakistani child carpet weavers. The package included an agreement by employers to release young children to attend school.

MONITORING

The following representative monitoring report is based on compiled information obtained from TV broadcasters and other research services. This represents a snapshot of global usage only and is based on information available at the time of publication:

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

REUTERS

Date	Feed	Time	Duration
19.2.99	Reuters World Alert	08:00-08:10	4'35"
19.2.99	APTN	16:00	4'35"
19.2.99	BBC WSTV	News Update	3'00"
19.2.99	MSNBC	World Roundup	2'55"

BROADCASTERS

Netherlands

19.2.99	TELE5	14:30	1'12"
19.3.99	TV ESPANOLA 1	22:00	2'00"
19.3.99	TV ESPANOLA 2	18:00	1'30"

Germany

19.3.99	TV MDR3	01:15	1'30"
19.3.99	TV VOX	17:50	3'00"
19.3.99	TV E-NEWS	19:00	4'22"

France

19.3.99	TF1	20:42	1'30"
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Report and Analysis

Produced & co-ordinated by
WORLD TELEVISION



Story: International Labour Organization – New Chief

Release: 4 March 1999

Story Summary: The new head of the International Labour Organization, the United Nations body charged with championing social and labour rights, has issued a stark warning about the next millennium.

Juan Somavia says that, in an economy dominated by boom and bust cycles and with global unemployment set to increase, respecting workers' rights will become critical to social stability.

MONITORING

The following representative monitoring report is based on compiled information obtained from TV broadcasters and other research services. This represents a snapshot of global usage only and is based on information available at the time of publication:

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

REUTERS

Date	Feed
04.03.99	CNN 1, US FEED
04.03.99	APTN, SA FEED DSS- NORTH AND LATIN AMERICA
04.03.99	EURONEWS

BROADCASTERS

Germany

04.03.99	SAT 1, FB BLITZ
04.03.99	TV PRO7, FB TAFF

Spain

04.03.99	TELE5, LAS NOTICIAS
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Netherlands

04.03.99	TV3, JEUGDJOURNAAL
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Media shelf

In print

■ **Gender guidelines for employment and skills training in conflict-affected countries.** *ILO, Geneva, March 1998. ISBN 92-2-111124-5.*



Skills training and employment promotion are critical for reintegrating the large numbers of conflict-affected groups into civil society, for reconstructing their communities and for promoting long-term peace. Unfortunately, special gender concerns in the conflict context are often ignored or at best inadequately considered in the design and implementation of such programmes. Taking these concerns into account in the peculiar conflict-affected context is a challenging task which is, however, critical for social justice, equity, sustainable development and peace. To assist efforts in this area, this document brings together the key issues concerning women and gender in the conflict-affected countries and provides guidelines for dealing with them within employment and skills training.

■ **Guidelines for employment and skills training in conflict-affected countries.** *ILO, Geneva, January 1998. ISBN 92-2-111035-4.*

This document discusses the requirements for employment and skills promotion in conflict-affected countries, focusing on how training and employment programmes should be adapted to this context. The most appropriate mix of tools and methods will depend on the specific circumstances of each conflict-affected country. In such circumstances, there is a particular need for an integrated approach and clearly defined partnerships among a range of actors – local, national and international. The guidelines contained in this document are an effort to elaborate the required approaches. They

have been prepared as a planning and support tool for policy makers, programme planners and implementers and for other relevant actors at the national, regional and international levels.

■ **A framework for ILO policy and action in the conflict-affected context: Training and employment promotion for sustainable peace.** *International Labour Office, Geneva, 1999. ISBN 92-2-111125-3.*

There is an alarming upsurge in the number of armed conflicts in the world today. These conflicts, which are mostly civil, and their extensive social, economic, physical, political and human destruction constitute a major challenge to development and ILO's concerns. Skills training and employment promotion, which fall within ILO's mandate, are critical elements in the required processes to rebuild livelihoods, communities, physical infrastructures and socio-economic life. Moreover, they contribute to social healing, reconciliation and long-term peace. ILO's role in this context is thus crucial, and needs a comprehensive and visible policy framework.

This document is divided into two parts. Part I provides the arguments and the elements for this policy framework by the ILO for effective action in the conflict-affected context. Part II reflects the succinct draft policy statement adopted by the



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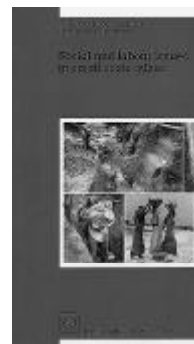
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Interregional Tripartite ILO Seminar on the subject in November 1997.

■ **Social and labour issues in small-scale mines.** *Sectoral Activities Programme, ILO, Geneva, 1999. ISBN 92-2-111480-5. Price: 17.50 Swiss francs.*



This report is a basis for discussions at the Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues in Small-scale Mines. It puts small-scale mining in context in terms of production and employment, and addresses the issues in general terms. The subsequent chapters on occupational health and safety, women in mining, and child labour illustrate some of the problems that exist and are being dealt with. The chapters on legislation, the links between large and small mines, and assistance from IGOs give examples of how some of the issues are being, and might be, addressed.

■ **Managing the privatization and restructuring of public utilities (water, gas and electricity).** *Sectoral Activities Programme, ILO, Geneva, 1999. ISBN 92-2-111449-X. Price: 20 Swiss francs.*

This report is the basis for discussions at the Tripartite Meeting on Managing the Privatization and Restructuring of Public Utilities. It reviews the changing environment in the utilities sector, with special reference to new technologies, environmental requirements, liberalization and privatization and their repercussions on employment, working conditions and industrial relations. It also describes how these changes are managed by the social partners and other stakeholders within a social and societal perspective.



