

Note on the proceedings

Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility
Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working
Life in the Chemical Industries

Geneva, 27-31 October 2003

Contents

Introduction	1
Part 1. Consideration of the agenda item.....	5
Report of the discussion	7
Introduction.....	7
Composition of the Working Party	7
Presentation of the report and general discussion	8
Presentation of the report.....	8
General discussion	8
Point-by-point discussion.....	10
Balancing employment security and work flexibility.....	10
Benefits and costs of flexible work arrangements	13
Female participation in the chemical industries.....	14
Work/life balance.....	16
Temporary or contract work	18
Training, education and lifelong learning.....	20
Priority areas for ILO action.....	22
Consideration and adoption of the draft report and the draft conclusions by the Meeting	23
Conclusions on the best practices in work flexibility schemes and their impact on the quality of working life in the chemical industries	24
General considerations.....	24
Employment security and work flexibility.....	24
Benefits and costs of flexible work arrangements	25
Female participation in the chemical industries.....	25
Work/life balance.....	26
Temporary and contract work	26
Training, education and lifelong learning	26
Priority areas for ILO action	27
Part 2. Resolution.....	29
Consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the draft resolution.....	31
Resolution concerning future ILO work programme for the chemical sector	32
Text of the resolution adopted by the Meeting.....	33
Resolution concerning future ILO work programme for the chemical sector	33
Part 3. Other proceedings	39
Panel discussions.....	41

Social dialogue in the chemical industries	41
Discussion	43
ILO tools for improving occupational safety and health in the chemical industries.....	43
ILO standards-related OSH activities – Recent developments.....	43
Strengthening regional and national capacities for implementing the globally harmonized system of chemical classification and labelling (GHS).....	44
Addressing OSH problems in the chemical industry – The Russian Federation experience	45
The international chemical safety cards in the ILO’s occupational safety and health strategy	45
Discussion	46
Closing speeches	47
Evaluation questionnaire	49
List of participants.....	53

Introduction

The Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries was held at the ILO in Geneva from 27 to 31 October 2003.

The Office had prepared a report¹ issued in English, French and Spanish to serve as a basis for the Meeting's deliberations. It addressed the following topics: employment; remuneration; working time; skills, training and knowledge management; shift work and industrial relations.

The Governing Body had designated Mr. V. Klotz, Government member of the Governing Body to represent it and to chair the Meeting. The three Vice-Chairpersons elected by the Meeting were: Ms. A. Cizmek (Croatia) from the Government group; Mr. P. Tomek from the Employers' group and Ms. C. Fraser from the Workers' group.

The Meeting was attended by Government representatives from: Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Central African Republic, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Greece, Guatemala, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Slovakia, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Venezuela and Zimbabwe, as well as 20 Employer representatives and 20 Worker representatives.

Representatives from the following international non-governmental organizations attended as observers: the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mines and General Workers' Unions, the International Organisation of Employers and the World Confederation of Labour.

The three groups elected their Officers as follows:

Government group

Chairperson: Mr. B. Mutetwa (Zimbabwe)
Vice-Chairperson: Mr. B.W.S.Wan Zulfkli (Malaysia)
Secretary: Mr. S. Nakanyane (South Africa)

Employers' group

Chairperson: Mr. F. Ernst
Vice-Chairperson: Mr. A. Buyukuslu
Secretary: Mr. J. Dejardin (International Organisation of Employers (IOE))

¹ ILO, Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries, Geneva, 2003: *Best practices in work flexibility schemes and their impact on the quality of working life in the chemical industries*, 116 pp.

Workers' group

<i>Chairperson:</i>	Mr. M. Mersmann
<i>Vice-Chairpersons:</i>	Ms. V. Burn
	Mr. W. Noling
	Mr. T. Thomas
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mr. R. Green (International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mines and General Workers' Unions (ICEM))

The Secretary-General of the Meeting was Ms. C. Doumbia-Henry, Director of the Sectoral Activities Department. The Deputy Secretary-General was Mr. N. Jennings of the same Department. The Executive Secretary was Mr. Y. Kamakura. The Clerk of the Meeting was Ms. S. Maybud. The experts were: Mr. P. Bailey, Mr. J. Beaulieu, Mr. P. Blomback, Ms. C. Foucault-Mohammed, Mr. M. Hahn, Ms. A. Springfors and Ms. J. Wells.

The Meeting held six sittings.

