

# WORLD OF Work

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ILO

**“... all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization..”**

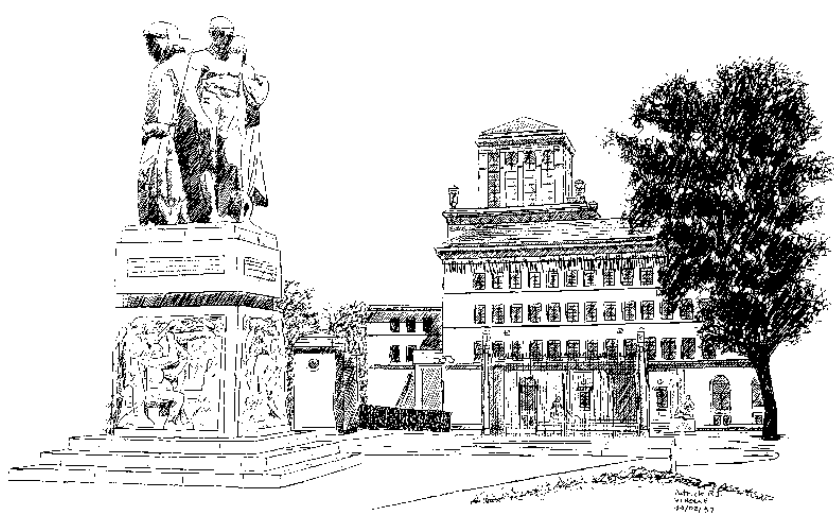
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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

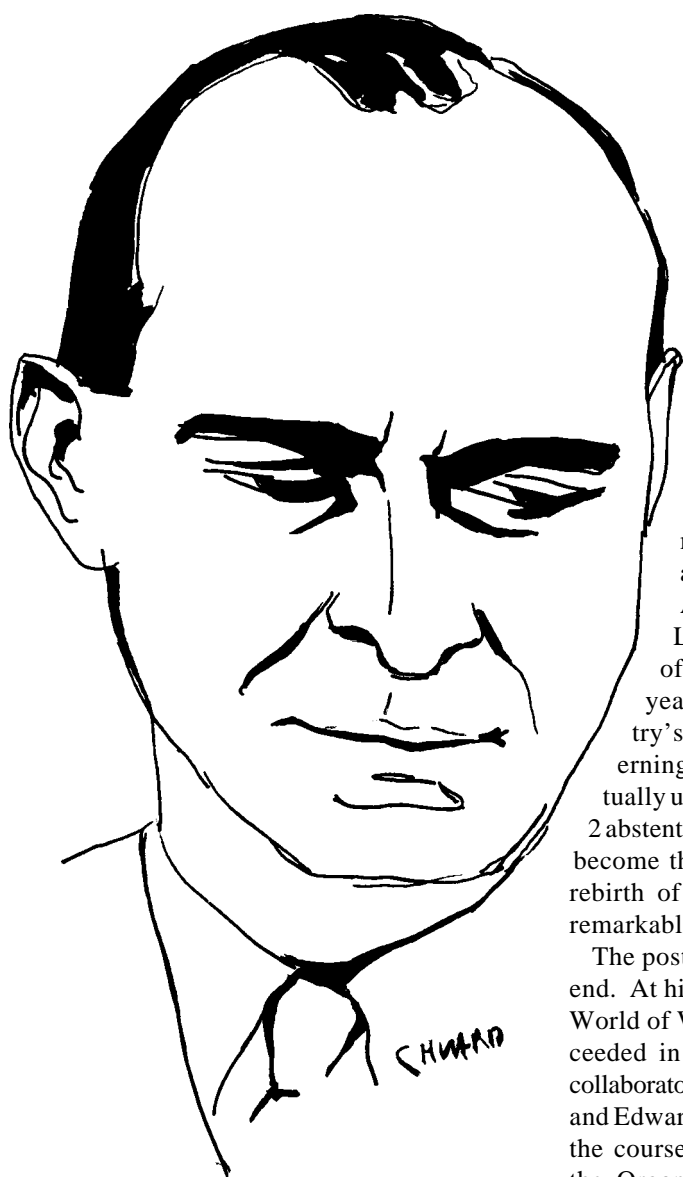
86th Session  
of the International  
Labour Conference





## The ILO in history

# Between two eras: 50 years ago



For the ILO, June 1948 – exactly half a century ago – marked the end of one era and the beginning of another.

On the 12th of that month, the 32 Members of the Organization's Governing Body (sixteen Government members, 8 Employer members and 8 Worker members) met in San Francisco and, after a rapid ballot, elected the American Under-Secretary of Labor David Morse to the post of Director-General. The 41 year-old New Yorker, his country's representative on the Governing Body, was appointed virtually unanimously (30 votes for and 2 abstentions) and would in due course become the architect not merely of a rebirth of the Organization but of a remarkable expansion of its activities.

The post-1919 era was coming to an end. At his death, Albert Thomas (*see* World of Work, No. 22) had been succeeded in turn by three of his close collaborators: Harold Butler, John Winant and Edward Phelan. They had followed the course set in 1919, strengthening the Organization's structures, firmly establishing its authority, developing its services, and expanding its corpus of standards with major Conventions including those concerning working time, occupational diseases and minimum age.

Above all, their skilled leadership between 1941 and 1946 had kept the ILO afloat even as the League of Nations floun-



dered. Thanks to heroic efforts of diplomacy and organization, the spirit of the ILO had been preserved.

By 1948, the world was finally entering the post-war era. The ILO, now “repatriated” to Geneva and armed with the famous Declaration of Philadelphia, was in a good position to take up the challenges of the time. The new Director-General, a man of youthful energy, would endeavour to cultivate the seeds planted by his pioneering predecessors while also breaking new ground. In that task, he was assisted by an exceptional



Siegfried Balmer

David Morse has been honoured with a place in the U.S. Labour Hall of Fame and has had a street named after him in Geneva.

team that had been strengthened by the trials of the War and the pre-war period – the British lawyer Wilfred Jenks, the brain and “memory” of the ILO where he had spent his entire career; and the Belgian trade unionist Jeff Rens, the Organization’s “heart and guts”, as one long-serving official put it.

The ILO’s achievements during this period, both in terms of its “production” and influence, are impressive. Fundamental human rights standards were drawn up and adopted, including the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111). The Technical Cooperation Programme was

launched in December 1948 with initiatives on manpower, migrant workers and vocational training, and subsequently underwent rapid expansion in the service of countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Many of these countries, newly independent at the time, owe to the Programme the basic elements of their social infrastructures. The Programme reached its culmination in the Andean Programme, a project of particular interest to Jeff Rens. The number of ILO member States grew from 58 in 1949, to 70 in 1955, 80 in 1958, and 121 in 1969, the fiftieth anniversary year in which the Organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its achievements.

David Morse had good reason to be proud of his contribution to all these endeavours. He retired in 1970 and died in 1990. His name has been commemorated in Geneva with the *Allée David Morse* inaugurated on 18 March 1998.



Jacques Maillard



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Delegates adopted a solemn ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, committing the Organization’s 174 member States to respect the principles inherent in seven core labour standards and promoting their universal application. After welcoming hundreds of child marchers, the Conference also completed the first round of discussions on a new Convention on the worst forms of child labour and called on members to take measures improving the employment prospects of young persons.



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## SPECIAL REPORT: PLAYING FAIR AND STILL WINNING

Protecting children is one of the essential elements in the pursuit of social justice and universal peace. The ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour is currently guiding and supporting projects in more than 50 countries. The football sewing programme in Sialkot, Pakistan, is a model for promoting conditions to enable the government to progressively prohibit, restrict and regulate child labour. Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman of the ILO reports on her mission to Sialkot and highlights the conclusions of a group of journalists who went with her.







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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.*

# When will it end?

## Report: Asian financial crisis is far from over, Poverty, unemployment seen rising

***The pain inflicted on Asian societies by the financial crisis will continue to grow in 1998 largely as a result of inadequate policy responses, says the International Labour Office (ILO) in a new report.<sup>1</sup> New responses will be needed to offset the disastrous social consequences of soaring unemployment.***

**I**n the ongoing financial crisis afflicting Asia, the message seems to be pain, pain and more pain. Millions of jobless in the worst-affected countries. A major employment shake out in the construction, financial services and manufacturing sectors. Underemployment becoming widespread. Real earnings of those still working falling substantially. And most dramatically, the report predicts, the impressive trends in poverty reduction achieved in these countries over the past 20 years, will be reversed.

That grim picture of the Asian financial crisis was presented in a recent ILO report entitled “**The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis**” prepared for the High-Level Tripartite Meeting on Social Responses to the Financial Crisis in East and South-East Asian Countries held in Bangkok on 22-24 April.

“This combination of sharp and unexpected social pain on the one hand, and lack of collectively provided relief on the other”, warns the ILO, “is fertile ground for breeding social unrest.”

To make matters worse, the effect of these developments will be amplified by “the absence of a meaningful social safety net”. The vast majority of displaced workers are unlikely to receive assistance of any kind and will be left to fend for themselves. “This combination of sharp and unexpected social pain on the one hand,

and lack of collectively provided relief on the other”, warns the ILO, “is fertile ground for breeding social unrest”.

### Focus on Indonesia, Thailand and Republic of Korea

The ILO report, based on the latest available data, focuses primarily on Indonesia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea. Although it served as a background paper for Governments, trade unions and employers’ organizations at the recent Bangkok meeting, its message remains current. Here is a country-by-country run-down of the report’s finding:

**Indonesia:** In Indonesia, the projected level of unemployment for 1998 ranges between 8 and 10 per cent – 7.9 to 9.2 million workers – depending on the GDP growth rate assumed for the year (zero growth or a 5 per cent contraction). This compares with an unemployment rate of 5 per cent in 1996.

In spite of remarkable achievements in reducing poverty, Indonesia still counted some 22 million persons living below the officially defined poverty line in 1996. This figure will increase by “a very sizeable number” as the present crisis unfolds. Poverty will be exacerbated by inflation and the disproportionate rise in the price of food and other essential goods. “The classic mechanism of high food inflation leading to an increase in the incidence of absolute poverty appears to be already at work”, says the report. “This is illustrated by the fact that the rice equivalent of the daily minimum wage (Rp 5,800) fell from 6.28 kg in January

1997 to 4.76 kg at the end of December 1997”.

**Republic of Korea:** In the Republic of Korea, unemployment is rising rapidly. The number of jobless increased from 451,000 (2.3 per cent) in October 1997 to a record level of 1,240,000 in February 1998 (4.7 per cent). Particularly affected are recent school-leavers and first-time job seekers. “In the last quarter of 1997, the youth unemployment rate was 7.4 per cent and 11.8 per cent in the age groups 20-24 and 15-19 respectively”, says the report. No improvement can be expected in the near future: “The Ministry of Labour has recently predicted that the number of unemployed will now exceed 1.5 million between March and May, with the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate soaring to a new high of 7 per cent.”

At the same time, real wages which had been rising rapidly for almost 30 years in the Republic of Korea, fell by 2.3 per cent during the last quarter of 1997. The inflation-adjusted real income of households fell by 4.4 per cent, the first drop since the third quarter of 1981.

**Thailand:** Thailand enjoyed virtual full employment prior to the crisis as reflected by the growing presence of foreign migrants in the country. By the end of 1997, however, unemployment was thought to affect 1,170,000 persons, or approximately 3.4 per cent of the labour force. “The Government now forecasts a rise in unemployment to just under 2 million by the end of 1998 and an unemployment rate of 5.6 per cent”. But these projections may prove to be overly optimistic



Keystone

assuming, as they do, a zero growth rate. Thai authorities now forecast a negative growth rate of minus 3.5 per cent in 1998.

While inflation in Thailand is expected to reach 15% in 1998, many enterprises have reduced nominal wages. Senior management in the hard-hit financial sector, for example, have seen reductions in their monthly earnings of between 10 to 30 percent. Lower-level employees have been subjected to a wage freeze. In other sectors, wage cuts and reductions in annual bonuses – traditionally an important component of total wages – “have been common responses to the economic context”.

### Women and migrants

Because of their unequal position in the labour market and their concentration in the most precarious forms of wage employment, women have proved especially vulnerable to the crisis throughout the region. Though reliable data is unavailable, the evidence at hand suggests that gender-biased dismissals are

common practice. The inferior employment status of women often means that they are less likely to be entitled to unemployment benefits where these exist and to severance pay. Women also find themselves at a serious disadvantage in gaining access to credit and other employment promotion programmes.

Foreign migrant workers also face difficult prospects (*See “Tight economic situation unleashes a flood of ‘reverse’ migration in Asia”, pp. 10-11*). Their numbers grew from one million in the early 1980s to an estimated 6.5 million by mid-1997 as a result of labour shortages in the “tiger economies” of Southeast Asia. A large proportion of migrant workers are undocumented and thus particularly at risk of arrest and involuntary repatriation. But repressive measures alone will do little to stem the flow of unauthorized migrants. “It is already being anticipated”, says the report, “that trafficking in clandestine labour migrants will rise” as a consequence of the build-up of emigration pressures in the worst-affected countries.

### An inadequate response

In the face of this massive crisis and in spite of various efforts to contain its social costs, “the overall impression must be that the response so far has been inadequate”, says the ILO report.

Although different initiatives to minimize the extent of lay-offs and to save viable enterprises facing temporary liquidity crises through “active cooperative action between workers and employers” have taken place, these have had little incidence on the course of events. In the Republic of Korea, says the report, “enterprise unions have been unable, in any broad way, to negotiate alternatives to lay-offs or to mitigate their social costs” in spite of “indications that most union members would be willing to accept redeployment within the enterprise, or a wage reduction if the *chaebol* owners made sincere efforts to reform their business and avoid lay-offs”.

In Thailand, the “meagre level of workplace organization means that col-



lective bargaining, were it to bear fruit at all in finding solutions to lay-offs, would apply to a narrow minority” of the workforce. And in Indonesia, the report points out, the unions have been so “weakened by the loss of membership arising from lay-offs” that some have been unable to monitor the rate of lay-offs involving their own members.

Apart from Korea where different job creation programmes are being introduced, measures to assist displaced workers have largely been confined to labour-intensive public works projects of the type used in the past in poverty alleviation programmes, mainly in rural areas. “The critical issue in the present crisis is whether they can be scaled up sufficiently and soon enough to cope with the vastly greater numbers that are likely to be in need of such relief”.

“The limited level of social protection in many of the countries of the region, and in particular in Indonesia and Thailand is a reflection of choices on social and economic policy”, says the report. “Throughout the period of sustained economic growth which pre-dated the crisis there was a tendency to rely on the belief that the alleviation of poverty would follow as a direct consequence of economic growth”. Only limited priority has, as a rule, been given to the development of social protection systems based on redistribution and solidarity. “The safety net remains the family or individual savings, with the State occupying a relatively minor role in this respect.”

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The extent to which social dialogue has played a role in the search for practical solutions and in defusing the danger of social unrest varies widely among the three countries covered by the ILO report. “It is clearly in Korea that the evolution of strong institutions in civil society has made the greatest strides in recent years”. Korea’s Tripartite Commission, composed of representatives from the government, workers’ and employers’ organizations, launched on January 15 and the Tripartite Social Accord, signed on February 9, “have become essential ingredients in the development of social and economic policies to contain the social costs of the financial crisis”.

Among the key elements leading to this development, according to the re-

port, were “the consolidation of political and civil democracy evidenced by the victory of the opposition leader, Kim Dae-Jung, in last December’s presidential election and the considerable social and political power of the trade union movement, as manifested in the general strikes of early 1997”.

In Thailand, by contrast, “the level of trade union organization is extremely low”. The 245,000 union members registered nationwide represent some 3.5 per cent of the 7 million industrial workers who themselves account for only one fifth of the country’s workforce of 34 million. The role that collective bargaining could play in negotiating the downturn’s social consequences is, under the circumstances, “rather minimal”.

While tripartite bodies do exist in Indonesia, their track record does not suggest “any ability to effectively confront the many pressing labour and social issues arising from the current financial crisis”, says the report.

At the root of the problem, says the report, “are the continued constraints on freedom of association. Neither Korea nor Thailand have ratified ILO’s Freedom of Association Convention (No. 87),

although following recent political changes, Indonesia has now ratified Convention No. 87.

## Lessons for the future

To overcome the crisis and current levels of social distress, “a two-pronged approach is required”, says the ILO report. The first is to bring about economic recovery by pressing ahead with structural reforms. An array of technical measures must be introduced in order to correct various deficiencies in the financial systems of the countries concerned. Among the issues which must be faced, the report underlines, is “the need to find effective instruments to control the degree of exposure to foreign debt by private economic agents, to set prudent limits to debt/equity ratios in the corporate sector and to discourage speculative and unproductive investment”.

Such measures “are absolutely essential but by no means sufficient”, states the report. “It was not only weaknesses in formal institutions that created the preconditions for the crisis but also the contamination of market processes by politics. Unless the latter are contained,



Jacques Maillard

**Geneva, 8 June 1998, at the International Labour Conference: ILO Director-General Michel Hansenne greets Mr. Muchtar Pakpahan, President of the Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia, Indonesia’s independent trade union confederation. Mr. Pakpahan was released from Cipinang Prison in Jakarta on 26 May. He had been held since 1996 on criminal charges relating to civil unrest and alleged subversion. The ILO Committee on the Freedom of Association had repeatedly called for all criminal charges to be dropped and for Mr. Pakpahan to be released (See page 27 on Indonesia).**



no amount of tinkering with institutions and regulatory mechanisms will be to much avail”.

To reduce the risk of future crises, priority attention must furthermore be given to the strengthening of employment policies. The massive lay-offs witnessed in recent months have demonstrated that a high rate of job creation means little if their sustainability is not ensured. As the report points out, “much of the job loss since the onset of the crisis has been in activities associated with an over-expanded construction and financial sector”.

Developing the capacity to monitor enterprise restructurings and to facilitate the redeployment of laid-off workers will require major efforts. It “will involve strengthening the research and policy analysis functions of labour ministries and the establishment of close working links between labour and economic ministries”. Qualified staff, now in short supply, will be needed to plan and administer active labour market measures as well as for designing and implementing direct employment creation schemes targeted at the unemployed and underemployed.