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What does seem to be emerging from experiences in the last decade is a recognition of the benefits of public-private partnerships in the development and management of public utilities and the importance of involvement by the social partners at early stages of the restructuring and privatization processes. Examples are given of measures to handle redundancies and of participation by the social partners in the privatization and restructuring processes. (See p.30)

■ ***Un Garde-Fou pour la Mondialisation – Le BIT dans l'après-guerre froide.*** Michel Hansenne. Editions Quorum, Gerpinnes (Belgium) and Editions Zoé, Geneva, 1999. ISBN 2-88182-366-1.

A parting message from Director-General Michel Hansenne published on the eve of his departure from the ILO after an eventful ten-year tenure. The book – 150 pages long – is a candid, first-person analysis and account of the international community's chaotic attempts to come to grips with the social implications of the globalization of trade, and of the ILO's ultimately successful efforts to formulate a first set of universal ground rules: the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998. Preface by Michel Camdessus, Director-General of the International Monetary Fund.

■ ***International Labour Review*, Vol. 138 (1999), No. 1.**

In this issue, the focus is on **development priorities, the future of labour law, managing retrenchment, and innovations in labour statistics.**

With all the concerns raised about the high levels of unemployment and social exclusion in the industrialized and transition economies, it is too easy at the international level to lose sight of the enormous employment problems confronted by low-income developing countries. And when examined, the result too often is pessimism in the face of a challenge deemed overwhelming. In a significant assessment of the relationship between *work and development*, Henry Bruton and David Fairris apply the criteria of efficiency, justice and well-being. They make a persuasive case for giving high priority, even at the earliest stages of development, to workplace quality. It is,

they argue, not only unnecessary to postpone concern with safety and health, worker participation and other components of workplace quality on efficiency grounds; but it is also counterproductive – quite apart from being inconsistent with workers' legitimate aspirations. Assuring meaningful work should not – and need not – be a serious objective only for industrialized countries. There is scope for improving efficiency, equity and well-being concurrently. The authors thus make a most constructive contribution to the long overdue renewal of the debate on development priorities.

Turning to the industrialized countries, the next article – by Alain Supiot – synthesizes the results of an international and interdisciplinary examination of the *transformation of work and the future of labour law* in western Europe. This subtle yet far-reaching analysis takes account of both the commonalities and the conceptual and practical diversity within Europe: Supiot argues against hasty abstraction, and insists on a recognition of complexity before moving on to a synthesis. There are pitfalls in exaggerating the importance of new forms of work, just as there are in underestimating them and clinging onto an outmoded industrial model. Supiot offers a very constructive contribution to a much-needed debate on how labour law, trade unions and, especially, the State need to adapt to transformations underway not only in the world of work but also in society as a whole. His reflections on the foundations of the State show how difficult – but how necessary – it is for a new relationship to be forged between the State, the economy and society.

Workers may lose their jobs as part of the usual process of adjustment to changes in technology, shrinking demand for particular goods or services, and for myriad other reasons. There is nothing especially new or alarming about the phenomenon when at the same time there are alternative jobs readily available, at equivalent or higher productivity and wages. In fact, that is likely to be necessary to the operation of an efficient and expanding economy, and to the reduction of inequalities. However, a slowdown in economic growth, rapid inflation that discourages productive investment, sudden structural changes as part of adaptation to increased international competition, even bankruptcies that result from poor labour-management relations, dis-

ruptive strikes or incompetent management, can lead to massive displacement and a dearth of decent alternatives. In such a situation, what matters most to the workers affected is not the cause but the remedies to which they have access. What legal recourse do they have? Is it possible to negotiate redeployment within the enterprise? Are resources available for retraining, job searching and geographical relocation? These are the concerns addressed in the article by Christine Evans-Klock, Peggy Kelly, Peter Richards and Corinne Vargha – *Worker retrenchment: Prevention and remedial measures*. In the results reported here, the authors give an indication of best – or at least good – practice in managing pressures for retrenchment. Though of course complementary to employment-friendly and growth-oriented macroeconomic policies, active measures that may need to be considered are highlighted in this useful overview.

In a *perspective*, Patrick Bollé explains a number of *innovations in labour statistics* that will begin showing up in national and international data in the next few years, as a result of the collective decisions taken by labour statisticians in late 1998. The statisticians tackled several difficult subjects, including how best to measure total earnings from work (not just basic wages); and how to define and then measure underemployment, in order to capture in labour statistics that category of people who are neither fully employed in gainful work nor totally unemployed. Data in these areas will be critical to finding appropriate remedies. Measurement is quite often the first step to recognition and then improved policy (e.g., for preventing occupational injuries). Also, as is explained here, the fact that labour statisticians from around the world meet periodically (at the ILO) to discuss and agree on modifications to the guidelines for labour statistics means that the data subsequently collected are, to the extent possible, relevant to diverse local situations and yet internationally comparable.

This issue closes with *book reviews and notes* on a range of topics, as well as information on new ILO publications and reports for the 87th (1999) session of the International Labour Conference on child labour, maternity protection, migrant workers, and safety and health in agriculture.

enterprise forum



International Labour Office
Geneva, 5/6 November

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