The Chairperson welcomed the participants and opened the Meeting by laying out the primary task, which was to discuss the development and application of flexible working arrangements and their impact on employment, working conditions, skill development and career prospects in the chemical industries. He emphasized that this sector is essential to other industries, communities and daily life, and highlighted its importance to the world economy. The top 34 multinational chemical companies in 2000 reported more than US\$147 billion in sales. Chemical products accounted for 10 per cent of world merchandise exports in 2001. The sector accounted for 2.4 per cent of total GDP in the European Union in 2002. In the United States in 2001, it generated more than US\$450 billion and employed over 1 million workers. The Chairperson pointed out that the industry was capital- and knowledge-intensive and that employment was centred in large-scale enterprises with a high percentage of engineers and scientists. He also stressed the important role of social dialogue and that this Meeting was a pragmatic forum for it. Tripartism, on which the ILO was founded and operated, was the best means for improving the quality of working life in the sector. He concluded by expressing his desire for the Meeting to reach consensus on the best way forward for the chemical industries.

On behalf of the Director-General, the Executive Director of the Social Dialogue Sector, Ms. Sally Paxton, welcomed the participants to the ILO. She emphasized that the essential elements for the high quality of working life were employment, remuneration, working time, training, workers' health, job security and a decent balance of work and life. She pointed out that, in the past decade, the industrial chemicals sector has lost approximately 2 million jobs as it currently employs about 7 million. There was a significant decline in North America and Europe, while East Asia realized a large increase. Ms. Paxton noted that new remuneration systems were closely linked to measurable economic criteria. Performance-based remuneration systems replaced the traditional wage structures that were based on the type of job or on seniority. As a result, the workplace was now more flat and line managers received greater responsibility and authority. She said that flexibility, in terms of working time, has increased. The way that working time was organized has been changing faster than the number of hours worked in a year. Family-friendly initiatives were fruits of the increase in flexibility and were mutually beneficial to employers and workers. Social dialogue and transparency were means to designing appropriate work patterns and avoiding adverse effects on workers' overall health, safety and health at work and social and family life. Social dialogue has played a pivotal role to date and the key issues for the social partners were the decentralization of negotiations,

trade union recognition and increased employability. In closing, she suggested that the Meeting give consideration, through its conclusions, to the new approach of the Sectoral Activities Department.

Part 1

Consideration of the agenda item

Report of the discussion ¹

Introduction

1. The Meeting met to examine the item on the agenda by way of five thematic discussions. In accordance with the provisions of article 7 of the *Standing Orders for sectoral meetings*, the Officers presided in turn over the discussion.
2. The spokesperson for the Employers' group was Mr. Kjaergaard and the spokesperson for the Workers' group was Mr. Mersmann. The Meeting held five sittings devoted to the discussion of the themes.

Composition of the Working Party

3. At its fifth sitting, in accordance with article 13, paragraph 2, of the Standing Orders, the Meeting set up a Working Party to draw up draft conclusions reflecting the views expressed during the course of the Meeting's discussion of the themes. The Working Party, presided over by the Government Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Cizmek, was composed of the following members:

Government members

France: Ms. Le Gac
Indonesia: Mr. Situmorang
Venezuela: Mr. Hands
Zimbabwe: Mr. Mutetwa

Employer members

Mr. Clerinx
Mr. Kjaergaard
Mr. Niskanen
Mr. Sardi
Mr. Weinspach

Worker members

Ms. Burn
Mr. Mersmann
Mr. Murgó
Mr. Nolingó
Mr. Thomas

¹ Adopted unanimously.

Presentation of the report and general discussion

Presentation of the report

4. The Executive Secretary presented to the Meeting the report that had been prepared by the ILO. It focused on the impact of work flexibility schemes on the quality of working life in the chemical industries. Employment in multinational chemical companies in industrialized countries had slightly declined while in Asia it had increased by about 20 per cent between 1980 and 1997. In qualitative terms, workers were ageing and employment instability was increasing. The report noted that remuneration was an integral part of human resource management and that wages in the chemical sector were generally good, but problems such as wage disparity between workers in the same union and a gender pay gap existed. Remuneration systems have increased flexibility by shifting to structures based on external competitiveness. Competency had been increasing in importance as a standard of appraisal and job promotion. As a result, wage decisions were no longer based on defined duties or on relevant values of work. The report stressed that issues related to working time were important when considering workers' quality of working life. They were also related to career development in the context of the work/life balance. A good work/life balance was mutually beneficial to employers and workers, as it lowered costs for companies by reducing staff turnover. The Executive Secretary emphasized the need to address the gender gap, since women only made up about 30 per cent of the workforce in major chemical producing countries. Female workers were more vulnerable and had been more affected by corporate restructuring, technology changes and the relocation of production. The report suggested that organizational learning had enabled multiskilling based on a flat work organization. It increased transparency and facilitated guidance of workers' career development, while providing workers with objective criteria for their promotion. In closing, he stated that compressed work-week schedules could meet the needs of both employers and workers. Employers benefited from increased productivity while workers could see an improvement in job satisfaction, health and safety, and family life. The best way to improve the health of shiftworkers was to reduce stress and to avoid unsocial or non-traditional work hours.