## Social protection

But, as the report underlines, “finding the economic solutions to a crisis cannot be divorced from dealing with its social consequences”. As high growth rates can no longer be taken for granted, “a significantly higher degree of social protection must be aimed for. Just as the great depression forged a new social contract in many industrialized countries in the 1930s”, says the report, “so too must the current Asian crisis be an impetus to creating a more socially-oriented model of development”.

The ILO report outlines several areas requiring active attention:

● **Unemployment insurance** – The latter “spreads the cost of dealing with the major social consequences of a crisis evenly among all enterprises”, thus protecting those most affected without distorting competition between enterprises. “Experience suggests that an adequate unemployment insurance scheme can be financed by a total contribution rate of about 2 per cent of insured earnings (...) shared equally between employers and workers”, says the report suggesting that “the collection of contributions can be started right away”.

● **Severance pay guarantees** – Although not an ideal method of providing social protection to the unemployed, severance pay is an established practice in many of the countries concerned. The problem is that some employers may fail to pay it. Part of the solution is better enforcement but, another “is to establish a severance pay guarantee scheme which may, as in the Republic of Korea, be combined with a guarantee of unpaid wages, in the event of enterprise bankruptcy”. Such a scheme, says the report, “should be financed by a modest employer contribution”.

● **Social safety net** – Essential as it may be, unemployment insurance does nothing for first-time job-seekers, the self-employed or workers in the informal sector. “Some kind of safety net is vital to ensure that everybody falling into such categories is able to cover the basic subsistence needs of themselves and their dependents”. But setting up social assistance schemes of the type, for example, existing in Hong Kong, will take years. “This should not, however, be used as a pretext for doing nothing”. An alternative “is the guarantee of work on public projects in return for a subsistence wage”. This is “a crude solution” acknowledges the report, but “in the short term it is probably the only feasible safety net that can be provided in most of the countries affected by the crisis”.

● **Health care** – “Services must be expanded; access to them must be made convincingly universal; they must be made cheaper to the user; and for the poor, user costs should be waived.” Strategies include action “to limit the extent to which health care providers can exploit an inflationary situation and “to promote the extension of health care coverage to workers who are dismissed”.

● **Minimum pension** – The crisis has revealed just how little protection is provided by personal savings. Many have lost all they had in stock market crashes and with the collapse of financial institutions, “while devaluation and inflation have spared only the very rich and the very well connected”. Moving towards a social insurance scheme providing periodical benefits is admittedly difficult but, because of demographic trends pointing to an aging population, “countries which do not make the effort to introduce pensions now are going to find themselves in deep trouble next century”. One way of

addressing the problem is to establish “a minimum basic pension (...) financed from general revenues”. For financial reasons, “eligibility should be based on both age and income. The age criteria”, adds the report, “would need to be set fairly high – over 70 for example – and the income criteria fairly low – above the poverty line, but not much above – in order to provide a subsistence level of income to those who could not otherwise achieve it.”

● **Informal sector** – The millions of workers in the informal sector enjoy little or no social protection. One way to assist them is through a universal pension system. “Another priority is to find suitable ways to finance health care for them”. No quick or easy solutions are on offer, but “governments with a will to achieve real progress may do so, however, if they tackle the problem simultaneously from both ends, i.e. by helping to promote self-help grassroots mutual insurance schemes and by gradually extending compulsory coverage and improving the level of compliance”.

● **Vulnerable groups** – Policies and programmes to cope with the effects of the crisis “must be sensitive to the special needs of vulnerable groups such as working children, women and migrant workers”. Specific steps appropriate to each group are discussed in the report.

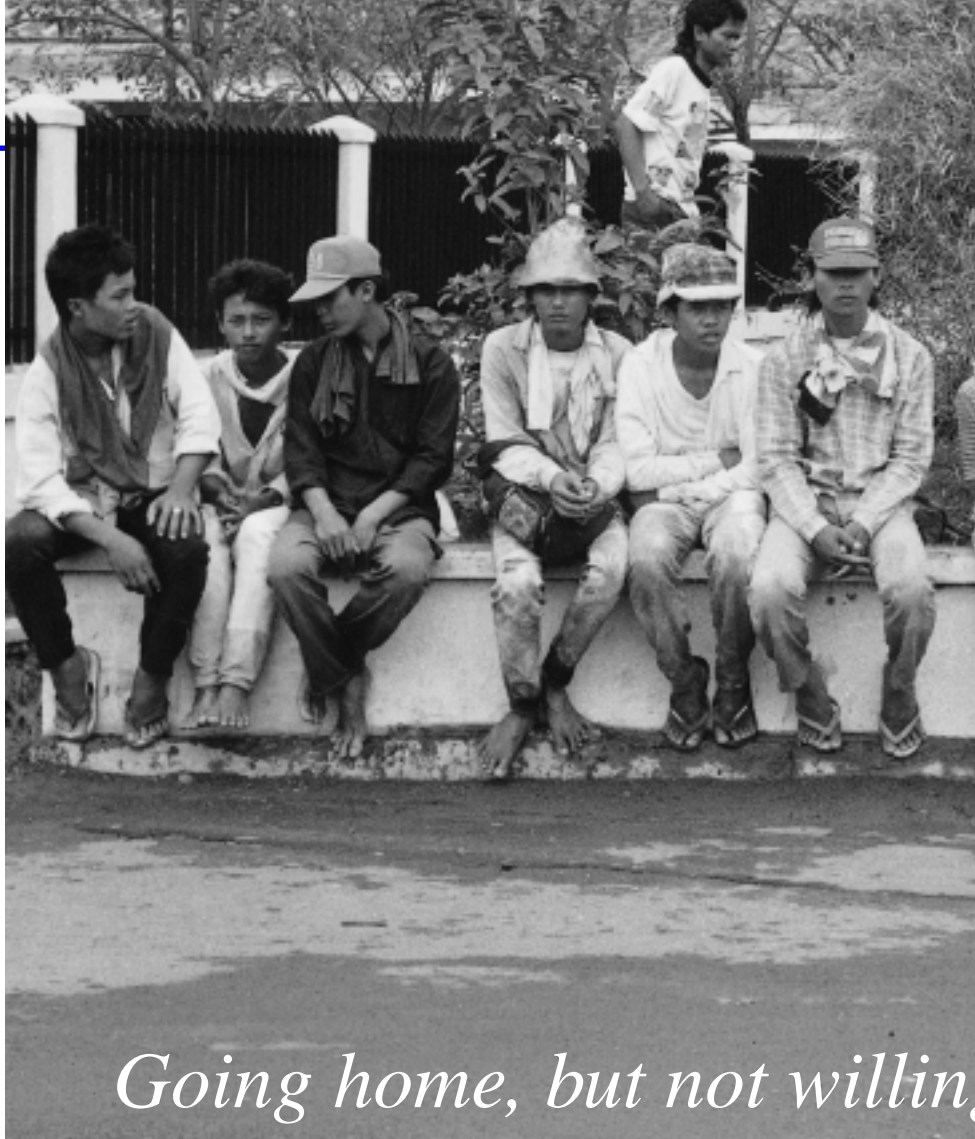
● **International labour standards** – “Ratification of all seven of the ILO’s Fundamental Conventions concerning forced labour, child labour, discrimination and freedom of association would clearly constitute a positive step”. The Freedom of Association Convention (No. 87) is of particular significance. The social dialogue needed to avert risks of social unrest requires “the existence of free, representative and strong trade unions to defend the interests of workers and act authoritatively, as interlocutors for enterprises, employers’ organizations and government. Yet the reality”, regrets the report, “is that in the three countries most affected by the crisis, as in other countries of the region, these conditions are not met.” □

<sup>1</sup>*The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis*. Technical report for discussion at the High-Level Tripartite Meeting on Social Responses to the Financial Crisis in East and South-East Asian Countries, Bangkok, 22-24 April 1998. ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok. ISBN 92-2-111093-1.

The text is available on the Internet: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/60empfor/cdart/pub.htm>.



**Millions of illegal migrants in Southeast Asia are feeling the crush of tight economic times. Once welcomed by labour-hungry tiger economies, they are increasingly victims of tougher immigration policies as national unemployment rises. Bangkok-based journalist Leyla Alyanak examines the plight of the new “reverse” migrants.**



*Going home, but not willing*

## Tight economic a flood of “reverse”

**B**ANGKOK— When the police pounded on her door, Tooch leapt out of bed, terrified. She grabbed her purse and pulled on whatever clothes she could before being bundled onto a bus headed first for Bangkok’s immigration detention centre, and then for the Cambodian border.

“I didn’t want to come to Thailand,” said the 35-year old factory worker, “but I couldn’t find work at home.”

Tooch and her sister Sinai were both swept up in a raid against illegal workers by Thai immigration officials.

Like millions of illegal migrants in Southeast Asia, they are feeling the crush of tight times as economies shudder under the weight of financial turmoil. Once the darlings of labour-hungry tiger economies, illegal workers are increasingly unwelcome. Immigration policies are getting tougher as national unemployment rises, and undocumented men and women are being sent home by the thousands in reaction to battered budgets.

### Thailand and Indonesia worst affected

Thailand and Indonesia have been shaken hardest. In Thailand growth plunged from 6 per cent in 1996 to almost zero in 1997, with prospects for 1998 even grimmer. Indonesia looks even worse. From 8 per cent growth well into the latter part of last year, experts foresee an absolute decline of 5 per cent for late 1998, a prediction made before Jakarta’s economic crisis turned violent.

### Illegal immigrants have to leave

Earlier this year, the Thai labour minister announced 300,000 illegal foreign workers would have to leave by the end of June 1998 to make way for some of the nearly two million unemployed Thai nationals, a dramatic turnaround in a country boasting virtually full employment in pre-crisis days.

Malaysia, the other Southeast Asian country which has cracked down severely on illegal workers, plans to deport 10,000 illegal foreigners each month in 1998. Of its 2.2 million foreigners, about a million are undocumented Indonesians.

### Women particularly hard hit

Particularly hard hit by the clampdown are women. In the 1970s they accounted

for about 15 per cent of the Asian migrant workforce. Today, half of those seeking work abroad are women. “They are concentrated in the most precarious forms of wage employment and are thus more vulnerable to lay-offs,” according to “The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis,” an ILO report released in April. Women are also more widely dispersed, making it harder for organized labour to reach them.

The Malaysian and Thai deportation announcements may have had less than the desired effect. By some reports, workers sent home from Thailand are being replaced almost instantly by clandestine newcomers. Malaysia, which detained 8,833 illegal workers in 1997, apprehended 3,026 in just two weeks this February.

“Administrative systems along Southeast Asia’s borders are not that well developed,” said Piyasiri Wickramasekara, Senior Specialist on Labour Market Policies at the East Asia Multidisciplinary Ad-





Jacques Maillard

# gly situation unleashes "reverse" migration in Asia

visory Team (ILO/EASMAT). "Sending foreign workers home at least shows politically that governments are dealing with the problem. But often the workers sneak right back and this creates a backlash. There is a danger they will be seen as scapegoats."

Activist groups worry clandestine and illegal migration will grow as border controls get tighter, worsening conditions for remaining workers and leading to greater abuse. In Thailand, there are fears prostitution and bonded labour could rise as more families sink below the poverty line and try to make ends meet by sending their daughters away to work.

Human rights workers are also worried about possible political repercussions once deportees get home. Of particular concern are Burmese returning to a country which does not want them back and Indonesians from the Sumatran province of Aceh which many fled years ago during an anti-government independence strug-

gle. Foreign embassy compounds have been stormed in desperate bids to avoid expulsion and riots have broken out in detention centres set up to receive returnees.

These illegal migrants have little to shield them from excesses since few Southeast Asian countries have signed the relevant protective Conventions.

## ILO Conventions

Convention No. 143 offers the best hope for illegal migrants. It provides for sanctions against the "clandestine movement of migrants for employment and illegal employment of migrants," and guarantees a number of rights including equality of salaries and benefits, the right of appeal and no-cost expulsion.

Several ILO core Conventions also protect migrant workers but until recently they too had few ratifications: No. 29 on forced labour and No. 98 on collective bargaining are relatively well-supported

### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS OF IMPORTANCE TO MIGRANT WORKERS

*C. 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948.*

*C. 98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949.*

*C. 97 Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949.*

*R. 86 Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949.*

*R. 100 Protection of Migrant Workers (Underdeveloped Countries) Recommendation, 1955.*

*C. 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958.*

*R. 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958.*

*C. 135 Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971.*

*R. 143 Workers' Representatives Recommendation, 1971.*

*C. 143 Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975.*

*R. 151 Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975.*

*C. 141 Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975.*

*R. 149 Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975.*

### CONVENTIONS DEALING WITH SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS AND BENEFITS CONCERNING OR APPLICABLE TO MIGRANT WORKERS

*C. 95 Protection of Wages Convention, 1949.*

*C. 102 Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952.*

*C. 118 Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962.*

*C. 157 Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982.*

*R. 167 Maintenance of Social Security Rights Recommendation, 1983.*

*C. 173 Protection of Workers' Claims (Employers' Insolvency) Convention, 1992.*



in the region, but No. 111 on discrimination has only been ratified by Vietnam and No. 138 on minimum age by Malaysia; Indonesia is the only State to have ratified No. 87 on freedom of association in Southeast Asia. Still, there are signs that the ratification campaign launched by ILO Director-General Michel Hansenne is making significant inroads.

### **A willingness to cooperate**

“Things are improving,” said Joachim Grimsmann, Senior International Labour Standards Specialist at ILO/EASMAT. “There is a definite willingness among countries in the sub-region to cooperate and the movement to apply, ratify and be bound by these Conventions has gained momentum.”

Lao PDR and Cambodia have submitted several Conventions to their competent authorities in a move to ratify them; the Philippines has signed on for 138 and Indonesia plans to do so; Thailand intends to ratify 100, and Malaysia ratified both 100 and 138 this year.

### **“3-D” jobs and “SALEPs”**

However politically charged the issue of illegal migration, Southeast Asia still suffers from labour shortages, especially in sectors known either as “3D” jobs—dirty, dangerous, demanding, or as SALEPs, jobs that are Shunned by All Except the very Poor, the term favoured by W. R. Bohning, Director of the South-East Asia and the Pacific Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (SEAPAT).

Despite high unemployment at home, many nationals continue to turn down these undesirable jobs. Employers may prefer illegal workers, who they see as “obedient” and willing to do more work for less money. A recent survey of some 500 Bangkok-based employers showed that while 56 per cent supported deportation of illegal workers, 30 per cent did not, saying replacements would be hard to find and local labour too expensive.

Too, Sinai and thousands of other deportees will probably return as soon as immigration officials turn their backs. Long and porous regional borders, weak and inefficient administrative systems and policies, or growing pressure from poverty and even hunger will continue to make clandestine employment attractive. □

### **Consensus: social advancements needed**

## **ILO HOLDS TRIPARTITE MEETING ON ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS**

*BANGKOK – The ILO’s High-Level Tripartite Meeting on Social Responses to the Financial Crisis in the East and Southeast Asian Countries ended with clear consensus on the seriousness of Asia’s unfolding economic crisis and the need for social advancements and improvements in a region facing serious deterioration in labour and social conditions.*

*The meeting, held in Bangkok from 22-24 April 1998, was underpinned by an ILO report entitled “The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis,” (see main story) which blamed inadequate policy responses for financial turmoil which was expected to extend through 1998. The report predicted massive unemployment and the reversal of gains in poverty reduction, all made worse by the absence of social safety nets. While analysing the social impacts of the crisis, the report also looked at prospects for sustainable recovery.*

*Those prospects, participants at the meeting acknowledged, centred on sustained economic growth needed to fuel social change. They stressed the need for appropriate regulation of financial systems, better corporate governance and markets that work.*

*The meeting agreed on a number of priorities. These included better government monitoring of economic policy impacts on employment, human resources development, direct employment creation schemes, information gathering on vulnerable groups (particularly affected working women and child workers), promoting sound enterprise development strategies, creating pro-investment business environments, introducing unemployment schemes, basic minimum pensions, protecting workers’ rights and salaries, improving social security systems, respect for freedom of association, strengthening collective bargaining and industrial relations, and preventing costly labour disputes.*

*Participants also agreed on the need for improved international cooperation, especially at the regional level, and for closer consultations between social partners and international financial institutions when designing and implementing economic adjustment programmes.*

*Key to developing a productive social partnership was respect for international labour standards, the meeting said, calling on countries to heed ILO Director-General Michel Hansenne’s campaign for ratification of core international labour standards.*

*Mr. Hansenne said at the opening that while more mature economies with social safety nets and stronger social institutions were vital, so was the development of stronger social and economic democracies based on social dialogue and workers’ rights. “One of the reasons for the crisis is lack of democracy, and we think it’s a good time to convince constituents to build it,” he told journalists at the conference.*

*Economic and social development policies should be given equal importance, said Chuan Leekpai, Thailand’s Prime Minister. “Sustained development cannot coexist side-by-side with social inequities and the deterioration of our human resource,” he declared while inaugurating the meeting.*

*The three-day meeting was attended by representatives of governments (both labour and planning ministries), employers and workers organisations from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, as well as by officials of the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.*

*Leyla Alyanak*



# Clearing the final hurdle

## *ILO Conference adopts Rights Declaration, seeks end to child labour abuses*

Delegates to the 86th International Labour Conference adopted a solemn *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, committing the Organization's 174 member States to respect the principles inherent in seven core labour standards and promoting their universal application. The vote on a decision that reaffirms the commitment of the international community to uphold fundamental rights in the workplace was 273 for, and zero against, with 43 abstentions.

The Declaration underlines that all member countries have an obligation to respect the fundamental principles involved, whether or not they have ratified the relevant Conventions. It includes provision for follow-up which will seek to "encourage the efforts made by the Members of the Organization to promote the fundamental principles and rights enshrined in the Constitution of the ILO and the Declaration of Philadelphia". (*Full text of Declaration on pages 14-15*)

A global report will assess the overall trends and the effectiveness of the Organization's technical support and establish future action plans to assist all member States in their efforts to promote these fundamental principles and rights.

***We can all be proud of the Declaration that has been adopted. The ILO can now proceed on the basis of a truly global set of common social values.***

– Director-General Michel Hansenne

Other developments during the Conference, which was attended by over 3,500 delegates from 157 countries, including 127 ministers:

● Delegates completed the first round of discussions on a new international Convention designed to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including hazardous work, debt bondage, forced labour and slave-like conditions, and

children in prostitution, pornography and drug trafficking. The text of the proposed Convention and Recommendations will receive a second reading and is expected to be adopted at the 1999 Conference.

