

**FOR INFORMATION**

FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

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

1. The Office has been reporting regularly to the members of the Governing Body on the progress made in the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy (hereinafter, the “Agreement”), signed by representatives of the Government of Colombia and of Colombian employers’ and workers’ organizations. This Agreement was submitted to the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards at the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference (June 2006) and to the Governing Body at its 297th Session (November 2006). This report will describe the latest developments in this area since the last report was presented to the Governing Body at its 300th Session (November 2007).
2. In accordance with the commitment made by the Office at the 96th Session of the International Labour Conference (June 2007), a high-level mission was carried out from 23 to 28 November 2007 in order to identify any new measures required to guarantee the effective implementation of the Agreement and the technical cooperation programme in Colombia. The high-level mission report will be submitted to this session of the Governing Body.¹
3. In November 2007, implementation of three of the four projects established under the commitments made in the Agreement and financed by the Government of Colombia began in the country. In December 2007, the project coordinators prepared a plan of work drawn up in consultation with specialists from the ILO Subregional Office for the Andean Countries and with the support of the Regional Office for the Americas. In parallel, they conducted a process of analysis, with officials of the Government of Colombia and representatives of the social partners, focusing on the principal themes and content of activities. In February 2008, a tripartite committee on project follow-up will be established. The project on local development will begin in March 2008, once a coordinator has been appointed.
4. For their part, the Director of the Subregional Office for the Andean Countries and the specialists of his team will conduct a new mission to Colombia in February 2008 in order to continue harmonizing the Decent Work Country Programme with the objectives of the

¹ GB.301/17/2.

Agreement. To that end, consultations have already been held with top-level government authorities and the social partners.

5. Since the last report was presented to the Governing Body at its 300th Session (November 2007), the officer in charge of the ILO representation in Colombia has carried out the following activities:
 - He provided guidance to various trade unions and employers' organizations in relation to disputes concerning the implementation of ILO Conventions. As a result, the organizations concerned decided to submit their cases to the Special Committee for the Handling of Conflicts referred to the ILO. The representative also collaborated with an executive committee in order to define the tasks assigned to the technical secretariat as well as the working methods of the Special Committee.
 - He held meetings with officials of the Attorney-General's Office, the special investigation units and the special courts dealing with the backlog of cases, and with human rights officials of the Ministry of Social Protection and the Office of the Vice-President of the Republic in order to coordinate the activities developed at workshops for members of the special investigation units and for magistrates. These activities took place in Bogotá and other cities in Colombia.
 - He participated in meetings of the Standing Negotiating Committee on Labour and Wage Policies held in December 2007 and January 2008, and gave support to the functioning of a working group to reach a consensus on a tripartite workplan to give effect to the commitments made in the Agreement.
 - He held meetings with officials of diplomatic delegations, representatives of employers' and workers' organizations from various counties, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and officials of United Nations agencies. The purpose of these meetings was to consider possible ways of supporting ILO technical cooperation activities in Colombia. The meetings resulted in the possibility of obtaining in the short term the funding required to further strengthen activities relating to social dialogue and the elimination of impunity.
6. Once again, the Office wishes to highlight the continued cooperation of the Government of Colombia with ILO officials in order to guarantee the implementation process of the Agreement. Similarly, the Office acknowledges the readiness of the officials of Colombian workers' and employers' organizations to further develop the commitments made in the Agreement.

Geneva, 19 February 2008.

Submitted for information.