General discussion

5. The Chairperson of the Employers' group recognized the importance of the Meeting, which was timely in face of the global challenges the industry faced. Most notable were the dilemma between multinational enterprises and small enterprises; the extent of the world the industry spanned – developed, developing and countries in transition; and the implications of mergers, acquisitions and restructuring which were strategies that companies employed in order to adapt to change and to remain competitive. He stressed that the industry, as the backbone of many economies, would remain a major provider for jobs, an issue which was central and which was the concern of all the stakeholders.
6. The Employer spokesperson thanked the Office for the reliable data provided in the report and looked forward to a productive discussion. In particular, he appreciated the examples of good company practices provided. He hoped more examples would emerge during the debate. A fast-changing world economy involved shifts in business cycles and political transition, but it was imperative for the industry to meet these challenges. To do so, it must come to grips with the issue of work flexibility, which had become a permanent feature. Work organization was evolving from the principles of Fordism to flexible open-ended processes of organizational development. These developments held implications for human resources, markets and technology. Instead of a single solution, the industry needed to consider a variety of models which involved increasing flexibility in work organization. Above all, work flexibility afforded new chances to all: it not only harboured opportunities

for continued economic growth, but work flexibility would mean increased competitiveness, and would respond to consumers' demand for high quality goods and services. At the same time such flexibility was a chance for workers to have better jobs involving more responsibility and initiative. It increased job security and was an increasingly common precondition for competitiveness and employment creation.

7. The Worker spokesperson thanked the ILO for the report and its presentation which was very positive. However, there were countries such as Colombia, where trade unionists were killed for exercising their rights and these situations called for urgent action. Dialogue was needed to deal with the issues of flexibility and globalization. Attention should also be given to the second part of the title of the Meeting – the impact of flexibility schemes on the quality of working life. Flexibility was a pre-condition for increased global competitiveness, as long as such flexibility was not equated with exploitation. Workers sought a fair balance since flexibility was not a one-way street. Although questions such as job security and compensation needed to be addressed, the question of flexibility was to the fore. Profitability and shareholder value underscored the question of flexibility, as did gender mainstreaming and further training and qualification. Employers in small and medium-sized enterprises and in multinational enterprises needed to address not only issues of further training and qualification, job security, environment, and safety and health, but also the capacity of individuals to cope with changes in job requirements and new forms of work organization, such as team work. The Workers' group supported further development of corporate social responsibility, but codes of conduct, in particular for multinationals, should be linked to ILO standards. Job security and safety and health were important, especially when enterprises are restructured, outsourced and subcontracted. Governments as well as employers must strive for answers. If success could be secured on the questions of job security and safety and health, there would be a better acceptance of the chemical industries. All partners needed to work together to achieve a successful outcome and there was no scarcity of good examples of labour/management cooperation to that end. At the end of the day it was essential to ensure that workers in a flexible regime were not worse off than less flexible colleagues.
8. The representative of the Government of Venezuela welcomed the report and said it was important that there be a steady improvement in work/life balance in the chemical industries. The ILO's role was vital in promoting social dialogue and collective bargaining. Job stability was essential to the industry and for a stable society. His country's new Constitution had introduced the concept of co-responsibility to avoid conflict. Entrepreneurial well-being, supported by codes of conduct, helped workers to assimilate ideas of competitiveness and efficiency, which in turn meant progress in the industry. Education was a human right and a fundamental task for his Government. It required the full participation of all involved. While it was understandable that competitiveness was of great concern in the industry, flexibility must be regulated by legislation based on collective bargaining.
9. The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe said the Meeting was timely, since the chemical industries were one of the most hazardous of all industries. Accordingly, programmes and systems had to be developed to address this feature. Equally important was the need to strike a good work/life balance. He hoped that the Meeting would generate synergies based on exchange of experiences. Some pharmaceutical companies in Zimbabwe had extended their shareholder portfolio to their workers, an initiative which had benefits for workers and enterprises alike.
10. The representative of the Government of Poland, who was also a representative of the Association of Chemical Engineers of Poland, said that while the Office report was rich in information and statistics it did not propose solutions. One major missing point was the question of human resources, in particular the length of time needed to acquire mature

knowledge. In ten years the knowledge required in the field of biotechnology would be very different from what it was today, so job classification and job profiles needed to be considered if global standards were to be developed. If such standards were not made available over the next 15 years, no one could predict whether any employer could be flexible in the years to come. What was needed was a strategic point of view of how the chemical industries could develop.

11. The Employer spokesperson agreed that flexibility was a precondition to improve competitiveness. It ensured job stability rather than job security. Job stability was the issue at stake. Companies were already addressing corporate social responsibility, and the current individual and voluntary approach should be maintained. Safety and health questions would remain a core concern for the chemical industries, even with a reduced workforce.