● Efforts to establish a new international Convention on contract labour failed to generate sufficient consensus and delegates referred the matter back to the ILO Governing Body for further consideration and possible inclusion on the agenda of a future conference. The 86th session of the ILC did adopt a Recommendation on the general conditions necessary for the stimulation of employment in small and medium-sized enterprises.

● The Conference also adopted a Resolution on Youth Employment, which calls on member States to take specific measures to increase employment opportunities for young persons, while ensuring employment protection for them. These measures include investment and education, vocational training, counselling, flexible work arrangements, and the creation of small and medium-size enterprises.

● The Conference held a special sitting to examine the Director-General's report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories, during which 39 speakers expressed their concern over difficulties that have arisen in the peace process. During the discussions, speakers indicated that "there can be no lasting improvement in the situation of workers of the occupied territories without economic development, training for workers and managerial staff, strengthening of employers' and workers' organizations and more efficient social institutions.

● The Conference also included an Informal Tripartite Meeting at the ministerial level on More and Better Jobs for Women. Ministers met with employer and worker representatives, as well as representatives from major donor countries and bilateral and multi bilateral agencies.

The 86th International Labour Conference was honoured by the visit of Dr. Rafael Caldera, President of the Republic of Venezuela, who addressed the Conference in a special sitting on 9 June. A total of 127 ministerial level delegates participated, as well as the Swiss Federal Counsellor, Mr. Pascal Couchepin, representing the Government of the ILO's host country. Another distinguished guest, Mrs. Mary Robinson, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, addressed the plenary on 10 June. Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, one of the main organizers of the Global March, also addressed the delegates at the opening ceremony of the Conference, on 2 June.

### New Declaration

*The ILO 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 in respect of employment and occupation.

The Declaration also reinforces the obligation of the Organization "to assist its Members in response to their established and expressed needs in order to attain these objectives" by making full use of its resources, including mobilizing external resources and encouraging the support of other international organizations with which the ILO has established relations.

The Declaration was adopted at the closing plenary session, following a series of marathon debates in a special Conference committee which deliberated over the past two weeks. The Director-General of the ILO, Mr. Michel Hansenne, praised the decision as a "watershed point in the struggle to achieve social justice in the globalizing economy".

**ILO DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK  
ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE  
GENEVA, 1948**

Whereas the ILO was founded in the conviction that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace;

Whereas economic growth is essential but not sufficient to ensure equity, social progress and the eradication of poverty, confirming the need for the ILO to promote strong social policies, justice and democratic institutions;

Whereas the ILO should, now more than ever, draw upon all its standard-setting, technical cooperation and research resources in all its areas of competence, in particular employment, vocational training and working conditions, to ensure that, in the context of a global strategy for economic and social development, economic and social policies are mutually reinforcing components in order to create broad-based sustainable development;

Whereas the ILO should give special attention to the problems of persons with special social needs, particularly the unemployed and migrant workers, and mobilize and encourage international, regional and national efforts aimed at resolving their problems, and promote effective policies aimed at job creation;

Whereas, in seeking to maintain the link between social progress and economic growth, the guarantee of fundamental principles and rights at work is of particular significance in that it enables the persons concerned to claim freely and on the basis of equality of opportunity their fair share of the wealth which they have helped to generate, and to achieve fully their human potential;

Whereas the ILO is the constitutionally mandated international Organization and the competent body to set and deal with international labour standards, and enjoys universal support and acknowledgement in promoting fundamental rights at work as the expression of its constitutional principles;

Whereas it is urgent, in a situation of growing economic interdependence, to reaffirm the immutable nature of the fundamental principles and rights embodied in the Constitution of the Organization and to promote their universal application;

The International Labour Conference,

1. Recalls:

(a) that in freely joining the ILO, all Members have endorsed the principles and rights set out in its Constitution and in the Declaration of Philadelphia, and have undertaken to work towards attaining the overall objectives of the Organization to the best of their resources and fully in line with their specific circumstances;

(b) that these principles and rights have been expressed and developed in the form of specific rights and obligations in Conventions recognized as fundamental both inside and outside the Organization.

2. Declares that all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization, to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of those Conventions, namely:

(a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

(b) the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;

(c) the effective abolition of child labour; and

(d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

3. Recognizes the obligation on the Organization to assist its Members, in response to their established and expressed needs, in order to attain these objectives by making full use of its constitutional, operational and budgetary resources, including by the mobilization of external resources and support, as well as by encouraging other international organizations with which the ILO has established relations, pursuant to article 12 of its Constitution, to support these efforts:

(a) by offering technical cooperation and advisory services to promote the ratification and implementation of the fundamental Conventions;

(b) by assisting those Members not yet in a position to ratify some or all of these Conventions in their efforts to respect, to promote and to realize the principles concerning fundamental rights which are

the subject of those Conventions; and

(c) by helping the Members in their efforts to create a climate for economic and social development.

4. Decides that, to give full effect to this Declaration, a promotional follow-up, which is meaningful and effective, shall be implemented in accordance with the measures specified in the annex hereto, which shall be considered as an integral part of this Declaration.

5. Stresses that labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes, and that nothing in this Declaration and its follow-up shall be invoked or otherwise used for such purposes; in addition, the comparative advantage of any country should in no way be called into question by this Declaration and its follow-up.

## Annex

### Follow-up to the Declaration

#### I. OVERALL PURPOSE

1. The aim of the follow-up described below is to encourage the efforts made by the Members of the Organization to promote the fundamental principles and rights enshrined in the Constitution of the ILO and the Declaration of Philadelphia and reaffirmed in this Declaration.

2. In line with this objective, which is of a strictly promotional nature, this follow-up will allow the identification of areas in which the assistance of the Organization through its technical cooperation activities may prove useful to its



Mr. Jean-Jacques Oechslin, Director-General, and Michel Hansenne, Secretary-General, signing the Declaration.



ILO/Georges Cabrera

● Twelve-year old Mohan Kumar from India wanted to know if the ILO building was “the biggest ILO in the world.” But for this Indian boy, making his first visit to Geneva as part of the Global March against child labour in early June, this event was bigger than the institution or its headquarters.

Mohan followed a rocky road in his voyage to the International Labour Conference. Sold into bonded labour in the carpet industry at a very young age, he worked in poor conditions for two years before being freed during a raid on his factory. Since then, he has lived in a child rehabilitation centre in New Delhi where he goes to school. Some day, Mohan wants to become Superintendent of Police so that he can help lead raids into areas where some of the less fortunate children still work in slave-like conditions.

● Khokan Raihan is from Bangladesh and has lost one of his legs, but he rushes around in excitement on his crutches. The 15-year-old works for an electrical welding factory, and has done what he calls this “dangerous work” for several years.

“He does not go to school but we are still trying,” says Mr. A. Hakim who is with the Child Rights Forum in Bangladesh (Shishu Adhikar Forum). “The main problem is that even when we do get these children into school, the drop-out rate is very high. This is mainly because the parents don’t want them to go to school, they would rather have them earn money.”

Khokan says he lost his leg in a work-related accident.



# Labour Conference

## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND ITS FOLLOW-UP AT ITS EIGHTY-SIXTH SESSION, JUNE 1998

Members to help them implement these fundamental principles and rights. It is not a substitute for the established supervisory mechanisms, nor shall it impede their functioning; consequently, specific situations within the purview of those mechanisms shall not be examined or re-examined within the framework of this follow-up.

3. The two aspects of this follow-up, described below, are based on existing procedures: the annual follow-up concerning non-ratified fundamental Conventions will entail merely some adaptation of the present modalities of application of article 19, paragraph 5(e), of the Constitution; and the global report will serve to obtain the best results from the procedures carried out pursuant to the Constitution.

### II. ANNUAL FOLLOW-UP CONCERNING NON-RATIFIED FUNDAMENTAL CONVENTIONS

#### A. Purpose and scope

1. The purpose is to provide an opportunity to review each year, by means of simplified procedures to replace the four-year review introduced by the Governing Body in 1995, the efforts made in accordance with the Declaration by Members which have not yet ratified all the fundamental Conventions.

2. The follow-up will cover each year the four areas of fundamental principles and rights specified in the Declaration.

#### B. Modalities

1. The follow-up will be based on reports requested from Members under article

19, paragraph 5(e), of the Constitution. The report forms will be drawn up so as to obtain information from governments which have not ratified one or more of the fundamental Conventions, on any changes which may have taken place in their law and practice, taking due account of article 23 of the Constitution and established practice.

2. These reports, as compiled by the Office, will be reviewed by the Governing Body.

3. With a view to presenting an introduction to the reports thus compiled, drawing attention to any aspects which might call for a more in-depth discussion, the Office may call upon a group of experts appointed for this purpose by the Governing Body.

4. Adjustments to the Governing Body's existing procedures should be examined to allow Members which are not represented on the Governing Body to provide, in the most appropriate way, clarifications which might prove necessary or useful during Governing Body discussions to supplement the information contained in their reports.

### III. GLOBAL REPORT

#### A. Purpose and scope

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a dynamic global picture relating to each category of fundamental principles and rights noted during the preceding four-year period, and to serve as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of the assistance provided by the Organization, and for determining priorities for the following period, in the form of action plans for technical cooperation designed in particular to mobilize the internal and external resources necessary to carry them out.

2. The report will cover, each year, one of the four categories of fundamental principles and rights in turn.

#### B. Modalities

1. The report will be drawn up under the responsibility of the Director-General on the basis of official information, or information gathered and assessed in accordance with established procedures.

In the case of States which have not ratified the fundamental Conventions, it will be based in particular on the findings of the aforementioned annual follow-up. In the case of Members which have ratified the Conventions concerned, the report will be based in particular on reports as dealt with pursuant to article 22 of the Constitution.

2. This report will be submitted to the Conference for tripartite discussion as a report of the Director-General. The Conference may deal with this report separately from reports under article 12 of its Standing Orders, and may discuss it during a sitting devoted entirely to this report, or in any other appropriate way. It will then be for the Governing Body, at an early session, to draw conclusions from this discussion concerning the priorities and plans of action for technical cooperation to be implemented for the following four-year period.

### IV. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT:

1. Proposals shall be made for amendments to the Standing Orders of the Governing Body and the Conference which are required to implement the preceding provisions.

2. The Conference shall, in due course, review the operation of this follow-up in the light of the experience acquired to assess whether it has adequately fulfilled the overall purpose articulated in Part I.

The foregoing is the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up duly adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization during its Eighty-sixth Session which was held at Geneva and declared closed the 18 June 1998.

IN FAITH WHEREOF we have appended our signatures this nineteenth day of June 1998.

The President of the Conference,

*The Director-General of the International Labour Office.*



Jacques Maillard

The President of the Conference, ILO Director-General, signs

ILO/Georges Cabrera



"I was running desperately to catch a bus one day because I was late for work," he says. "And being late for work could mean being sacked immediately. In doing so, I was run over and lost my leg."

● Mosaiful, 14 years old, now goes to school and lives at the hostel of the Bangladesh Child Rights Forum. He still sells sweets and chocolates in his free time but is proud that he is getting an education.

"I am angry with my family and do not ever want to live with them," he says.

Why? Because he was the youngest – a stepchild – of a large family that left the village of Kushtiya to come to Dhaka. No one could spare money to send him to school, so he had to go out to work.

"My NGO school is my only family now," he says.



Jacques Maillard

"The world has enough compassion. This compassion has to be transformed into social action for children." Kailash Satyarthi; marching with the children at the ILO, Geneva, during the International Labour Conference.

## Concerns over globalization

The impetus for the Declaration stemmed from concerns in the international community over the processes of globalization and the possible social consequences of trade liberalization, expressed notably at the UN World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and the WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore (1996), both of which expressed support for internationally recognized core labour standards and identified the ILO as the competent body to deal with and set such standards.

The Declaration “stresses that labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes, and that nothing in this Declaration and its follow-up shall be invoked or otherwise used for such purposes; in addition, the comparative advantage of any country should in no way be called into question by this Declaration and its follow-up”.

In his address to the Conference, Michel Hansenne said that “it was high time for the ILO to give itself the means to address the social consequences of the globalization of the economy... I believe we can all be proud of the Declaration that has been adopted”, he said, adding “The ILO can now proceed on the basis of a truly global set of common social values.”

Referring to concerns expressed during the long Committee debate, Mr. Hansenne said that the follow-up, which forms an integral part of the Declaration, aims at punishing no one, or condemning anyone: “It serves, on the contrary, to promote the fundamental rights and principles embodied in the Declaration: Nothing more, nothing less.”

Following the Copenhagen Summit, the ILO launched an intensive campaign among its members to increase the number of ratifications of core standards. Since then, more than 80 new ratifications have been registered, and the campaign to achieve universal ratification will continue.

To date, 37 countries have ratified all seven of the Conventions.\* Convention No. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948) has received 122 ratifications, roughly 70 per cent of ILO members. Convention No. 98 (Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949) has received 138 ratifications, roughly 80 per cent of ILO members. The Forced Labour Convention (No. 29, 1930) has been ratified by 149 member States, (84 per cent) and

the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105) has received 130 ratifications (75 per cent). The two Conventions on discrimination (No. 100, Equal Remuneration, 1951, and No. 111, Discrimination – Employment and Occupation, 1958) have received, respectively, 137 and 130 ratifications, covering 79 and 74 per cent of ILO member States. The Minimum Age Convention, (No. 138, 1973) has received 63 ratifications, covering 36 per cent of member States.

## Discussions on the worst forms of child labour

Following discussions on a new Convention and Recommendations concerning child labour, the Conference unanimously adopted a resolution to place the item on the agenda of its 87th session in June 1999. The move concluded an intense, three-week series of activities focusing on child labour, which included the reception by the delegates at the Conference of hundreds of children partici-

pating in a “Global March against Child Labour” which got underway in January and had crossed over 100 countries before arriving in Geneva. (*See profiles of the marchers on pp. 14-15*)

A 181-member Committee on Child Labour composed of government, worker and employer representatives adopted a series of improvements to a proposed draft Convention. The proposed conclusions urge the Conference to adopt new standards on the immediate ban of the “worst” forms of child labour, and strengthen existing standards, including the **ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)**, of 1973 and its accompanying **Recommendation No. 146** which are aimed at the total abolition of child labour. More than the previous Convention, the new instrument would bring into sharper focus the kinds of measures needed to suppress “the worst forms of child labour.”

The Committee also proposed that:

- The term “child” in a new Convention should apply to all persons under the age of 18;

- **The Conference President was Mr. Jean-Jacques Oechslin (France), Honorary President of the International Organization of Employers.**

- **The three Vice-Presidents of the Conference were Mr. Alhaji Muhammed Mumuni, Minister of Employment and Social Affairs of Ghana, representing governments, Mr. I.P. Anand, of India, representing employers and Mr. Sukesada Ito, of Japan, representing workers.**



Jean-Jacques Oechslin



Alhaji Muhammed Mumuni



I.P. Anand



Sukesada Ito

- **The International Labour Conference meets annually. It provides an international forum for discussion of world labour and social problems and sets minimum international labour standards and broad policies of the Organization. Every two years, the Conference adopts the ILO's biennial work programme and budget, which is financed by its 174 member States. Each member country has the right to send four delegates to the Conference: two from the government and one each representing workers and employers, each of whom may speak and vote independently.**

- **The ILO Governing Body unanimously elected Mr. Nobutoshi Akao, Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Government of Japan, as Chairman of its 1998-99 session. Mr. Rolf Thüsing (Germany), a member of the Executive Board of the Confederation of German Employers Associations, was elected as employer Vice-Chairman and Mr. William Brett (United Kingdom), a member of the General Council of the UK's Trades Union Council, was re-elected as worker Vice-Chairman.**



Nobutoshi Akao



Addressing a special sitting of the 86th International Labour Conference, President Rafael Caldera said that while globalization and market economics are inevitable and potentially positive developments "there are also characteristics of globalization which must be dealt with carefully so that they will not cause harm to humanity...In the era of globalization, the struggle for social justice needs to be international: globalization should not breed further injustice but be harnessed as an element for strengthening peace in the world."

Echoing the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia, he said that poverty anywhere poses risks to peace and prosperity everywhere. "It was a valid principle yesterday and it is still a valid principle today. We must stress the fact that globalization is not a matter for discussion, something that one can be for or against. It is a fact."



Jacques Maillard

His Excellency Rafael Caldera, President of Venezuela (left) is welcomed by ILO Director-General, Michel Hansenne.

He said that while the market is important for governing relations among individuals, it is not an all-powerful force. "There is one thing that the market cannot solve by itself: this is the unfair distribution of wealth," he said. "We live today in a world

where two words predominate: productivity and competition. They cannot be the only standards of social relations. If we only think in terms of competition, the social consequences will be very serious."

Mr. Caldera also voiced support for the Declaration on Fundamental Rights of Workers, saying "this declaration of principles, this reaffirmation of worker rights, must not be invoked by protectionist interests wishing to take advantage of the difficult circumstances prevailing in some countries in order to circumvent the principle of fair competition."

The President praised the recent election of his "Latin American compatriot, Juan Somavia of Chile," who will succeed Michel Hansenne as Director-General of the ILO (in March 1999). He said the decision to elect a Director-General from a developing country reflected a positive evolution.

● The "worst" forms of child labour should include:

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, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for production of pornography or for pornographic performances, as well as illegal activities, such as the production and trafficking of drugs; and

● Any other type of work or activity which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, could jeopardize the health, safety or morals of children.

The draft calls on each ratifying member State to establish "appropriate mechanisms" for monitoring the provisions of the proposed Convention, as well as designing and carrying out programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. In addition, it urges each ratifying member State to "take all necessary measures to ensure its effective implementation and enforcement including the provision and application of penal and other sanctions."

Finally, it calls on members to take into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour, and adopt "effective, time-bound measures" to assist in the removal of children from the worst forms of work and "provide rehabilitation and social reintegration".

This was the first discussion of the new instrument and it will be discussed again next year with the view to adoption. Under the ILO Constitution, the new Convention, if adopted in 1999, will come into force one calendar year after the second ratification by an ILO member State.