Point-by-point discussion

Balancing employment security and work flexibility

12. The Employer spokesperson preferred the term “job stability” to “job security”. In his view job stability and work flexibility were complementary and constituted a precondition for improved competitiveness. Faced with economic globalization and the emergence of fast-growing regions, companies had to be innovative and diversify the modes of work organization in order to respond creatively to market demands and remain viable. Only then would they be able to create jobs with fair benefits and more job satisfaction for workers through multiskilling, and increased responsibility. This called for a culture of lifelong training.
13. A Worker member from Singapore said that it was important to strike a balance between job security and flexibility. In the light of the uncertainties facing the industry, and the need for a win-win situation in terms of both job security and job stability through social dialogue, a legal framework was needed. This should ensure proper representation of the workers. As to the outcome of such dialogue, examples were already to be found in the form of the ILO’s decent work programme, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and ILO safety and health standards. Flexibility did not just mean reducing numbers; it meant meaningful jobs, job satisfaction, and a better quality of life involving even better remuneration and standards of living. The right to organize and to collective bargaining should also be protected. There was no substitute for the process of social dialogue in managing change.
14. A Worker member from South Africa expressed concern that the Employers preferred the term “job stability” to “job security”. For them, it was a question of “job security” or “no job security”. Flexibility should not erode progress already achieved over many years. Issues of flexibility were already regulated in some countries, but care should be taken that working conditions, particularly safety and health, and pay, were not undermined. Agreements should be developed through collective bargaining.
15. The representative of the Government of France recalled the industrial accident which occurred in the AZF factory in Toulouse. Damage was caused to more than 100 businesses, 30 people died and thousands were injured. The French Government initiated a consultation exercise with the social partners to learn lessons. In this way, situations involving subcontracting were identified as creating risk factors because of the dissipation of important data and the watering down of responsibility. A law was adopted in July 2003 with regard to subcontractors. Its main objectives were to ensure greater control of hazards

by principal enterprises on their own premises, by introducing orientation courses for employees of subcontracting firms to enable them to acquire a better understanding of hazards and to improve the conditions of worker representation, in particular those in subcontracting firms. The spirit of the law reflects the Government's intention to promote social dialogue by providing a framework whereby the social partners could negotiate the terms of implementation of some of the provisions of the law, taking into account the particular circumstances of each occupational group and each enterprise.

- 16.** A Worker member from Japan agreed that flexibility was needed, but stressed that social dialogue was as important as flexibility for the development of a company. Frameworks that would ensure social dialogue were needed to allow for successful consultations on flexibility.
- 17.** The representative of the Government of Japan said that flexibility encompassed two distinct areas. One related to a system of flexible work schemes within a company, the other was typically based on the use of short-term contracts, similar to the concept of seasonal work. Social dialogue was important in creating employment systems that balanced, underpinned by governments, workers' interest in stability and companies' interest in flexibility.
- 18.** A Worker member from Algeria agreed that an employment system, which would provide for a way to reconcile the creation of jobs and job stability, was fundamental. The most important achievement for any company was to increase productivity. Changes brought on by extensive subcontracting harmed productivity and took away workers' rights. These changes ignored the fact that job security was essential to remain competitive. Moreover, flexibility had a very different meaning from country to country. The Meeting should therefore strive to find a common definition to create a sound basis for further discussion.
- 19.** A Worker member from Slovakia said that flexibility was important in the collective bargaining process. This put considerable pressure on States to change their labour codes to the disadvantage of workers. Changes included the facilitation of dismissals, short-term contracts and further outsourcing. These changes were problematic for the industry, since they increased stress and work-related risks. It was therefore essential to create national frameworks, based on ILO instruments, to provide for opportunities to negotiate. Most Central European States did not yet provide for social dialogue on a national level, since in some cases, employers' organizations do not exist.
- 20.** The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe stated that the guiding principle should always be the improvement of working life. Job security needed to be retained to prevent psycho-social problems brought about by a lack of dependable work contracts. It was therefore important to ensure the existence of strong bipartite structures which would enable social dialogue and foster stability.
- 21.** The Employer spokesperson stressed that the term "win-win situation" only partially reflected his perception of the advantages brought by increased flexibility, since society as a whole would also be winning, thus creating "win-win-win situations". He illustrated the need for flexibility by referring to bankruptcies brought on by the inability of a company to focus on its core business due to excessive regulation. Subcontracting needed to be left as an option for companies.
- 22.** A Worker member from Argentina reminded the Meeting that the discussion on profitability and flexibility needed to take into account questions such as workers' health and their families. Solutions needed to be found through dialogue to ensure the well-being of workers and to improve productivity, which relied on a healthy labour force.

-
23. The representative of the Government of Venezuela pointed out that job security was becoming more prevalent in collective bargaining. While it was advisable in some countries to soften rigid conditions, national situations differed greatly requiring different approaches. The concept of employability was important and educational programmes needed to improve workers' individual abilities. Vocational training should not only be borne by the State, but also fostered by employers. An ethical balance between stability and flexibility should be achieved that would ensure the stability necessary for workers to perform well.
 24. The representative of the Government of South Africa agreed and pointed out the importance of lifelong learning in the chemical industries due to constant technological change. He informed the Meeting of the efforts in his country to address issues of flexibility through social dialogue. The last national summit between the social partners in June 2003 was a good example.
 25. An Employer member from France explained that social dialogue had been the key to an agreement in his country which permitted better control of safety aspects. A joint agreement, which was endorsed by four out of five trade unions, became the basis of successful national legislation. Solutions that respected local diversity and were satisfactory to all partners had to be found.
 26. The Worker spokesperson said that although situations differed from country to country, the need for social dialogue was universal. In this regard, best practices were often helpful. The creation of a solid basis for social dialogue should be an important outcome of this Meeting.
 27. A Worker member from the Russian Federation said that since employers and workers were colleagues and partners, cooperation was needed to ensure the success of an enterprise. A means to balance employment security and work flexibility was to enable workers to become shareholders. Ninety-five per cent of companies in his country were privately owned and large companies often included workers' representatives as board members. These enterprises were very successful and stable, and provided positive examples of collaboration between workers and employers. Such an approach was essential to ensure flexibility and increase the likelihood of compromise.
 28. An Employer member from Bulgaria referred to the work of the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) and stressed that issues such as best practices (responsible care) and compliance with ISO 14001 and related voluntary health and safety standards were increasingly important. The capacity and representativeness of the National and Chemical Employers' Associations in Central and Eastern European countries were also improved significantly in recent years. Most of them are now associated members of CEFIC.
 29. The Chairperson agreed with an earlier statement by a Worker member from Slovakia and stressed the importance of creating structures to support and ensure social dialogue and suggested that the Meeting should further develop this idea.
 30. The representative of the Government of France, speaking on behalf of the Government group, compared the terms "employment security" and "employment stability". Employment security was a broader concept than employment stability, since it had a macroeconomic dimension as well as relating to working conditions and safety and health. It should be linked to the individual person by providing him or her with a degree of security in career terms and allowing that individual to be integrated into the community, as well as meeting the needs of the enterprise. In times of change there needed to be a degree of flexibility and stability. Although the two terms were not contradictory, employment security was the appropriate one to use.

Benefits and costs of flexible work arrangements

31. The Employer spokesperson supported the concept of lifelong learning. He also stressed that flexibility was about companies and workers requiring individual arrangements and accommodating them as far as possible.
32. An Employer member from Belgium noted that increased productivity was often achieved as a result of flexible work arrangements in lean companies, just-in-time production and concentration on core activities. Different elements could lead to balanced arrangements that optimized the costs and benefits for both employers and workers. Flexibility meant accepting diversity. Constructive employer-worker relations enhanced the capacity to make changes that were mutually beneficial. This could be achieved through mutual trust, a positive attitude towards change through dialogue, timely exchange of information, a transparent approach and through a regulatory framework that was positive towards adaptation and flexibility, with social security systems that covered flexible workers.
33. An Employer member from Sweden informed the Meeting of a flexible system that was introduced through collective bargaining six years ago. Workers could choose between free time, money or pension funds. The results showed that the workers chose equally among the alternatives and highlighted the benefits of different solutions.
34. An Employer member from Mauritius gave an example of a chemical factory that had success in changing from having fixed working posts that created operational difficulties, to a flexible system. Everyone was identified as a “factory worker” and a “pool bonus” to share bonus awards amongst all workers had been introduced.
35. A Worker member from France stressed that the difference between employment security and employment stability was important. Flexibility was not the only element, but aspects such as new technology and management also existed. A mutual understanding of flexibility should be determined. Employers often thought of it as compensation through money, but they should also consider health and work conditions. Different situations required different approaches.
36. A Worker member from Japan talked about flexibility and employment security as a win-win situation. He mentioned an agreement in Japan where his company and trade union recognized the issue of job security as part of their social mission and sought solutions to issues in the collective agreement through social dialogue.
37. A Worker member from Singapore emphasized the need for flexibility. Workers benefited from flexibility by being able to balance work and social life, but they also absorbed most of the costs. He suggested that employers should avoid treating people as commodities. Mutual trust led to a good workplace atmosphere, increased productivity and competitiveness as well as job satisfaction and enrichment and a good work/life balance. He noted the positive examples put forth and called for the reinforcement of the legal framework of freedom of association and collective bargaining. He agreed with the clarification of security and stability given by the representative of the Government of France.
38. A Worker member from the Russian Federation said that the majority of benefits from flexibility went to management while the workers bore most of the costs. He desired a joint solution in a cooperative spirit, where employers and workers worked together to achieve greater and mutual benefits.