### "Contract labour": Future directions

The Conference adopted a *Resolution concerning the possible adoption of international instruments for the protection of workers in the situations identified by the Committee on Contract Labour*, inviting the Governing Body of the ILO to place these issues on the agenda of the International Labour Conference by the year 2002, with a view to the possible adoption of a Convention supplemented by a Recommendation, if considered necessary.

Persisting conceptual problems, combined with divergences of viewpoints, prevented the Committee on Contract Labour from recommending to the Conference the adoption of proposed instruments on contract labour as had been originally foreseen. Not since 1961 has a Committee of the International Labour Conference set up to examine draft instruments not reported back to the Conference with proposals for the adoption of international labour standards.

The Worker Members at this year's Conference expressed disappointment that the Committee did not come up with a draft Convention and Recommendation. The Workers' Vice-Chairperson, however, welcomed the fact that there will be a follow-up to the work of the Committee with guidance given to the Governing Body to ensure that all the necessary steps will be taken to bring back a draft Convention and Recommendation for future consideration. Such a Committee should "address the situations identified by the actual Committee where workers require protection and complete the work commenced by this Committee on Contract Labour", he said.

According to the Employers' Vice-Chairperson, "the outcome of the Committee's work reflects the fact that the subject of contract labour should not have been on the agenda for consideration of an international instrument. It has been demonstrated that the conceptual, definitional and linguistic difficulties, associated with the term *contract labour* made any meaningful consideration impossible". He expressed his hope that "future considerations will be much more tightly focused and based on a more precise understanding of the issues under discussion".

The Committee's Chairperson, and its Reporter, as well as a number of other

(Continued on p. 28)

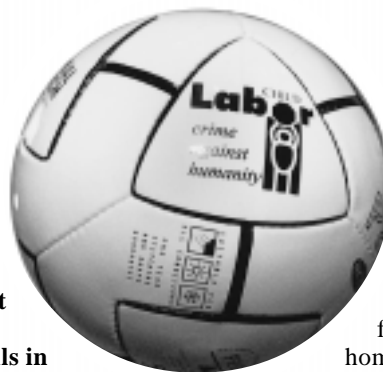
# Playing fair and still winning

*The ILO Constitution states that protection of children is one of the essential elements in the pursuit of social justice and universal peace. ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is the world's largest technical cooperation programme on child labour. More than fifty countries on four continents are currently participating. The programme is inspiring, guiding and supporting national initiatives in key areas of policy-making and direct action. In June 1994, the Government of Pakistan and the ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding on a national programme for the progressive elimination of child labour within the framework of IPEC. Its aim is to promote conditions to enable the government to progressively prohibit, restrict and regulate child labour so that child labour can be gradually eliminated.*

**J**ust weeks before the Football World Cup teams kick off in France on 10 June, the ILO took a media team from Europe to visit Sialkot, Pakistan.

Football (soccer balls in the United States) are part of a global sporting goods industry. Seventy-five per cent are hand-stitched in Sialkot for an export market that generates US\$1 billion in retail sales annually. According to the ILO, some 5,000 to 7,000 children currently work in the industry in Sialkot region. To tell the story, nine journalists spent five days with ILO staff, travelling to villages and visiting homes, stitching centres, non-formal learning and rehabilitation centres, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and some large modern manufacturing facilities.

**Sialkot** – We are at the Fazalpura Umang Talimi Centre in the district of Sambrial, meeting with Aamir, Ali Akbar and several other children. This is one of the 90 village non-formal education centres run by the ILO's IPEC programme and its partners (*see box on FACTS*). The centre is a mud and brick building with a few wooden benches. Aamir, Ali Akbar, Ameena, and Rubina are, like all the others, child workers who stitch foot-



balls around here. Aamir, 10, waits watchfully before he decides to come forth to talk to us. He attends this non-formal school and works on footballs when he returns home.

Ali Akbar, 13, has never been to school. His fingers show healing wounds that bear witness to the fact that he still stitches footballs. His friend, also named Ali Akbar, says that some years ago he had attended school. "But I had to leave under pressure from my parents who needed me to stitch footballs for added income."

When asked whether they play football, Aamir and Ali Akbar answer spontaneously: "No". Do they know anything about how football is played or how many players make up a team? Another "No". In fact they don't know any real games.

This programme enables many children to leave their homes and forget stitching for a few hours, attend lessons, learn recreational activities and games, and at the same time get some free health care. We ask: "What is it that you like best about coming here"? No hesitation whatsoever from any child: "Studying". They understand the importance of education in realizing their dreams of becoming teachers, pilots, nurses or doc-

## FACTS

Pakistan is a major exporter of sporting goods, particularly hand-stitched footballs. The industry, concentrated in and around Sialkot, has come under considerable international pressure because of the involvement of children in the manufacturing of these balls. An agreement signed between the ILO, UNICEF and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) in February 1997 in Atlanta, USA, has led to a project which aims to eliminate child labour in the manufacturing of footballs through the voluntary participation of manufacturers. The overall project is being implemented jointly by the ILO, UNICEF, SCCI, Save the Children-UK, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, and the Bunyad Literacy Community Council. The project has two main components: Prevention and Monitoring, and Social Protection. (*See box "Who's paying for the soccer ball project?"*).

**Prevention and Monitoring:** The ILO has set up an external monitoring system to identify the occurrence of child labour in the football industry in Sialkot and to ascertain its phase-out. The monitoring team collaborates with the participating manufacturers, who are responsible for the internal monitoring.

**Social Protection:** A wide range of activities have been designed to provide alternatives to the working children and their families who are affected by the Prevention and Monitoring Programme. For the ILO these activities include the establishment of Village Education and Action Centres which are to provide rehabilitation services, including non-formal education, skills training, income generation activities for adults in the family, credit/loan/savings facilities, and awareness-raising.



tors. In all, there are now over 2,000 children registered in such rehabilitation centres and several more siblings who just “tag along”. It’s something different and new and the knowledge they gain will help them eventually join the mainstream education system.

We continue to the Hajipura Stitching Centre, also in Sambrial. This is a small dimly-lit room. There is just enough space for the men squatting on the floor, huddled over the wooden form onto which they assemble intricate pieces of thick multi-layered material, using a long needle-like tool and waxed thread.

ILO monitoring teams make surprise visits to such stitching centres on a regular basis to ensure that no child under 14 works there. By bringing the stitching out of homes into formal centres, the inspectors are able to confirm that the production from that centre is indeed child-labour free. When they do find a child, sanctions are taken against the supervisor of the centre and the parents are advised to send their children to one of the learning centres. Convincing them is not always easy because the time the child spends at school means that fewer footballs will be produced.

We also take the time to visit two modern manufacturing facilities. The large manufacturers have their own stitching centres and some have tried to eliminate the middleman. In this way they can account for the production of each football and claim to be producing only child-



**Ten-year-old Taheera spends most of her day stitching footballs.**

ILO/Georges Cabrera



ILO/Georges Cabrera

**Stitching soccer balls at home in Sialkot, Pakistan.**

labour free footballs. These are two of the 34 manufacturers who have joined the ILO/IPEC programme to try to eliminate child labour. These 34 alone, out of about 70 manufacturers in the region, produce around 70 per cent of the balls for export.

Another day, another village and after a one-hour drive on bumpy, dusty village tracks, we arrive unannounced in Munde ke Barian in Pasur district. Once the village elders have invited us to enter the narrow alleys of the village, we try to visit homes to find children who might be stitching footballs. Many a time when we enter a home, the children working there disappear.

Haleema Bibi sits outside her small one-room house stitching footballs, helped by her 10-year-old daughter Taheera. Taheera is silent and, except for a moment when she pauses to throw us a doleful look, she does not stop her work. At this young age, she spends most of the day helping her widowed mother put together footballs. “I cannot afford to let her go to school”, sighs her widowed mother. “We are the two main breadwinners of the family. I have four younger children to feed”, she adds. Hoping that education will improve their lot, she does send the two younger daughters to a part-time school when they are not polishing and assembling footballs.

While we weave our way through the maze of alleys, we meet Nazia, ten years old. She is wearing a school uniform which means that she must attend a government school. Yes, after school she generally stitches footballs. Saying that, she runs away. After several attempts to locate her, a village elder leads us to her home. We find her sitting on the floor, already busy stitching. Her 14-year-old sister is doing the same. She does not go to school. Being the elder child, she has had to sacrifice so that the others can get an education. A 12-year-old sister is at school and is expected to return soon, to do her share of work. This family seems relatively well off since the father works in assembling surgical instruments and the

### **WHO'S PAYING FOR THE SOCCER BALL PROJECT?**

*The aim of this project is to eliminate child labour in the soccer ball stitching industry in Sialkot over the next two years. It had an initial contribution of about US\$1.5 million which has now risen to over US\$2 million.*

- ILO-IPEC funds, amounting to over US\$755,700, are provided by the United States Department of Labour.
- Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has committed an additional amount of about US\$195,000 towards the ILO's Social Protection and Rehabilitation programme of the project.
- UNICEF's contribution is US\$200,000 and
- The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) is contributing US\$250,000 towards the project's Prevention and Monitoring Programme.
- Save the Children – UK has a commitment of about US\$900,000 from the British Department for International Development's bilateral programme funds.
- The Soccer Industries Council of America (SICA) and (FIFA) have provided US\$100,000 each towards the project.
- As a token of the commitment of Pakistani workers to the cause of elimination of child labour in Pakistan, The All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU) has made a contribution of US\$1,000 to the Sialkot project.

*A Project Coordinating Committee has been established under the overall Sialkot project and the Partners' Operational Framework for the activities has been endorsed by the Project Coordinating Committee.*

mother spends a few hours each night making crochet covers.

The children of Sialkot work long hours sewing footballs, an intricate task, especially hard on little fingers.

To get an objective view of everyone's side of the story, here are some excerpts from articles published in the press following this visit.

*Kiran Mehra-Kerpelman*



Excerpt from an article which appeared in *Le Soir* (Belgium) 25 May 1998 (Original in French)

**...The boycott panic**

Piled up high and dangling off trucks, stacked in horse-drawn carriages, and dangerously heaped on motorcycles. In Sialkot, there are footballs everywhere.

Seven out of every ten footballs used in matches around the world are produced in the Sialkot province. Around 40 million hand-sewn balls, conforming to FIFA standards, are exported each year. This is an old tradition developed under the British Empire. Today, Sialkot specializes in two industries: sporting goods and...surgical instruments.

The footballs are manufactured for large sporting-goods multinationals, Reebok, Nike, Adidas, etc., by about 70 local manufacturing firms in their ostentatious headquarters in this miserable decor. In these factories synthetic leather is prepared and cut to shape. The hexagonal pieces are decorated with stencils and the quality of the ball is checked. The balls are prepared for shipping: in all, a lot of manual tasks – but labour is cheap!

But there are also the “little hands” which sew the pieces of leather though rarely in the factories. They work more generally at home, in the outlying villages, or in groups in any space that can be found. *Seventy thousand people stitch these balls, of which 7,000 to 10,000 are children under 14. All do not work full time*, says Mr. Aslam Dar, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Industry has accepted the elimination of child labour (under 14 years) within two years, already at the end of 1998. As Western public opinion mobilizes against the “scandal”, the panic of boycott sets in...

“The footballs of shame” had already mobilized opinion during the English EURO of 1996.

At the beginning of 1997, an agreement was signed in Atlanta (USA) between the Chamber, the International Labour Organization (UN agency for workers rights), UNICEF, the non-governmental organization Save the Children-UK and two local associations. Half of the local manufacturers (70% of the production) have joined the project. They have pledged not to use child labour and have regrouped the stitchers in centres which are moni-



Georges Cabrera/ILO

The Fazalpur Umang Talimi Centre of informal education in the district of Sambrial, Sialkot.

tored by “flying squad” inspectors of the ILO. The little workers receive an informal education.

We visited these places, at the invitation of the ILO, together with a photographer and eight colleagues, all from European countries selected for the World Cup. A head-on collision with a complex reality. And multi-faceted: According to the ILO, 3.3 million children work in Pakistan: bonded labourers forced to reimburse past debts, domestic servants, carpet weavers, workers in brick kilns. So many activities which do not benefit from the spotlight of the World Cup...

*Philippe Regnier*

Excerpt from an article which appeared in three parts on 14, 15 and 16 May 1998 in *La Gazzetta dello Sport* (Italy). The article appeared in three parts on 14, 15 and 16 May 1998. (Original in Italian)

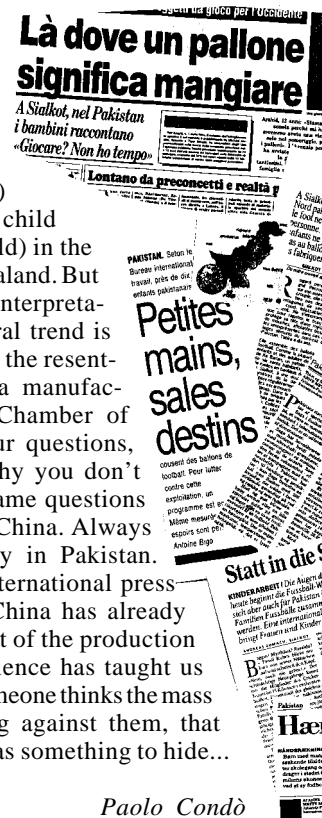
...When you visit a sewing centre, it doesn't take you long to realize why the production activities are concentrated in Pakistan and not the United States or Europe. The work is unpleasant and no Western worker would be prepared to use a needle and thread for over two hours in exchange for one dollar. “That's another matter,” says Faiz Shah and he's right because purchasing power in Pakistan and in the poorer Asian countries in general is another matter compared to the developed world. Born in Sialkot and a graduate from the University of Kentucky, Shah came back home to become a manager. Friendly and evidently intelligent, he makes the mistake of describing his Saga City like a miniature Disneyland and when he assures you that he has nothing against the introduction of the unions (“On the contrary...”) his affability does not ring completely true. But maybe that's just my impression: the inspection of his factory making balls and goalkeepers' gloves reveals a healthy environment. The hall where the mate-

rials are treated with ammonia is well ventilated, for example. And, above all, there's no trace of children.

Saga City and other 33 local companies did not hesitate in joining the UN Labour Organization's programme. Those companies employing minors first reported then enrolled them in the new school programme. The ILO subsidy (initially 500 thousand dollars then 753 thousand) together with the UNICEF contribution (200 thousand dollars) and that of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce (a further 200 thousand dollars) now allows the “reported” children to study without their families suffering from an economic point of view. The 34 factories linked to the UN programme are nearly exactly half of the total number of factories (70) and together they produce 70 per cent of Pakistani footballs. Among them are all the exclusive dealers of the sports industry giants. We only saw one brand-name football (Umbro) being sewn by a child (Assaf, 8 years old) in the village of Bhagwaland. But any optimistic interpretation of the general trend is rapidly halted by the resentful reaction of a manufacturer from the Chamber of Commerce to our questions, “I ask myself why you don't go and put the same questions to companies in China. Always in Pakistan, only in Pakistan.

Thanks to the international press-picking on us, China has already stolen 15 per cent of the production from us.” Experience has taught us that whenever someone thinks the mass media is plotting against them, that person usually has something to hide...

*Paolo Condò*





Excerpt from an article which appeared in *Jyllands-Posten* (Denmark)

22 May 1998.  
(Original in Danish)

### Sialkot

“Show me your hands. If the skin on your fingers is callous from many stitches, it proves that you have been sewing footballs daily for years”.

Thirteen-year-old Ali Akbar has done just that and he cannot read or write; nor can he explain how to play football because since he was 7 years old he has been sewing so many footballs every day that there was no time left for neither play nor school attendance.

He is fed up with sewing footballs. He still does it though when he comes home from school because his mother says that if the other children in the family can do it, so can he, and thus contribute to the family income; it is difficult to resist that kind of pressure. He does not dream of spending the rest of his life sewing footballs; he would like to be a miller like his father, but like the majority of children in Pakistan he comes from a large family which cannot make both ends meet.

Nine reporters from nine European countries met Ali Akbar and more than 100 other children from football sewing families in a school in the village Munde ke Barian near Sialkot where ILO, UNICEF and the local chamber of commerce are cooperating in a project, the object of which is to eradicate child labour in the football industry...

### Driven into a corner

The campaign against child labour has in fact driven Sialkot's football producers into a corner, so much so that at present they are fighting to survive. They are faced with one of the strong weapons of



Georges Cabrera/ILO

today, i.e. the threat of consumer boycotting and the American Senator Harkin's proposed Bill prohibiting the importation to the USA of goods manufactured by children. A football producer from the factory Recto estimates that due to the campaign, manufacturers in Sialkot of the less well-known brands have experienced a 20 per cent drop in orders.

It is the irony of fate that many of the cheap footballs, which have come on the market, are produced in China, India and Mexico under conditions which are no longer tolerated in Pakistan. The news from France that the 500 Adidas footballs, to be used at the World Cup shortly, have been manufactured in Morocco – by Pakistani families – in order to avoid polemics on child labour in Pakistan, reflects the seriousness of the situation...

Anne Mette Skipper

Excerpt from an article which appeared in *Trouw* (The Netherlands)

16 May 1998.  
(Original in Dutch)

Of all the footballs produced in Pakistan, about 75 per cent are manufactured in Sialkot. Sporting goods production in this city accounts for 40 per cent of its total exports. To save the threatened football industry, the local Chamber of Commerce promised to put an end to the use of child labour, and in 1997, agreed to join a program co-organized

by the International Labour Organization (ILO), Unicef, the World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI), as well as the Save the Children Fund, an English NGO. This NGO had estimated that out of a total of 40,000 workers employed in the football industry in Sialkot, about 7,000 were children.

Until 1997, balls were stitched at home. Since it is so difficult to monitor the use of child labour in the privacy of homes, the stitchers have been gathered together in stitching centres, which enables the ILO to carry out checks to ensure that no children under the age of 14 are employed. Of the 73 football manufacturers in Sialkot, around half voluntarily joined the program, accounting for around 70 per cent of the total production of footballs in this region. The remainder who decided not to join, still rely on production of balls “often cheaper and lower in quality” being stitched at home, and using child labour. Children are allowed to

continue earning a wage, but their full-time employment, which prevents them attending school, is forbidden under Pakistani Law.