-
39. The Worker spokesperson supported the idea of a legal framework for pensions and sickness insurance for part-time workers. Social dialogue was also vital, as was the involvement of trade unions in it.
 40. The representative of the Government of Austria argued that flexible working hours could be profitable. Governments should create flexible frameworks, but they needed to ensure flexibility would not become counterproductive. Different requirements of the various sectors of the industry had to be met.
 41. The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic pointed out the need to agree on a definition of flexibility. Flexibility should be regulated and adapted to different situations. The State should implement a mechanism for controlling flexibility and ensuring that the objectives were met and that the social dimensions were not neglected. There should be systematic interaction between the workers, employers and governments and an outcome that was beneficial to all. Some benefits were abstract while others were tangible. He called for flexibility with a “human face” based on continuing social dialogue.
 42. The Employer spokesperson agreed on the need for a common understanding of flexibility. Flexibility was a means to create competitiveness in companies. However, there were other means too, such as management, technology and investments – they should all work together to improve competitiveness. He also agreed that situations were different both within countries and companies and the stakeholders had different roles. Since many aspects had to be taken into consideration, there was a need for individual arrangements. In most cases workers became more employable through flexibility.
 43. The representative of the Government of France said that the costs and benefits of flexible working arrangements should be assessed at all levels – state, company, enterprise. The State was responsible for social cohesion and ensuring workers’ rights to safety and health; an important issue for the chemical industries. The social partners had to be able to negotiate at the occupational group and enterprise levels on the basis of legislation which had itself been drawn up through consultation.
 44. The representative of the Government of Venezuela said there was a need to coordinate efforts and reach agreements based on an analysis of the various issues. In the current period of transition between full employment and more flexible working arrangements, labour legislation had to be able to accommodate the change. There also needed to be effective education and training to meet the current concern about employability. Employment and security could be achieved if flexibility was based on consensus between workers and employers.
 45. The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe agreed with the points made by the two previous speakers. If the aim was to optimize the benefits and costs, there were clearly defined roles for governments, workers and employers. Governments’ role was to create an environment where the various players could meet and agree on developing flexible work arrangements.

Female participation in the chemical industries

46. A Worker member from the United Kingdom said that the report had many examples of good practice but it also demonstrated many shortcomings with respect to gender equality and equal remuneration. Her trade union was working with forward-looking employers in conducting equal pay audits that determined women’s exact place within an organization. They were a systematic scheme of management and activities within the workplace;

checklists were then drawn up, monitored and evaluated regularly. Similar audits should be carried out worldwide. Companies should be obliged to include in their annual reports explanations of actions being taken to address anomalies in equal opportunities.

47. A Worker member from Canada pointed out that specific working conditions presented obstacles to women's participation in the workforce. Childcare was not the only issue; care of the elderly was an additional responsibility for many women. A tripartite committee in Canada was looking at the recruitment and retaining of future chemical workers. Practices being discussed included family-friendly policies, some excellent examples of which were in the report to the Meeting.
48. The Worker spokesperson concluded that all in society had to work harder to ensure progress. Equality between men and women was often impeded because of differing accessibility to education and training and understanding of everyone's roles.
49. The Employer spokesperson believed there had been a slight increase in women's participation in the chemicals industries. Flexible working arrangements were a specific opportunity for women to increase their share of the workforce, for example through part-time work, including shift work. While cultural factors kept women out of the workforce in some parts of the world, the situation was changing, particularly where there was a lack of workers, such as in some industrialized countries. Many companies had career development programmes that focused on creating a working environment that was more conducive to women workers. The government's role was to provide opportunities for re-education and retraining so that women could re-enter the labour force after a period out of work.
50. The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe considered that governments had to provide an appropriate legislative framework to prevent discrimination against women in the workplace and ensure there were equal opportunities in access to training. A particular problem in the chemical industries was the possibility of women being exposed to chemical hazards during pregnancy. Government had to ensure that women were protected against such hazards.
51. The representative of the Government of Japan said there were many opportunities for governments to promote female employment. The most important role of governments was to change the thinking of society on gender issues in the workplace.
52. The representative of the Government of Austria gave two examples of measures taken by his Government to promote family life and career prospects for women. In 2002, a scheme to provide financial support for children under 30 months (two-and-a-half years) was introduced. As a consequence, the number of employed women increased by 23,000. The Government was also promoting part-time work for new parents, protection against dismissal and the right to return to the former job after parental leave.
53. The representative of the Government of Greece pointed out that the report noted the lack of gender equality in the chemical industries. Women themselves believed this was particularly true with regard to promotion and salaries. In order to ensure the advancement of women there was a need for legislation on working hours, as well as continuous training so that women could regain their place in the workforce after maternity leave. There was legislation in her country on working hours, occupational safety and health, parental leave, and equal pay. The concept of lifelong training should be implemented by the State and the enterprise.
54. The representative of the Government of France drew attention to the importance of comparative studies of the professional situation of men and women. Such studies would

highlight any discrepancies in the opportunities provided for men and women and would facilitate corrective measures in areas where they were needed. European legislation on parental leave provided for both women and men to work part time, or to stop working for a time. Pregnant women should be informed of the risks attached to exposure to reproductive toxins and, where appropriate, transferred to less hazardous work and assured of being able to return to their previous position at the appropriate time.