The manufacturers who joined the programme at present only produce a certain amount of their footballs in the stitching centres and without the use of child labour. By mid-1999, however, they will be expected to produce all their balls in such centres and without the use of child labour. Come next October, the target is for at least half of the production to be organized in such centres. In May, 41 per cent of footballs were being produced in this way. The manufacturers, it seems, are on schedule.

### Missing

“But it's the last phase which is going to be the toughest”, predicts Rijk van Haarlem, a Dutch labour inspector who set up the program for monitoring in Sialkot. “To date, our monitors have only found 91 children in the stitching centres. All the rest are older. About 2,000 are in the special rehabilitation programme. That means around 4,900 children are still missing. It's pretty obvious that they are still working from home and it's going to be a hard task to remove such labour from the chain of production.”

Saskia Jansens

Excerpts from other newspapers and magazines will appear in the next issue.





# Calling for more and better jobs

*Telecoms on the rise: New enterprises, new technologies, internet, will mean long-term job growth*

**Increasing competition from private enterprises, new means of communication, elimination of monopolies and the growth of such new media as the Internet pose major challenges to workers in postal administrations and telecoms around the world. A new ILO report says faster, better communications will mean big changes in the nature of jobs held by millions workers worldwide, especially women.**

**W**ill the telecommunications revolution mean more and better jobs? Yes – eventually – says a new report,\* prepared for a tripartite meeting on posts and telecommunications.

Although the study notes that postal and telecommunications services, traditionally organized on the basis of public monopolies or private quasi-monopolies, have often seen a decline in the number of jobs over the past decade as they go private, the growth of new enterprises – often recently established or the subsidiaries of existing enterprises as well as telecoms and the Internet – will offer new prospects for ultimately increasing the number of jobs in the sector--especially for women.

Governments from some 20 countries met at ILO offices in Geneva on 20-24 April with representatives of trade unions and employers from privatized and public postal and telecommunications operators to discuss the new trends. Subjects included liberalization and deregulation practices, social implications of privatization and restructuring, labour relations, working conditions and human resources development and training.

## Big sector, big impact

The report cites data from the 1995 World Telecommunication Development Report showing that employment in the public telecommunications services sec-

tor has fallen by 6 per cent since 1982, with significant reductions in the Asia Pacific region (-25 per cent) and in North America (-23 per cent).

Among public postal operators (PPOs), employment increased slightly in some industrialized countries such as the United States or the United Kingdom between 1990-95, while in most other developed countries the number of postal employees remained stable or decreased.

“Employment in most PPOs of the European Union is expected to decrease up to the year 2000,” the report says. “Most redundancies have occurred in postal deliveries, counter services, letter and parcel sorting and transportation sectors.”

The report states that, as a result of the rapid pace of change in the telecommunications sector, workers will face the prospect of a two-stage change in employment. In the first phase, traditional telecommunications operators may lose between 25 per cent and 50 per cent of their staff, mainly in occupations made redundant by technology or “externalized” following a refocusing on commercial and high value-added services. The report cites one study by BIPE Consulting Group, prepared on behalf of the European Commission, predicting that *British Telecom*, for example, “will experience another 45,000 to 55,000 redundancies, depending on the scenario chosen, from now until the end of the century.”

The study goes on to say, however, that this initial phase may be followed

by a “change in the nature itself of employment,” (now being seen in particular in the United States for example) in which “permanent adjustments and redeployment follow one another at a brisk pace.” In the postal sector, the report cites the example of Sweden, where following the liberalization of the postal sector at the beginning of the 1990s, around 1,000 new jobs were created by new enterprises.

The report notes, however, that this two-phase scenario may not occur everywhere, adding “on the contrary, this two-phase movement in the evolution of employment could be accelerated – even bypassed – in its first phase in various countries as a result of new techniques (satellites, mobile telephones, alternative enterprise structure) allowing some regions to save on complete telegraphic infrastructure – as well as a desire for rapid withdrawal by States for budgetary reasons.”

## “Creative destruction” and “destructive erosion”

The report cites examples of changes in occupations, termed “a creative destruction.” It notes that already in the early 1990s, various occupations were on the way out: operators of manual telephone exchanges, traditional fitters and linesmen, staff of telephone directory inquiry services affected by computerization and the introduction of electronic





Jacques Maillard

**I can do better with new technology...**

directory services, workers in manual sorting stations and clerical employees whose daily jobs are increasingly performed by office machinery.

“The evolution of occupations has increased since the beginning of the 1990s,” the report says, “and totally new functions have appeared, in particular those related to access services to the Internet or multimedia.”

Not only are new occupations appearing, but the separation line between various occupations and some branches is blurring with computerization encouraging versatility and distance work, the report says. At *Telecom Italia*, for example, a company-level agreement negotiated and signed in 1995 allowed the redeployment of staff, such as operators who would otherwise have run the risk of dismissal, to home where they could work on a part-time basis.

Meanwhile, the legal status of employees is seeing a “destructive erosion.” Job security, for example, has been sacrificed in the process of structural reform, resulting in an increase in the precariousness of employment as a result of a move from a technological and/or public logic to a commercial logic.

“The organization of enterprises (including postal services) by type of market reflects the priority given to the client over functions of general interest,” the report says, adding that while public service

functions and client interests may co-exist, “the consequences of such an evolution appear to be considerable for the status of employees and the manner in which they exercise their occupation.”

The report cites the example of *Deutsche Telekom* which halted recruitment of public employees since 1995. At the same time top management has called for a move from an administrative status of the operator to that of a multinational on markets opening up to competition.

Transformation of the Malaysian Department of Telecommunications into an enterprise (*Telekom Malaysia*) in the 1980s, for example, resulted in the transfer of all staff into the new publicly owned company, with job stability guaranteed for five years. Subsequently, in the 1990s, employees whose work had become obsolete (manual operators, accountants) were redeployed while analysts and programmers were recruited.

### **Impact of changes on female employment**

The new realities in the postal and telecommunications services are expected to especially benefit female workers who, though large in numbers, often perform low-paying and low-skilled jobs.

Citing Malaysia as fairly characteristic of the general trend in the employment

of women in telecommunications, the report says women are beginning to take up technical or management jobs. Whereas in 1990 almost 25 per cent of *Telekom Malaysia* employees were women (mostly employed at that time in data entry operations, administrative jobs or as operators), since then women with technical or commercial skills have been increasingly sought.

The report notes that the same conditions apply where automated sorting systems have become increasingly used and electronic communications of all kinds are growing faster than ever. Thus, in the European Union, women’s share of employment increased from 18.9 per cent in 1990 to 24.6 per cent in 1995 among public postal operators. Except for Finland, the figures have increased in the public postal operators of every Member State.

“The reorganization of working time and the development of the information society – which is substantially based on individual skills, experience and talent – should encourage the growth of female employment in the emerging or future new services,” the report says.


### **Impact of the growing telecommunications sector and the Internet**

According to studies cited in the report, a significant number of jobs should be

# News Section

## Solutions sought in Washington, D.C. Conference

### *ILO study: Worker disability problems rising in industrialized countries*



created by new network operators resulting from the gradual opening up of markets to competition, as well as by providers of telecommunications services.

New operations and service providers in the European Union could lead to creation of between 114,000 and 162,000 new jobs by 2005, although this rate of expansion may not cover job losses among traditional operators.

“The new jobs created are appearing above all in sectors adjacent to communications, in various activities linked with multimedia convergence and the information society,” the report says. “The postal services, as a result of the use of new technologies and their frequent offer of financial products or saving devices, should be affected more or less directly by this tendency.”

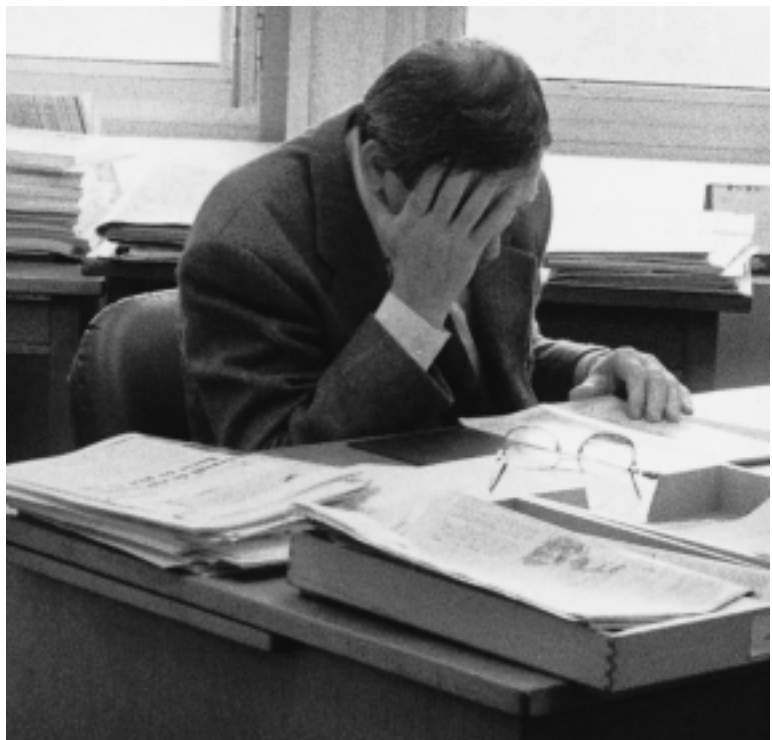
While the loss of jobs among traditional telecommunications operators in the industrial countries may be offset, to some degree, by the “creation of new and dynamic enterprises and individual job-creating initiatives”, the report notes that most new jobs should result from the arrival of new entrants, whether they establish their own networks, or use those of existing or alternative infrastructures, or offer new services with labour recruited specially at market cost or on a temporary basis.

“Internet service providers (which are developing at a rapid pace) and, more generally, the providers of on-line information services are developing as a result of the rapid growth of computerization in homes and among small and medium enterprises,” the report says. “Furthermore, many enterprises which repackage information which is provided through servers are being increasingly used, as well as content editors or intermediation companies which put together virtual commercial centres.” □

\* *Structural and regulatory changes and globalization in postal and telecommunications services: The human resources dimension.* Report for discussion at the Tripartite Meeting on the Human Resources Dimension of Structural and Regulatory Changes and Globalization in Postal and Telecommunication Services. International Labour Office, Geneva, 1998. ISBN 92-2-110966-6.

A new ILO **International Research Project on Job Retention and Return to Work Strategies for Disabled Workers** found that in eight countries – Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States, laws protecting disabled workers may increase the reluctance

of private companies to hire them. What’s more, the study found that existing social insurance system regulations may discourage their return to work. These and other preliminary findings were presented at the *Washington Symposium*, an international conference on job retention and return to work strategies for workers with



Jacques Maillard

More and more workers suffer from the “new” occupational diseases, for example those related to stress...



disabilities, organized by U.S. Government agencies in Washington, D.C. from May 20-22, 1998.

WASHINGTON – Claims for disability benefits are surging in industrialized countries – up to 600 per cent in some nations – encouraging governments, private companies and unions to search for ways to get disabled people back to work. The ILO estimates that some 600 million people have mental and physical disabilities, or 10 per cent of the world population. Approximately 50 per cent are of working age. Statistics show a steady increase in these numbers.

The reasons include:

- emergence of new diseases and other causes of impairment, such as HIV/AIDS, stress and alcohol and drug abuse;
- increasing life span and numbers of elderly persons, many of whom have impairments;
- projected increases in the number of disabled children over the next 30 years, particularly in the developing countries, due to malnutrition, diseases, child labour and other causes;
- armed conflict and violence.

“The new economic reality – growing global competition, shrinking profit margins, a declining resource base – is forcing firms the world over to seek ways of decreasing personnel costs, but such cost reductions should not come on the backs of disabled workers,” says Ali Taqi, ILO Assistant Director-General. “Instead, creative ways must be found to keep them in the workforce, and bring back those disabled people who can and want to work.”

Information from countries participating in the ILO study reveals:

- In the United States, the number of working age people benefiting from Social Security disability benefit programs increased 60 per cent between 1984 and 1994, with less than one-half of one per cent of such beneficiaries ever leaving the disability rolls to return to work;
- The number of beneficiaries claiming disability benefits increased by over 50 per cent in the Netherlands, to more than 900,000 people, between 1980 and 1992;
- Expenditures for workers compensation increased by more than 700 per cent in Australia between 1976 and 1986, and averaged \$5 billion annually during the 1980s in direct costs, with indirect costs at four times the direct ones. Indirect costs include productivity losses from lost time and skills, and retraining costs;
- In Sweden, between 1980 and 1990,

people receiving supplementary disability pension or sickness allowances for more than one year increased from 300,000 to 436,000 – which triggered a reduction in benefit levels and an increased pressure on employers to encourage workers who become disabled to return to work.

Recent innovations in national laws to promote the employment of disabled

persons have often not been adequate to assist individuals with new types of impairments, the study finds. “This is particularly true for those workers suffering from the “new” occupational diseases, for example those related to stress and repetitive strain injury, and for those who have invisible disabilities, such as mental illness and chronic pain,

# “Looking at child workers”

*Putting children to work in today's world*

*Analysis and case-studies*

*Publication of Editions Page deux (Lausanne, Switzerland), 231 pp., 30 Swiss francs*

**Michel Bonnet was one of the experts of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), launched in 1991 by the ILO. His book: *Regards sur les enfants travailleurs* is based on experience acquired in the design of IPEC projects, among other activities. In less than seven years, IPEC has extended its initiatives to some 40 countries.**

*Regards sur les enfants travailleurs* is a “manual” in the literal sense: a book which should always be carried around by anybody and everybody who has understood the extent and the gravity of putting children to work prematurely even now at the end of the 20th Century. It is also a manual in the way it systematically presents the main forces that constitute the world of work of children.

A close look at the table of contents confirms this. After having gone through the trajectory of “child workers as human beings in flesh and bone”, Mr. Bonnet treats eight crucial questions whose recounting uncovers the meaning of this book: the different means of putting children to work; individual strategies of the children as well as those of their parents and of employers; domestic work and work in enterprises, in all its intricate forms; government policies; the role of non-governmental organizations, consumer associations and the mass media; the game of quantifying the value of putting children to work in the framework of increased globalization of the economy; the causes of bonded labour and its function in uncovering oppressive social relations regarding children; the role of large enterprises in child labour.

Mr. Bonnet presents his analyses in the spirit which inspired the work and the projects of IPEC. Schematically one can resume it as follows: First of all, one must begin from the optimal development of riches a child possesses and on whose use he has a right to speak out on. Next, every initiative taken regarding child workers must take into account local conditions, understand where local and global realities meet, and give due consideration to local actors as well as the potential of the child workers to become the subjects of their emancipation.



that do not fall within the scope of legal definitions in some countries”, Mr. Taqi says.

### Supportive laws found in some countries

The ILO study found that in the more-regulated German, French, Dutch and Swedish systems, laws controlling the hiring and dismissal of workers and their conditions of employment provide the foundation of support for public employment policies to protect persons with disabilities. The “laissez-faire” approaches in the United States, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, avoid imposing restraints on business and open the door to voluntary or profit-maximizing disability employment policies.

“Public subsidies to employers to hire disabled persons are incompatible with the free-market philosophy in the USA,” the ILO study says. “The United Kingdom has not developed wage subsidies specifically for disabled people in the competitive labour market, although if unemployed they will benefit from a new ‘Welfare to Work’ programme which includes retirement benefits.”

The ILO study finds, however: “Across mainland Europe, wage subsidies, recruitment grants and relief of national insurance contributions are widely used to create jobs for long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups, including disabled people. There are also special incentive schemes in Germany, France and Sweden to promote employment of disabled people. Swedish active labour market policies positively favour disabled people. Incentives (to employ disabled employees) are a new feature of Dutch policy.”

“Staying in work has become more difficult for workers with disabilities in general, due to the deregulation of the labour market in many countries, and as a result of pressures on enterprises to remain competitive in an increasingly global market,” says Mr. Taqi, who led the ILO delegation to the Washington Symposium and gave the keynote speech.

“At the same time, the escalating costs to public and private insurance systems of compensating workers who leave employment due to disability are driving a search for strategies to keep in employment such workers who can and want to work,” Mr. Taqi adds. “Some enterprises have found job retention to be a cost-effective option and have developed

their own practices for managing disability.”

The ILO study finds that corporations, unions, insurance and rehabilitation service providers and medical practitioners in many countries are increasingly recognizing the costs of disability and the benefits of return to work. Such organizations are making re-employment the primary objective for the disabled worker who can and wants to continue or return to work.

“New approaches to medical and vocational rehabilitation that emphasize early intervention and rapid return to work have shown positive results,” Mr. Taqi says.

### Union involvement

Unions are becoming involved in the return to work through the direct provision of services, and through disability management programs in the workplace, the ILO says, adding that private insurance providers are introducing more flexible arrangements so that workers who become disabled and attempt a gradual transition to work do not lose their benefits. Companies are looking for ways to reduce costs by introducing disability management programs in the workplace.

“Our analysis of the situation suggests that while any one component of a national system of legislation, regulation, social

security benefits, worker compensation, vocational rehabilitation services, or company level practices may favour return to work, the system as a whole may not,” Mr. Taqi says. “In fact, to the disabled worker, the overall system may offer many incentives *not* to return to work, or disincentives to doing so.”

The ILO says this problem stems from fragmented, uncoordinated and often contradictory policies and practices, and the interplay between different parts of national systems. Discriminatory practices also continue to deny persons with disabilities, as well as workers who become disabled, access to the world of work.

The *Washington Symposium* examined the ILO findings with the goal of identifying promising strategies for encouraging job retention or the return to work for disabled workers. Participants included researchers as well as representatives of government departments, social security agencies, workers compensation corporations, employer organizations, trade unions, rehabilitation agencies and disabled persons organizations from the eight countries examined in the ILO study.

Among the long-term goals of the project is the development of comprehensive, cost-effective strategies involving workers, employers and government agencies, which favour job retention and rapid return to work for disabled workers.

Source: ILO Press Release ILO/98/19

# HIV/AIDS in the workplace

*New ILO study finds some progress, but more needs to be done*

GENEVA – Through its impact on individuals, the pandemic of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) has had a major effect on the workplace. And according to a new study by the ILO, some of the reactions to the prospect of employing persons with a feared and often misunderstood

disease have included such practices as compulsory testing, non-respect of medical confidentiality, and unjust dismissals.

The new study “**HIV/AIDS and Employment**”<sup>\*</sup> addresses the issue of how to deal with the impact of HIV/AIDS and work. Analysing different legal frameworks and describing enterprise practices in 12 countries, the study found

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negative enterprise practices had occurred in some countries that represented infringements of fundamental rights of workers, such as:

● **Compulsory HIV tests:** This practice has been required, either at time of recruitment or during employment, notably in Indonesia, Mexico, where this practice can be seen in large enterprises, in India (especially in the hotel business), South Africa and the Côte d'Ivoire.

● **Non-respect of medical confidentiality:** Many doctors of occupational medicine have been known to disregard medical confidentiality as a result of their subordination to employers. This has been observed in India and Côte d'Ivoire. In the Jamaican companies visited, medical files which might include HIV test results are kept in the same place as other personnel information (CVs, evaluations, etc.). In Mexico, laboratories testing for the virus do not hesitate to return the results to employers in the form of a list of names.

● **Unjust dismissals:** Cases of unjustified dismissals have been observed in Uganda, in South Africa, in the Côte d'Ivoire, in Jamaica and in Hungary. Frequently, the employees concerned are laid off for incapacity for work or are put under pressure to resign.

Except for a few cases, the study notes that on the whole in the countries concerned, many employers have implemented policies based on the rights of persons with HIV/AIDS, in order to eliminate discrimination during recruitment or employment. Moreover, compensation and targeted assistance is often proposed. This is especially the case in France and the United States where the law requires adoption of a practice combining therapeutic part-time work and compensation followed by an invalidity pension.

Other countries such as Thailand, Jamaica, Uganda, South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire in particular, allocate special coverage for workers with HIV/AIDS or allow them to take premature retirement with acquired social security rights. Occupational reclassification measures also encourage people to return to work.

Awareness-raising campaigns, together with a code of conduct within the enterprises are also key factors in any strategy to fight this pandemic. Among the countries studied, South Africa provides an example of positive practices that were initiated to counter negative reactions at the workplace.

Various initiatives observed are proof of the importance of establishing personnel education programmes geared

towards prevention and especially to abate negative attitudes that AIDS has given rise to in the workplace and in private life. It should be noted that in South Africa and in the United States, enterprises have internal resource persons who can organize such awareness campaigns.

AIDS is a problem on a global scale and the world of work has not been spared. Many enterprises have already formed collective agreements, drawn up AIDS education and awareness-raising programmes, and given support to community activities to combat HIV/AIDS.

But it's not only one group's actions: laws, employer initiatives and other actions will make a dent in the wall of discrimination facing persons affected, the study says. It is important to support and encourage lasting participation of all the social actors concerned (States, employers, unions) in this "civic action".

It is in this perspective, which is, after all, vital to the ILO's global message on workers rights, that the ILO study underlines the need to carry out collective and concerted action in order to adopt clear policies based on effective principles of law which guarantee workers' rights without discrimination.

Finally, the report notes that the ILO can play a larger role than it already has, tapping into its experience in workers' education and employers' relations, as well as providing policy advice to States and moral suasion in other intergovernmental bodies regarding furnishing technical assistance to governments, to employers' organizations and to trade unions.

*By Bernard E. Gbézo, Paris*

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\* HIV/AIDS and employment, by Louis N'Daba and Jane Hodges-Aeberhard, ILO Geneva, May 1998.



## Indonesia releases detained trade unionists, ratifies Convention No. 87

GENEVA – The Director-General of the ILO, Mr. Michel Hansenne, has welcomed the decisions of the new Indonesian Government to ratify ILO core Conventions, including No. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948), and to release Mr. Mughtar Pakpahan, President of the Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia, and several of his colleagues, who are members of Indonesia's independent trade union confederation.

Indonesia's Minister of Manpower, Mr. Fahmi Idris, formally notified the Director-General during the June International Labour Conference of the ratification. In an address to the Conference, Minister Idris also indicated the intention of the Government of Indonesia to ratify other ILO Conventions, including No. 105 (Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957), No. 111 (Discrimination – Employment and Occupation, 1958) and No. 138 (Minimum Age, 1973).

Mr. Hansenne said "the ILO stands ready to help Indonesia in the transformation underway." He added that "the ratification of this all-important Conven-

tion represents a major step on the road to institutionalizing democracy and human rights in the workplace."

The ratification of these Conventions would mean that Indonesia would count among the 37 countries which have ratified all seven of the ILO's "core" human rights Conventions.\* To date, Convention No. 87, which guarantees the right of workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining, has received 122 ratifications among the 174 member States.

### Pakpahan released

Mr. Pakpahan was released from Cipinang Prison in Jakarta where he had been held since 1996 on criminal charges relating to civil unrest and alleged subversion, charges which the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association considered as unjustified and deriving from legitimate trade union activities. The ILO Committee has repeatedly called for all criminal charges to be dropped and for Mr. Pakpahan to be released.

The Director-General expressed "the great pleasure that I take from this news,



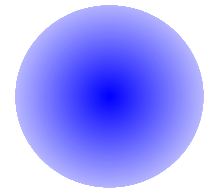
which constitutes an important and positive development with regard to freedom of association.” Mr. Hansenne added he hopes this release of imprisoned trade unionists “will be but one of a series of measures which will contribute to the positive development of the trade union situation in Indonesia and to the full respect of the principles contained in the ILO Conventions on freedom of association.”

Mr. Hansenne also wrote to the released trade unionist, Mr. Pakpahan, assuring him that “the ILO will continue to closely follow the trade union situation in Indonesia, especially with regard to developments concerning the SBSI”.

\*Freedom of association and collective bargaining (Nos. 87 and 98); Forced labour (Nos. 29 and 105); Non-discrimination (Nos. 100 and 111); and Minimum age (No. 138).



Tania Tang/WTO



**U.S. President Bill Clinton speaking about the ILO on 18 May during the World Trade Organization's 50th Anniversary Commemoration. The President said “the WTO and the ILO should commit to work together to make certain that open trade does lift living standards and respects the core labour standards that are essential not only to worker rights, but to human rights.” He added “We must work hard to ensure that the ILO is a vibrant institution.”**

## Conference (cont'd from p. 17)

delegates, put forward fresh approaches to dealing with the issues addressed by the Committee.

The Resolution approved by the Conference invites the Governing Body of the ILO to take measures to have the work commenced by the Committee on Contract Labour completed. These steps are to include meetings of experts to assist the International Labour Office in doing the preparatory work for the future Conference discussion.

## Recommendation stimulates job creation in SMEs

The International Labour Conference adopted a *Recommendation on General Conditions to Stimulate Job Creation in Small and Medium-Size Enterprises* (SME),<sup>2</sup> enterprises which generate more than 80 per cent of new jobs worldwide. A Recommendation sets a non-binding, international benchmark for activities.

In order to create a business environment conducive to the growth and development of SMEs, the Recommendation asks member States to adopt “measures which are appropriate to national

conditions and consistent with national practice in order to recognize and to promote the fundamental role that small and medium-size enterprises can play as regards the promotion of full, productive and fully chosen employment.” The Recommendation also highlights *inter alia* the contribution of SMEs to greater income-earning opportunities, sustainable economic growth, increased economic participation of disadvantaged groups, increased investment, training and development of human resources and a balanced development of local and regional markets.

The Recommendation encourages member States to adopt policies to promote a stable economic environment, as regards inflation, interest and exchange rates, taxation and employment and social stability, remove constraints to the development and growth of SMEs, include specific measures aimed at assisting and upgrading the informal sector to become part of the organized sector, ensure the extension of social protection to workers in SMEs and compliance with social security regulations.

The Recommendation also calls on member States to adopt measures in consultation with representatives of employers and workers, to create and

strengthen an “enterprise culture” favouring initiative, enterprise creation, productivity, environmental consciousness, quality, good labour and industrial relations. It also calls for consideration to be given

***In a “crazy world...250 million children forced to work while 800 million adults are unemployed”.***

The German Minister of Labour, Norbert Blüm (left), brought the participants of a roundtable discussion news from what



he called a crazy world: “250 million children are forced to work and some 800 million adults are out of work.” The Minister asked government, employers’ and workers’ delegates, NGOs and the participants of the Global March to concentrate their fight on the worst forms of child labour, saying “transitional solutions in the abolition of the worst forms of child labour are un-

to the availability of a range of direct and indirect support services to enhance the growth, job-creation potential and competitiveness of the SME sector.

## Committee on Application of Standards

The Committee on the Application of Standards cited two countries in special paragraphs, Myanmar and Sudan, for continued failure to implement ratified Conventions.

In the case of **Myanmar**, the Committee noted severe and longstanding violations of fundamental and trade union rights in the country and persistent non-compliance with the terms and principles of Convention No. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948).

The Committee recalled that the case had previously been discussed on several occasions and that it was "once again obliged to deplore the fact that no government report had been received by the ILO Committee of Experts" despite repeated calls from the Committee. It recalled that Myanmar has already been mentioned in special paragraphs the last two years as being among the cases of continued failure to implement Convention No. 87.

In the case of **Sudan**, the Committee heard evidence of slavery and related

practices in the country, in violation of ILO Convention No. 29 (Forced Labour, 1930). The Committee stressed in its conclusions that "this was a particularly serious case affecting human rights" as witness by the inclusion of Sudan last year in a special paragraph for similar facts. The Committee noted information provided by the Government on measures being taken to track down and bring an end to practices of slavery" and urged that there be "a serious attempt to eliminate slavery throughout the country." In view of the very serious nature of the evidence and the widespread accusations of serious human rights violations in Sudan, the Committee agreed that the case should continue to be mentioned in a special paragraph.

The report of the tripartite Committee on the Application of Standards recorded the views of Conference delegates on current issues of freedom of association and forced labour in the world, as well as problems of application of various Conventions in specific countries.

The Committee based its discussions on the report of the ILO's independent Committee of Experts, which had drawn attention to phenomena arising especially in a time of economic globalization – such as export processing zones, migration for employment, some aspects of the right to strike – and creating problems for application of the leading Convention on freedom of association (No. 87), adopted by the Conference in 1948.

Another issue attracting debate has been forced labour, and especially the case of prisoners who do work for private companies or in privately run prisons. The Committee was told that in, for example, Canada and the United States questions such as prisoners' consent to work and the control exercised by public authorities over prison labour are being looked at in terms of conformity with the ILO's standards. Worker members see the forced labour issue both as one of basic human rights and one of unfair competition: they raised the cases of Malaysia and Singapore, which denounced Convention No. 105.

Over 20 individual cases of the application of ratified Conventions were discussed in detail. The Committee welcomed the move by Indonesia to ratify Convention No. 87 and the release of several trade union leaders, although there remained many problems in applying ILO standards on the right to organize under Convention No. 98 which the Govern-



Jacques Maillard

## Mary Robinson, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights

In the first appearance at an International Labour Conference by a U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights since the post was created by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, Mrs. Robinson said she was "heartened" by the discussion on a proposed Declaration on Fundamental Rights of Workers.

"All countries have human rights problems, and that includes problems with basic labour rights", Mrs. Robinson said. There is no room for anyone anywhere to be complacent in relation to human rights..."

She also urged that a proposed new ILO Convention on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour be approved next year, saying "Is there a better way for the ILO to enter the next millennium than by adopting this Convention? Clearly, there is no better way."

Referring to the Declaration on Fundamental Rights of Workers – on freedom of association, the High Commissioner said she "subscribed fully" to it. "I am pleased to see it so clearly stated."

ment should address soon with ILO technical assistance, and which the ILO supervisory bodies would pursue further.

Application by the Russian Federation of the Convention on wage protection (No. 95) was discussed, revealing continuing difficulty in ensuring payment of wages and the need for effective inspections and penalties for non-payment of arrears.

In all 59 government delegations collaborated with the Committee by providing information on the situation in their countries. The Committee noted 32 fresh cases of progress, and found its proceedings operating under the ILO Constitution a constructive contribution to the social dimension of globalization. □

<sup>1</sup> Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominica, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Poland, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia.

<sup>2</sup> Vote on the Recommendation: Yes – 403; No – 0; Abstentions – 4

acceptable."

He didn't hesitate to give a critical look to the past of his own country: "Bad excuses were also common in Germany in the last century when it came to forbid child labour: first the general situation must improve etc...it was only when the army became afraid that there would be no more healthy soldiers that child labour was forbidden overnight."

"A market economy", the Minister added, "has its own weapons to fight injustice. Nobody is forced to buy carpets woven by children's hands." The Minister gave the ILO a leading role in the fight against child labour, warning that action was needed more than analysis of the problem.

*The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) goes back to a German initiative. The Assistant-Director General of the ILO, Ali Taqi (centre), referred to Mr. Bliim as the "founding father of IPEC" – Germany has contributed 100 million DM to IPEC since 1992.*





# Working World

## EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT

● “Affirmative action” has arrived in **South Africa**. The public sector has been dominated by whites. Now, according to a recently announced programme, public sector employment will be diversified. Thus, between now and the year 2000, measures should be taken so that 50 per cent of the country’s public service jobs are held by blacks, while 30 percent are held by women and 2 per cent by disabled persons. The government says these “quotas” are mandatory, and should be implemented by managers if they want to keep their jobs. Parliament is to oversee the implementation of the quotas. (*Jeune Afrique*)

● The booming U.S. economy is bearing fruit in terms of creating new jobs. Last April, the unemployment rate in the **United States** fell to its lowest since 1970: 4.3 per cent of the economically active population, down from 5 per cent in April of last year. Most of the 262,000 new jobs were created in the service sectors. In addition, wages have been on the rise over the last 12 months and the 4.4 per cent increase recorded is the highest since 1983. Nevertheless, there is still no sign of inflation. (*Le Figaro*)

● As unemployment hit record highs in **Japan** recently (3.9 per cent in March), workers and the unemployed took their unease to the streets in

## A regular review of trends and developments in the world of work

the first May Day protest in seven years. Marchers expressed their concern over the rise in unemployment, and concerns that the lengthening economic slump may mean less welfare benefits. (Japan provides unemployment benefits for a maximum of 300 days.) Workers reportedly believe “the worst is yet to come” prompting fears that the crisis could upset the social stability has been the bedrock of Japanese culture for decades. (*Source: Financial Times, 8 May 1998*)

## ECONOMIC NEWS

● Economic indicators in **Uruguay** have improved. The GDP grew by a healthy 5.1 percent last year, above the average of 3.75 per cent achieved since 1985. Household purchasing power was up by 3.3 per cent during the quarter ending in January, while during the past year, the inflation rate fell by half (12.3 per cent compared to 23.7 per cent). For the first time in 40 years, Uruguay seems to be

within arm’s reach of single-digit inflation. (*Latin American Monitor*)

● In **Mauritania**, salaries in certain sectors are increasing. In an announcement, the government said an increase of 15 per cent was granted in the low salaries prevailing in the public sector, as well as a increase of the same amount in retirement pension benefits. (*Source: Marchés Tropicaux, No. 61*)

● **The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)** is re-orienting its financing towards local communities and “civil society”. In 1997, 10.2 percent of its financial assistance went to education, compared to 4.2 per cent for the same sector between 1961 and 1997. In addition, 13.2 per cent of the funds were earmarked for “social investments”, compared to 4.3 per cent in 1961-1997 and some 11.3 per cent went to urban development (compared to 6.3 per cent). (*Source: Le Monde, 5 May 1998*)

● Micro-credit schemes are developing in **Morocco**. The new schemes are geared toward small producers or businesses which until now were without access to classic forms of credit (or could only obtain funds with absolutely prohibitive interest rates). This has been made possible by associations or foundations, assisted by international organizations or in cooperation with certain banks. Among the beneficiaries, 92 per cent are women from the rural or semi-

● **Labour disputes on the decline?** Reports say yes.

The employers’ confederation in **Spain (CEOE)** notes that between 1996 and 1997 the number of labour conflicts decreased by about 20 per cent (707 in 1997 against 883 in 1996 and 1,212 in 1995). This has reduced the number of work hours lost by 11 per cent.

In **Finland**, the Work Tribunal decided to abolish one of its two sections as the number of cases it

handled annually had declined from a high of 244 in 1987 to 100 cases a year since 1993.

In **France**, the number of working days lost fell by 21 percent between 1996 and 1997, marking an all-time low for the past 50 years. The number of workers on strike was reported at 109,299 out of 16 million wage earners, the lowest rate since 1935.

(*Source: Social International, April 1998; Libération, April 16 1998*)

urban areas. The proportion of micro-credits which are paid back has reached 95 per cent, compared to a rate of non-payment in the classic credit sector of 35 per cent. (Source: *Jeune Afrique*, 19-25 May 1998).

## AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

● In the province of Thua Thien-Hue, **Viet Nam**, trade unions have launched an information campaign on awareness of HIV-AIDS among workers. Some two thousand workers have already attended awareness-raising workshops. At the end of 1997, the province reported 42 persons infected with HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus which causes AIDS), either people with the disease and six persons who had died of AIDS. (Source: *Vietnamese Trade Union No. 2*, 1998)

## LABOUR ISSUES

● The Labour Government of the **United Kingdom** has announced an ambitious reform in trade union legislation. Employers will be now required to pay half of the expenses incurred towards organizing votes on the recognition of trade unions, while employees may bring a case for unfair job termination after only one year of employment, instead of the previous requirement that they work two years in order to have the right to do so. In case of a conflict with an employer, every worker can be assisted by a trade union whether or not it is recognized by the enterprise. Employers are unhappy with this move. Trade unions are also protesting because recognition of a trade union requires a favourable vote of 40 per cent of the total number of workers in an enterprise instead of, as they had proposed, only a majority of votes cast. (Source: *Le Temps*, May 1998)

● A paralyzing, nationwide strike in **Denmark** by nearly 500,000 workers in the transport, industrial, service and building sectors in April 1998 demanding a sixth week of paid holiday has prompted the Government to seek new legislative measures. A new draft law, presented to the Folketing, would require the return to work of those on strike but also grant the additional holiday. In order to win the support of Conservative and Liberal politicians, the law also provides for lower contributions by employers to retirement funds to finance the additional week of holiday. (Source: *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, April 1998)

● In **Australia**, a five-week strike by dock workers which had paralyzed the country's ports has resulted in a partial victory for the so-called "Wharfies". An appeals court in charge of arbitrating the conflict ordered the re-employment of some 1,400 dock workers who had been fired *en masse* by their employer, a stowage company, in an apparent victory for the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA). Meanwhile, government officials have vowed to fight for "reform on the wharves" while stowage companies are seeking legislation that will redefine productivity in the sector. (Source: *Le Figaro*, 8 May 1998, *Reuters*, 7 May 1998)

## WORKING CONDITIONS

● The multinational retailer **IKEA** and the **International Federation of Building and Woodworkers** (IFBWW) recently signed an agreement relating to working conditions, the environment and health and safety for workers at IKEA's suppliers all over the world. According to the Code of Conduct, IKEA will demand that its supplier's workers enjoy working conditions which at

## ● Reduced working hours: Snapshot of Europe (and the United States)

In **France**, the Parliament voted a law foreseeing the move to a 35-hour week between now and the year 2000 or 2002 based on the size of the enterprise. In **Italy**, a law was proposed by the government, foreseeing the same legal work week in 2001 for enterprises employing more than 15 persons. In **Germany**, trade unions are divided on demanding 30 hours per week. In **Spain**, the Secretary-General of the UGT is asking for a reduction in the legal duration of work to 35 hours per week at the beginning of the next century, without any cut in salary. (Source: *Social International*)

Here is a table showing the evolution of the conventional length of working time in industry between 1987 and 1997\*

State	Annual conventional average duration of work (in hours)		Modification in percent of working time
	1987	1997	
Portugal	2,025	1,823	-10
West Germany	1,716	1,573	-8.3
Japan**	2,138	1,990	-6.9
Denmark	1,756	1,665	-5.2
Finland	1,784	1,716	-3.8
Italy	1,800	1,736	-3.6
Switzerland	1,913	1,844	-3.6
Ireland	1,864	1,802	-3.3
Belgium	1,756	1,702	-3.1
Sweden	1,800	1,752	-2.7
The Netherlands	1,748	1,715	-1.9
Austria	1,743	1,713	-1.7
Spain	1,800	1,782	-1.0
Luxembourg	1,800	1,784	-0.9
United States	1,912	1,904	-0.4
Norway	1,740	1,733	-0.4
United Kingdom	1,778	1,774	-0.2
France	1,771	1,771	+/-0
Greece	1,840	1,840	+/-0

\*The number of potential working days was 261 in 1987 and in 1997.

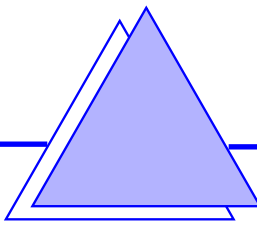
\*\* Working time on average during the period 1986/1996 in enterprises of at least 30 workers.

least comply with national legislation or national agreements. The suppliers must also respect the relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations applicable to their businesses. This means that child labour is not acceptable and that workers shall have the

right to join trade unions and to free collective bargaining. The joint statement issued by IKEA and IFBWW said these rules already apply to manufacturing companies owned by IKEA. (Source: *IKEA, IFBWW Press Release*)

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## AROUND THE CONTINENTS



### “JOBLESS GROWTH” IN SOUTH AFRICA ?

The global debate over “jobless growth” is moving south. The latest focus is the southern African region and especially South Africa, where three years of accelerating economic growth have nonetheless seen declining employment in key industrial sectors. But a preliminary ILO report, *Patterns of Economic Growth and Employment in SADC* (Southern African Development Community) warns against jumping to hasty and negative conclusions about growth prospects in the regional labour market as the arguments in support of “jobless growth” are not supported by the hard facts. In South Africa, the currently weak employment response to the strengthening national economy is seen as the result of temporary factors – rather than chronic trends – in the post-apartheid, restructuring and liberalizing economy. For example, restructuring in the context of globalization has exerted short-term pressure on formal sector labour markets, while businesses and employers have adopted a wait-and-see attitude to future labour market policies. Furthermore, the report says, South African employment has been statistically undercounted – and unemployment exaggerated.

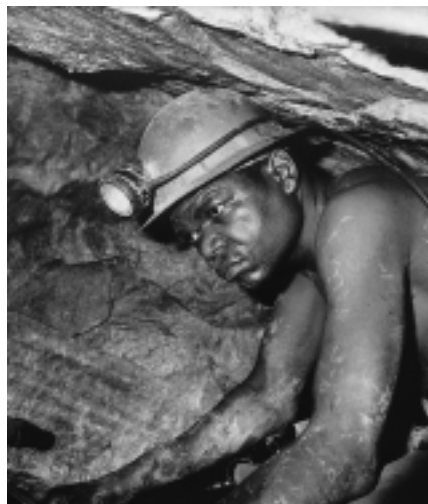
*For further information please contact Mr. Peter Peek, Director, ILO Southern African Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (SAMAT), Harare (Zimbabwe), phone +263-4/759438; Fax: +263-4/759373; e-mail: makaha@ilo.org*

### LABOUR MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

Migrants are not the primary factor behind the South African unemployment crisis, argues another ILO report on *Labour Migration to South Africa during the 1990s*. It blames internal factors such as the move in recent years towards more capital-intensive forms of production which employ fewer workers. The report notes that the number of formally-contacted labour migrants has declined dramatically over the last decade. In the key mining sector, for example, employment of foreigners

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

has fallen from 600,000 in the early 1950s to just over 150,000 in the mid 1990s. At the same time the number of forced repatriations of illegal migrants rose by 300 per cent between 1990 and 1995.



CIRIC

The ILO recommends a less politicized and more considered analysis of the migration problem grounded in the emerging reality of regional integration and proposes a Regional Reconstruction and Development Plan to enhance future regional integration and labour market stability.

*For further information please contact Mr. Peter Peek, Director, ILO Southern African Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (SAMAT), Harare (Zimbabwe), phone +263-4/759438; Fax: +263-4/759373; e-mail: makaha@ilo.org*

### MORE AND BETTER JOBS FOR WOMEN

Global women’s economic activity rates have climbed from 54 per cent in 1950 to 67 per cent in 1996 and are expected to reach almost 70 per cent in 2010. Yet, despite this steady but slow progress, inequalities persist on a global basis. Depending on their home country, women earn between 50 and 80 per cent of average male wages. The first action plans in the context of the *International Programme on More and Better Jobs for Women* were completed in Estonia, Pakistan and Tanzania. Action plans focused on the strengthening of women’s representative institutions, the legal framework and bet-

### ILO TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN 1997

The year 1997 saw the expansion of technical cooperation approvals. Total approvals increased by 6 per cent, rising from US\$114.5 million in 1996 to US\$121.4 million in 1997.

Of this amount, multi-bilateral approvals were US\$60.2 million or approximately 50 per cent of total approvals in 1997. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) registered a remarkable increase of 81 per cent as a major contributor to ILO technical cooperation activities.

The approval levels were highest for development policies (US\$33.3 million), employment and training (US\$25.2 million) and enterprise and cooperative development (US\$23.4 million), followed by working condi-

tions and environment (US\$11.4 million) and social security (US\$11 million).

In terms of geographical distribution, African, European and Arab States regions have experienced an important increase in approvals. Africa accounts for 46 per cent of the total approvals, followed by Asia and the Pacific and inter-regional projects and programmes (17 per cent each).

*For further information please contact Mr D. Duysens, Promotion of Active Partnership and Technical Cooperation Department of the ILO (PROPAR/TEC), tel. +4122/799.6379; fax: +4122/799.6668; e-mail: duysens@ilo.org*

ter information on the labour market for women as well as employment promotion activities for specific target groups. Similar programmes have been launched in Burkina Faso, Mexico and the West Bank and Gaza.

*For more information please contact Ms. Lin Lean Lim, International Programme on More and Better Jobs for Women, tel. +41-22-799.7843; e-mail: lim@ilo.org*

### WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

Women are breaking new ground as trade union leaders, thanks to an ILO project fostering the integration of women in rural workers organizations in Ghana, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Women are now members of the National Executive Committees in Ghana and Uganda, a woman has become a member of the International Executive Committee for the Agricultural Trade Group of the International Food Workers Union (IUF) for Ghana, and another has become acting General Secretary in Zambia. Another beneficial effect of the project was an increase in trade union membership among women and men in all four countries, including over 20,000 new members in Ghana and nearly 7,000 in Zambia.

*For more information please contact Mr. Enevoldsen, Bureau for Workers Activities, tel. +4122/799.6691; fax: +4122/799.6570; e-mail: enevoldsen@ilo.org*

### NEW JOBS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The ILO-DECO (*Development of construction enterprises producing local building materials*) project has made a significant contribution to the development of the construction industry in several countries. Over its ten years of existence, it helped to create over 250 enterprises in 12 countries in Africa and Southeast Asia, generating more than 2,500 jobs and resulting in the construction of over 20,000 buildings roofed with local building materials. Support services by various private or semi-private local bodies enjoying large financial and managerial autonomy assure the sustainability and profitability of these newly created enterprises in the construction sector. The use of low-cost raw materials also facilitates access to affordable housing. The project is part of the ILO's activities to promote small and medium-sized enterprises.



Jacques Maillard

*For further information please contact Mr. Brys, Entrepreneurship and Management Branch (ENT/MAN), tel. +4122/799.6447; fax: +4122/799.7978; e-mail: brys@ilo.org*

### FOREIGN LABOUR PROBLEMS IN EASTERN EUROPE

Central and Eastern European countries have experienced great difficulties in dealing with the steady increase in the numbers of unauthorized migrant workers since the lifting of the restrictions on freedom of movement which existed in many cases up to 1989. To help the countries take stock of the situation and identify policy options, the ILO initiated the "Informal Network on Foreign Labour in Central and Eastern Europe" in 1995. The two annual meetings of the Network in Budapest in 1996 and Bratislava in 1997 have already improved cooperation between 13 countries in the region on migration issues. The Network's 1998 meeting was held in Prague (11-13 May).

*For further information please contact Mr. Abella, Conditions of Work and Welfare Facilities Branch (CONDI/T), tel. +4122/799.7892; fax: +4122/799.8451; e-mail: abella@ilo.org*

### ENVIRONMENT AND THE WORLD OF WORK

A good example of collaboration between the social partners in the field of environment and the world of work comes from Chile, where several mining companies and the Mineworkers' Federation launched a joint hazard mapping and prevention programme in plants and mines with the support of the ILO. Hazard mapping is a technique originally pioneered by Italian trade unions and subsequently taken up health and safety institutions in Spain and several Latin American countries. It involves the identification of potential hazards by workers and employers, their assessment and the adoption of solutions. In a similar vein, management and workers in a number

of enterprises in Sri Lanka agreed to collaborate for the identification and introduction of cleaner production methods.

*For further information please contact Mr. Takala, Occupational Safety and Health Branch (SEC/HYG), tel. +4122/799.6716; fax: +41-22-799.6878; e-mail: takala@ilo.org*

### PROGRESS IN SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES

A number of ILO member States have registered significant progress in the field of social security in 1996/97:

- Costa Rica included ILO comments in the final text of the draft basic law on social security that is under examination by the national parliament;
- Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines and Namibia participate in new ILO social security projects and show their commitment to carry out reforms;
- Following ILO advice on the application of its Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102),



Jacques Maillard

Latvia is considering changes in national legislation, including reforms of unemployment and pension benefits;

- United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia have adopted legislation establishing national pension schemes covering employees in the formal sector;
- Thailand's social security scheme set up under an ILO project in 1990 is operating satisfactorily. It is primarily concerned with providing entitlement to health care but consideration is now given both to extending the range of coverage and to the introduction of new benefits, in particular pensions.

*For further information please contact Mr. Gillion, Social Security Department, tel. +4122/799.6633; fax: +4122/799.7962; e-mail: gillion@ilo.org* □



## Media focus on...

# The social crisis in Asia and the International Labour Conference

- ✓ – ILO calls for new policy responses to the crisis in Asia
- Social Crisis in Asia: ILO meeting identifies areas for priority action (ILO Press Releases Nos. 98/15 and 98/18)

## The Economist

April 25<sup>th</sup> - May 1<sup>st</sup> 1998

### Asia's new jobless

The countries of East Asia need to give unemployed workers better protection. But they can also do more to create new jobs.

(Asian)...governments are under pressure at home and abroad to play a greater role in protecting workers. Typical of this thinking is a report presented this week to a conference in Bangkok of East-Asian employment ministers, trade unionists and employers. In it, the International Labour Organization (ILO) argues that East Asia needs greater social protection for the unemployed (jobless benefits and state pensions) and stronger trade unions. "Just as the Great Depression forged a new social contract in many industrialized countries", it argues, "so too must the current Asian crisis be an impetus to creating a more socially-oriented model of development."

Up to a point, this is right. In the past, Asian governments got away with little or no unemployment benefit because rapid growth created lots of new jobs, and firms provided "jobs for life" in return for government favours. In the face of the present economic crisis, many governments have bought time by sending foreign workers home. But they will indeed eventually need to put in place some minimum safety net. This needs to be designed with care.

## Bangkok Post

(Thailand) 26 April 1998

ILO calls for more market regulations  
Discrimination and child labour debated

ILO's chief policy analyst Eddy Lee wrote in a report issued earlier this week that some Asian countries were poorly prepared to cope with the economic turmoil that had engulfed them so quickly.

He said crony capitalism, a blinkered approach to growth, and a lack of democratic balanced during the preceding Asian boom had all delayed development of the social structures needed to deal with a crisis of this magnitude.

In the countries following IMF policies, Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand, unemployment was expected to double this year and rates of absolute poverty were also expected to rise sharply, the report said.

Lee said the strength of traditional safety nets in Asia, such as the extended family networks and the ability of city dwellers to return to rural roots, was exaggerated and inadequate to cope in the current conditions.


## THE OBSERVER

(Indonesia), 23 April 1998

### Lack of democracy behind Asian crisis

Bangkok – The International Labour Organization (ILO) yesterday struck out at international financial institutions for failing to deal with the social impact of the region-wide economic turmoil.

Speaking at a conference here, ILO director-general Michel Hansenne also said that a lack of democracy in the region was at least in part responsible for the crisis and the severity of its aftermath. – AFP



KUWAIT AL - QABAS, Tuesday 21 Apr. 1998

مستدفع ملايين العمال للبطانة

منظمة العمل الدولية تحذر من الآثار الاجتماعية للأزمة الاقتصادية في آسيا

Al - Qabas, Tuesday 21 Apr. 1998  
Millions of Workers will Pay for Unemployment  
ILO warns of the social consequences of the economic crisis in Asia

## Handelsblatt

(Germany) 16 April 1998

### SÜDOSTASIEN/Bericht der Internationalen Arbeitsorganisation über die sozialen und politischen folgen der Krise

#### AUSLÄNDISCHE ARBEITER IN SÜDOSTASIEN

(Angaben in Tausend, geschätzt)

	ausländ. Arbeiter gesamt	Anzahl der Arbeiter nach Herkunftsland <sup>1)</sup>				
		Indonesien	Philippinen	Thailand	China	and. asiat. Länder
Malaysia	2 500	755+(1 000)	100+(400)	79+(33)	k.A.	305
Thailand	1 260	k.A.	5	k.A.	80	944 <sup>2)</sup>
Singapur	450	100	60	80	46	k.A.
Japan	1 354	k.A.	84+(43)	18+(39)	234+(38)	680 <sup>3)</sup> +(88)
Hongkong	k.A.	50	120	18	k.A.	39
Taiwan	297	9	84	138	21	k.A.
Südkorea	210	15	23+(15)	9+(6)	28+(49)	56+(20)

<sup>1)</sup> geschätzte illegale Migranten in Klammern; <sup>2)</sup> hauptsächlich Burmesen; <sup>3)</sup> ca. 680 000 registrierte Koreaner in Japan; Quelle: ILO



วันพฤหัสบดีที่ 23 เมษายน พ.ศ.254

# กรุงเทพธุรกิจ

## ไอแอลโอชี้ไทยแก้ปัญหาเลิกจ้างไม่ดีพอ

● ระบุการสร้างงานไร้ประโยชน์ถ้าขาดหลักประกัน-อำนาจต่อรอง

### BANGKOK BUSINESS

(Thailand) 23 April 1998

“The ILO report indicated that the measures taken by the Thai government in dealing with the problem of retrenched workers were inadequate.”



(Spain) 20 April 1998

La OIT prevé que el alto paro generará disturbios en Asia  
La respuesta de los gobiernos afectados se cree inadecuada

...Según la OIT, el brusco abandono de las altas tasas de crecimiento que disfrutaba Asia desde hacía un decenio significa que el impacto de la tormenta financiera será mucho más severo que las consecuencias de la crisis mexicana de peso. ...En el estudio titulado «El impacto social de la crisis económica» ... la OIT afirma que las consecuencias de la crisis fueron agravadas por la ausencia de una red de protección social.



86th International Labour Conference  
(ILO Press Releases Nos. 98/23-98/28)

**DIE WELT**  
UNABHÄNGIGE TAGESZEITUNG FÜR DEUTSCHLAND  
Freitag, 5. Juni 1998

Kinderarbeit ist nicht nur ein Problem der Dritten Welt

Wer einen generellen Boykott bestimmter Waren fordert, macht es sich zu bequem

Kinderarbeit ist eine Investition auf das Elend der Zukunft. “Diese Analyse im Blick, will Bundesarbeitsminister Norbert Blüm nicht warten, bis Lösungen zur Bekämpfung aller Ausprägungen dieses “Skandals” gefunden werden.

Wier brauchen einen fundamentalen Pragmatismus, fordert der CDU-Politiker. Weil die Eltern arbeitslos sind, müssen die Kinder arbeiten, weil die Kinder zur Arbeit gezwungen werden, können sie keine Schule besuchen. Deshalb werden sie als Erwachsene ebenfalls arbeitslos und ihre Kinder wieder zu Arbeit gezwungen sein. diesen Teufelskreis gelte es zu durchbrechen.