55. The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic said that measures were needed to ensure equal pay for equal qualifications. His country's Labour Code provided for 14 weeks' maternity leave, nursing hours before work, and job protection for women taking maternity leave. The Government was preparing proposals to build crèches and childcare centres so that women might have sufficient time to undertake training.
56. A Worker member from France said that although an appropriate legislative framework existed in his country, the laws were often not applied.
57. A Worker member from Austria noted that women wanted equality and not special treatment. Men were also exposed to risks in the chemicals industry. If the risks were high there had to be protection for all. Access to training and promotion should also be equal.
58. A Worker member from Argentina pointed out that women suffered from discrimination throughout the world but the situation differed from country to country. In Argentina, women comprised 30 per cent of government and 30 per cent of the committees of trade unions. Flexibility was important in the context of workers' rights. In the chemical industries, women were more vulnerable to the effects of contamination at the workplace because of their role as mothers. All workers should be protected, but special protection should be afforded to women.
59. The Employer spokesperson reiterated that flexible working practices provided a great opportunity to increase the number of women in the labour force. The Meeting should examine how to work together to bring this about.

Work/life balance

60. The Employer spokesperson advocated a flexible approach to finding the key elements to achieve a proper balance between working time and private life. A beneficial balance could best be achieved on an individual basis between employers and workers. Benefits for workers had to be compatible with employers' needs to meet new demands. Most arrangements related to working time, i.e., part-time work, parental leave or time accounts – all these had advantages for both sides. Governments could also give incentives for workers to save up their time for pre-retirement schemes. The key was to work together on a tripartite basis and abolish rigidity in favour of more flexible approaches.
61. The Worker spokesperson reacted to a common thread that ran through the Employers' group's position, i.e., the constant reference to the need for individually determined flexibility. The Workers' group believed that individual arrangements could be dangerous. Flexibility was necessary and possible, but it should be developed and implemented on the basis of collectively agreed solutions. Collective agreements enabled a proper relationship between working time and private life to be established in order to meet enterprise challenges of competitiveness and pressure from shareholders.
62. A Worker member from South Africa also referred to balancing working and private life, which was easier in times when companies were profitable and could share the benefits of this with workers. Governments regulated working hours everywhere for the benefit of all,

and thus had an important role to play. One problem was that MNEs often did not apply the same standards in developing countries as they did at home. Flexibility should be considered collectively and workers had to sit at the bargaining table in order to be considered as equals.

- 63.** The Employer spokesperson explained that his reference to work/life balance being best achieved on an individual basis did not exclude collective bargaining or social dialogue which could take place at the industry level, the company level or the level of the individual worker. Each situation would determine the appropriate level.
- 64.** A Worker member from Singapore referred to the prerequisite of adequate remuneration in order to achieve a work/life balance. Workers often faced increased fatigue and stress which prevented them from enjoying life outside working hours. Safety and health standards needed to ensure that the workload was reasonable and fair. In addition, new technology such as mobile phones, and the Internet were forcing workers to do unpaid work outside working hours.
- 65.** The representative of the Government of Venezuela said the key element was having enough free time to meet family obligations. The concept of a “family wage” was important and was part of collective agreements in his country.
- 66.** The representative of the Government of Greece felt that many European countries in the name of social progress were creating a general environment in which working time could be reduced in order to provide a better balance between work and private life. Shift work should be looked at carefully with respect to natural biological rhythms.
- 67.** The representative of the Government of Italy noted that, with more and more women entering the workforce, there was a reduction in the time they could spend with their families. There was a private and public aspect to this and companies could be encouraged to adopt family-friendly profiles, without losing sight of their corporate objectives. Italy supported work and family life through legislation which favoured flexible working time arrangements and vocational training to reintegrate those returning to the workforce after parental leave to meet the needs of employers and employees. The Government encouraged companies to develop affirmative action plans for workers who had children under 8 years of age, and part-time work and other flexible schemes were supported.
- 68.** The representative of the Government of Egypt saw the need for the government to ensure a tripartite setting through legislation that would provide a high level of social security and wages as part of the work/life balance.
- 69.** A Worker member from the United Kingdom referred to the need for a collective discussion and negotiation of the work/life balance. There was a high cost to other workers of absenteeism as a result of long hours, many consecutive shifts and lean production. The report provided examples of mutually beneficial negotiated agreements. Collective agreements were needed on this so that companies could focus on doing business.
- 70.** A Worker member from Ghana emphasized the importance of factory inspectorates having sufficient resources to ensure a high level of safety and health.
- 71.** The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic thought that there was a need for symmetry between the tripartite partners and shared responsibilities. Government should provide the regulatory framework, employers had to implement occupational safety and health measures, and workers had to follow the safety regulations and to use the protective equipment available.