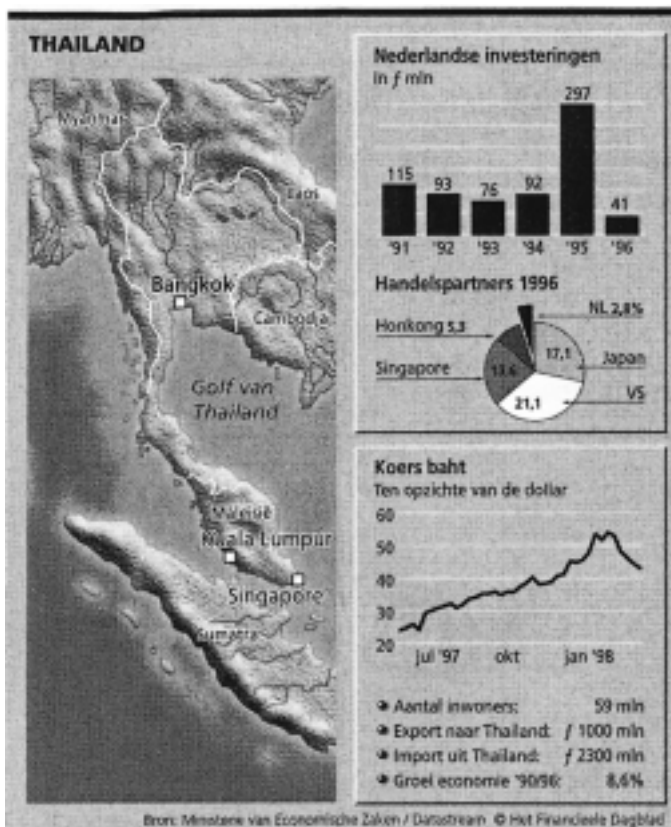
Dieses Ziel hat sich auch die Internationale Arbeitsorganisation (ILO) gesetzt. Delegationen dieser UN-Behörde, denen Regierungsvertreter, Gewerkschafter und Arbeitgeber angehören, wollen in den nächsten Tagen in Genf über ein Verbot zumindest der extremen Formen der Kinderarbeit beraten...

## FINANCIEELE DAGBLAD

### OPKOMENDE MARKTEN

(Netherlands) 8 April 1998

#### Crisis Thailand brengt werkgever tot samenwerking



Bangkok - ...De tendens is positief, maar bereikt is er nog weinig. Een middel om de huidige crisis zo goed mogelijk door te komen, is het tripartiete overleg waarbij de drie partijen, werkgevers, werknemers en regering, bij elkaar komen. De

International Labour Organisation (ILO) heeft onlangs met moeite een eerste overleg georganiseerd. ‘We hebben ze nu een keer met zijn allen om de tafel gehad. Maar we staan nog maar aan het begin’, vertelt Tan Peng Boo van de ILO.



# THE **Observer** INDONESIA

Wednesday 3 June 1998

## RI to ratify ILO pact

Jakarta (IO) – President B.J. Habibie yesterday signified Indonesia will ratify the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention on freedom of assembly and organization, Manpower Minister Fahmi Idris said...

The minister also said that an additional private labor organization will also be given recognition from the government, however he declined to be more specific.

## TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE

Friday 29 May 1998



Genève est au coeur du combat contre le travail des enfants venus des quatre coins du monde, des petits travailleurs arrivent ce weekend à Genève pour une conférence de l'OIT.

# CORREIO BRAZILIENSE

ORÇÃO DOS DIÁRIOS ASSOCIADOS LONDRES, 1808, HIPÓLITO JOSÉ DA COSTA, BRASÍLIA, 1962  
Brasília, Distrito Federal, quarta-feira, 3 de junho de 1998

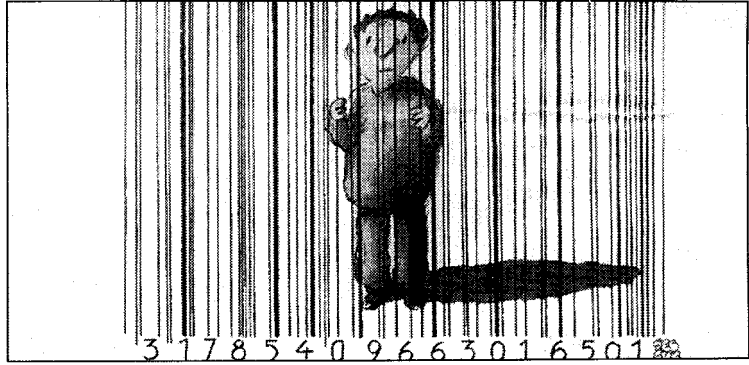
COMBATE AO TRABALHO INFANTIL

**3** EXEMPLAR DE ASSINANTE  
DE JUNHO DE 1998

Centenas de crianças procedentes da América Latina, Ásia e África inauguraram ontem no pédio das Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT).

# L'OIT résonne sous les pas des enfants

La Marche mondiale contre le travail des enfants a fait ses derniers pas, hier, au sein même de la Conférence internationale du travail (Assemblée générale tripartite de l'OIT). Cent cinquante marcheurs, munis de banderoles bariolées et scandant des slogans le poing levé, ont pénétré dans une salle comble de délégués, qui se sont levés pour les applaudir.



Dessin réalisé par Selcuk (Turquie), extrait du recueil «Dessine-moi un droit de l'homme», paru aux éditions de l'EIP.

## LE COURRIER MERCREDI 3 JUN 1998

### Al Hayat, Egypt, 3.6.98

ILO facing the globalization challenges. Fighting child labour and the "social factor".

منظمة العمل الدولية امام تحديات جديدة: مكافحة عمل الاطفال و"الشرط الاجتماعي"

### France Soir, 23 mai 1998

## Esclavage

L'appel des enfants du monde

Ils sont une vingtaine, venus d'Inde, du Brésil et du Bangladesh parcourir 98 pays. Objectif : saisir l'opinion mondiale pour faire cesser ce scandale



### IVOIR' SOIR

3 juin 1998

24 heures

PROTESTATION

SUISSE

## Les enfants contre leur exploitation

Des centaines d'enfants venus d'Asie, d'Afrique et d'Amérique latine ont ouvert hier la conférence internationale du travail dans le grand hall de l'ONU à Genève au terme d'une marche symbolique pour soutenir un projet de traité contre le travail des enfants dans le monde.

"L'histoire est témoin aujourd'hui d'un moment unique où les victimes de l'esclavage, de la dépendance et de l'exploitation partout dans le monde ont frappé au portes des Nations unies", a dit Kailash Satyarthi, l'organisateur de la marche mondiale des enfants.

*In print*

# Media shelf

■ **Safety and health in forestry work: An ILO code of practice**, ISBN 92-2-110826-0, Price: 27.50 Swiss francs.

This new Code is designed for most countries and enterprises. It covers all types of forestry workers, including groups with above-average accident statistics such as contractors, the self-employed and forest farmers. It does not focus on technical measures and safe performance, but emphasizes that safety starts at the top – at the national level, in enterprises and at worksites. It outlines a safety management system for enterprises that integrates safety into overall management, and provides for training and mandatory skill certification as key conditions for safety in forestry.

The code applies to all forestry activities and all organizations and individuals whose activities influence the safety, health and welfare of forestry workers.

This book aims to protect workers from hazards in forestry work and to prevent or reduce the incidence of occupational illness or injury. It is especially valuable for those countries and enterprises which lack relevant regulations and guidelines. Several countries have already decided to use the code to revise their national regulations.

■ **Employee ownership in privatization: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe**. Experts' policy report. ILO, 1998. ISBN 92-2-111011-7.

Along with privatization and the emergence of a great variety of different property forms in Central and Eastern Europe,

the important question of "corporate governance" has recently become the focus of the debate on transition economies. While several privatization issues have been widely studied, a closely related aspect which has received considerably less analytical attention is the development of employee share-ownership.

The aim of this policy report is to describe the extent and likely impact of employee ownership on the transition process under way in Central and Eastern Europe and to present its particular strengths and deficiencies as a privatization strategy; on this basis, we provide a number of concrete policy options to governments, employers, and em-

ployees and their respective representatives.

The aim pursued here by the ILO is not to favour one form of privatization over another, but to help governments and social actors which decide to develop employee ownership as a possible privatization form to do so under the best possible conditions.



■ **Work organization and ergonomics**, edited by Vittorio Di Martino and Nigel Corlett. Price: 25 Swiss francs. ISBN 92-2-109518-5

This book is intended to demonstrate how to use the potential of ergonomics and of work organization to improve working conditions, increase productivity and enhance quality and performance.

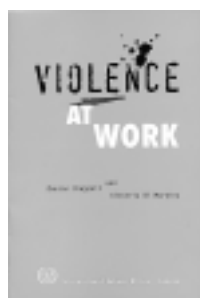
In the past few years, profound changes have occurred in the way efficient companies are run. This book draws together some of the basic changes now being applied by enterprises around the world and explains briefly what they are and how other enterprises can start to benefit from them.

It looks at practical aspects of the operation of enterprises

■ **Violence at work**, by Duncan Chappell and Vittorio Di Martino. ILO, Geneva. ISBN 92-2-110335-8. Price: 25 Swiss francs.

The workplace has traditionally been viewed as a relatively benign and violence-free environment, in which confrontation and dialogue form part of normal operations. Workers and managers are faced on a daily basis with personal and work-related problems, but dialogue usually prevails over confrontation. People manage to develop efficient and productive activities within the workplace. Sometimes, however, this fails to develop in a positive way; relationships between workers, managers, clients or the public deteriorate, and the objectives of working efficiently and achieving results is affected. When this occurs, as it seems to be with increasing frequency, violence may enter the workplace and make it a hostile and hazardous setting.

Based on rich case-study material and experience, this ILO report addresses the problem, and is intended to constitute a stimulus for action. It is centred on the analysis of existing literature and information, deliberately avoiding the more "sensational" presentations of violence to concentrate on those data, experiences and publications which best help to explain and interpret the roots of violence at work, and



to promote proactive initiatives. It provides worldwide coverage, as violence at work is found in both developing and industrialized nations. However, the information from developing countries is frequently limited, episodic and ill-defined. Thus the report concentrates mainly on industrialized countries, where violence at work is better documented and the field of investigation more homogenous.

The underlying causes of violence at work, rooted in wider social, cultural, economic and related areas, are briefly reviewed. Limited attention is also paid to issues already covered by specific ILO action, such as occupational stress, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual harassment, child labour and migrant workers. Certain technical issues, including violence associated with terrorism or military action, are excluded.

The report is intended to provide a basis for understanding the nature of workplace violence, and ways of preventing it in the future. It highlights best practice and successful methods of prevention, illustrating the positive lessons to be drawn from such experience. It is directed towards all those engaged in combating violence at work: policy makers in government agencies, employers' and workers' organizations, health and safety professionals, consultants, trainers, managers' and workers' representatives.



where knowledge from research and applications of ergonomics and work organization has been utilized to match the work environment to the needs and characteristics of the workers and the processes. The objective is to remove obstacles which hamper the workers' ability to work effectively and efficiently to produce high-quality output. This is to be achieved by creating human-oriented work organizations and ergonomically sound environments, which will lead to major gains for both the workers and the employers.

The study will suit managers, supervisors, workers' representatives, engineers, trainers and consultants, both in developing and industrialized countries.

■ **Chemical Safety, Training Modules.** Asian-Pacific Newsletter on Occupational Health and Safety. African Newsletter on Occupational Health and Safety. International Programme on Chemical Safety. Supplement 1/1998. ISSN 0788-4877, 1237-0843.

This training material is intended for those who need to widen their general knowledge of chemical safety in the workplace. It could be used by those who handle chemicals at work, those who have to decide on safety measures and those who guide and educate others in handling and using chemicals. This package covers different areas of managing chemical hazards and can be used as background material for sessions and discussions.

This material may be freely copied, used, adapted or translated for local educational meetings and workshops (with ref-

erence to the source). The text is also available on computer diskette to modify and reuse where necessary. Limited number of copies available from: *International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS), ILO, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel: +4122/799-6740; fax: +4122/798-6253; e-mail 100043.2440@compuserve.com.*

■ **International Labour Review**, Vol. 137, No. 1, ISSN 0020-7780. 90 Swiss francs, US\$72, UK£44 for a one-year subscription.

The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation in all its forms is the objective of one of the ILO's core labour standards (Convention No. 111, 1958), and anti-discrimination provisions have been incorporated into national legislation in a great many countries. Furthering that objective requires not only a clear conception of the target but also reliable data and information to determine the existence of discrimination and to measure progress in its elimination. Two of the articles and a *perspective* in this issue of the *International Labour Review* contribute to that objective in respect of discrimination against women.

The first article, by Derek Robinson (well known for his exceptional expertise in analysing pay structures) provides the results of an examination of differences in occupational earnings by sex. Using all available desegregated data (from the ILO's October Inquiry) that allow the comparison of like activities, he shows empirically the extent of inequality in earnings between persons in the same occupation. Detailed results are given for two major occupational groupings – for medical personnel and for

public service, banking and insurance. This is the kind of systematic analysis that is necessary in order to determine where unequal pay for substantially similar work occurs – a crucial step in redressing discrimination-based inequality in pay.

Next, Julie Nelson (an economist who has published widely on gender issues), discusses some of the biases that inhibit analysts from taking due account of women's roles. Her focus is on the traditional ways in which academic specialties delimit subjects for analysis, often leaving out the messy questions less amenable to quantitative approaches. Following a critique of narrow economic analysis she suggests other paths worth exploring.

One of the *perspectives* then completes the coverage in this issue of gender issues. Drawing on background material she prepared for an ILO meeting and reflecting on the debates, Linda Wirth (ILO) discusses women's substantial gains in management and what still remains of the "glass ceiling" that hinders their rise to the very top of corporate management.

The focus then turns to workers – first, their provision of venture capital, then their experience in the course of transition to a market economy. Pierre Laliberté analyses the labour-sponsored venture capital corporations in Quebec that have made possible the provision of direct investment in a number of smaller firms that might otherwise have succumbed, for lack of financing. Several institutions have been created in Canada to facilitate the channelling of workers' funds to firms, and this analysis helps to show how they work and their potential value.

Academics in Poland and the United States (Mary Winter, Earl W. Morris, Krystyna

Gutkowska and Marzena Jezewska-Zychowicz) undertook to study what happened to individual workers in the process of transition. A representative sample of a fairly typical Polish province covering the period a few years before and after the change in regime in 1989 provides the basis for examining the transition at a more human level. While the results are not so surprising – that many workers were engaged in the same activity before and after, and that those with better education, good health and relative youth fared better – this micro-level study complements the more common macroeconomic and strategic analyses of the transition process.

In a *perspective* on the social implications of the Asian crisis that has gripped world markets since the summer of 1997, Eddy Lee (ILO) explains the origins of that crisis and the near-term outlook. Workers, whose rising productivity helped to create the Asian miracle, were obviously not to blame for the crisis that arose first in financial markets and has subsequently had dramatic effects on the economies of the affected countries, on employment and on political fortunes. This overview helps to put in perspective the various forces – international and national – that are at play in these high-stakes games.

The *books* section of this issue starts with a review of a book on the management style of large enterprises in the United States in recent decades: Masuru Ishida reflects on that empirical analysis comparing it to information on other major industrialized countries. Along with other reviews and book notes, information is provided on documents for the 1998 Session of the International Labour Conference.

ILO publications on sale can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or directly from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel: +4122/799-7301; fax: +4122/799-6938; <http://www.ilo.org>. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address. The ILO Publications Center in the US can be contacted at tel: +301/638-3152; fax: +301/843-0159; E-mail: [ILOPubs@Tasco.com](mailto:ILOPubs@Tasco.com); Web site: <http://www.un.org/depts/ilowbo>.

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## The Employment and Investment Policy (EIP) Programme:

# Creation of employment through the use of local resources for infrastructure development

### What it is

*Lack of access to basic productive resources, basic social services and remunerative employment is one of the biggest problems faced by developing countries. This problem is directly related to poverty and cannot be solved by social or compensatory programmes alone; what is required are investments targeting the poor and not compensation programmes.*

The Employment and Investment Policy (EIP) Programme is a sub-programme of the Development Policies Department (POLDEV) of the International Labour Office (ILO).

Over the past decade the EIP programme has helped more than 40 member States to develop sustainable employment creation policies. Approximately 1 million direct jobs and close to 2 million indirect jobs have been generated in only those investment programmes to which the EIP, with donor support, was directly linked to through demonstration and capacity-building activities. It has also helped to improve the productive social and transport infrastructure in many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia where the majority of its activities are located. Recently, the Programme has been taking new initiatives in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

### What it does

The EIP Programme works with local government units, private contractors and communities in both rural and urban areas in developing countries. It promotes democratization at the grass-roots level by assisting poor people to organize themselves and to negotiate with public authorities for a greater share of, and more control over, national investment resources.



It has helped to forge links between employment policies, private sector development and the promotion of relevant labour standards.

Based on more than two decades of experience with research and development, training, implementation and replication of practical methods of employment-generation through the provision of infrastructure, the EIP Programme:

- at policy level promotes employment by orienting investments towards (i) employment-intensive public infrastructure and (ii) urban and rural works schemes of local community interest. These works are carried out using local resources, local labour and local capacities, which maximise employment and income generation for the poor;

- provides technical advisory and capacity building services relating to employment-intensive interventions for different types of infrastructure (roads, irrigation, soil conservation, water supply);

- upgrades the competitiveness, productivity and cost-effectiveness of local contractors while promoting fair conditions for them to compete in public works;

- promotes participation and empowerment of the working poor by introducing innovative collective bargaining schemes;

- introduces – through relevant labour regulation – fair working conditions and basic labour standards (including the prohibition of child labour, forced and bonded labour and non-discrimination of women) in employment-intensive works programmes.

In this way, the EIP Programme provides Ministries of Labour with a practical and policy tool enabling them to work closely with technical ministries, employers and workers on employment creation and social protection.



The ILO's Employment and Investment Policy (EIP) Programme

# sustainable jobs for developing countries



The Employment and Investment Policy Programme looks at how public and private investments in infrastructure can be oriented towards the creation of productive employment, whom they will benefit and how they can serve the development of a viable local construction industry.



With donor support, the EIP Programme has helped more than 40 ILO member States to undertake employment-intensive infrastructure projects, create jobs and reduce poverty. Some results of the EIP Programme's activities are the generation of approximately 3 million jobs worldwide over the last 10 years and the improvement of rural and urban infrastructure in many developing countries.



In introducing investment policies that take into account both economic and, more importantly, social concerns, the Programme is an important tool to introduce fair working conditions and enforce respect of basic labour standards.

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*For further information please contact POLDEV, phone: +4122/799.6892; fax:+4122/799.6489; e-mail: [poldev@ilo.org](mailto:poldev@ilo.org)*