-
72. The representative of the Government of Poland said a key factor in achieving a work/life balance was a safe, well-organized ergonomic workplace. Negotiations had to be linked to productivity and use best available techniques (BAT).
 73. The Employer spokesperson noted that most interventions had focused on how to establish the best conditions for family life without looking at the need for business to balance work and life and continue to operate. Without a business no one would have a job.
 74. The Worker spokesperson concluded that a just wage was needed for a proper work/life balance. This went beyond the mere minimum wage to include elements such as one that was comparable with other businesses in the region and included family allowances, skills level, health, lodging, holidays and the ability to participate in society.

Temporary or contract work

75. A Worker member from Slovakia remarked that there were three types of work contracts that were often used to exploit workers. Temporary contracts did not allow workers to plan ahead; self-employment was only advantageous to employers; and agencies were used to lease out workers like a commodity. The ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), had not been ratified by Slovakia. Relevant national legislation was currently under discussion, which would permit the payment of lower wages for subcontracted workers. Companies should not be permitted to use these three types of contracts to gain competitive advantages. Moreover, temporary workers increased the risk of accidents in the workplace.
76. A Worker member from Japan said that the number of permanently employed workers was diminishing, while the number of temporary and contract workers increased. It was important that legislation did not permit the use of employment agencies as a means of diminishing workers' rights. Temporary and contract workers were often not organized or even allowed to be. The State's duty was to legislate so that such workers would be granted trade union rights, thus allowing issues such as guaranteed minimum wages to be addressed through social dialogue.
77. A Worker member from Argentina stressed that temporary and contract work only benefited employers. Respect for human beings was needed and efficiency was only ensured if a worker's future was predictable. Temporary and contract workers lacked strong bonds with the company and were easily dismissed.
78. A Worker member from Ghana reminded the meeting that temporary work needed to be seen in the context of seasonal work. Temporary contracts should not be used when there was an ongoing demand for labour.
79. The Employer spokesperson called for a balanced discussion. Temporary work was often necessary and provided much needed flexibility. These contracts were not only useful to address the pressing problem of unemployment, but also offered chances for young workers to start their professional lives, as employment opportunities would often result from such contracts. Safety was also a concern for employers and temporary workers were therefore adequately instructed so that risks could be minimized. Temporary work should be viewed as a positive aspect of flexible working.
80. The Worker spokesperson acknowledged that temporary and contract work were a reality, but they also meant less protection, less pay and inferior working conditions. Some cases, such as the contracting of highly specialized experts, were acceptable, but their contracts and working conditions should be equivalent to the conditions of permanent workers.

Unionization needed to be extended to temporary workers so that both workers and employers could profit from increased stability. Such a framework would enable problems of occupational health and safety brought by temporary and contract work to be addressed. It could also ensure that these workers did not have to bear economic risks.

- 81.** The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic said a clear distinction needed to be made between the use of temporary work to address temporary needs of a company and the unjustified use of temporary work as a means of profit by avoiding social security or accident-related expenses. Governments needed to legislate on the issues of temporary work to give workers more chance of having permanent and lasting work in the chemical industries.
- 82.** The representative of the Government of France explained that national legislation provided for certain conditions, such as guaranteeing the health of workers, which had to be met if companies wanted to recruit temporary workers. This was difficult since with some working conditions, such as the exposure to carcinogenic substances, there were risks of delayed effects that were only shown to be carcinogenic much later. Temporary work should therefore be restricted for certain jobs to ensure the temporary worker's well-being. Such workers required familiarization with dangers and risks, and training on how to manage them safely.
- 83.** The representative of the Government of Venezuela said that legislation should be in place to prevent the abuse of temporary work contracts. Venezuelan legislation did require that the rights of workers working for a small company, which had concluded a contract with a large company to provide a labour force, would be equivalent to the rights of the permanent workers of the larger company. Compulsory medical checks ensured the health of the subcontractors' workers.
- 84.** The representative of the Government of Indonesia explained that his country had introduced the Manpower Act, 2003, which required equal working conditions for temporary and permanent workers. Moreover, only supporting activities could be assigned to temporary workers; the core business could only be covered by the permanent labour force.
- 85.** The Employer spokesperson reminded the Meeting that a large number of workers all over the world depended on temporary contracts or contract work. These jobs were often the means to first employment, especially for women, and were not abusive. It was necessary to avoid over-regulation. Social dialogue was far better suited to address the issues raised than legislation, since different cultural and local contexts needed to be specifically addressed.
- 86.** The Worker spokesperson acknowledged the existence of temporary work and suggested that agreements were needed on how to ensure its fair use. Issues such as the gap between temporary and permanent workers' working conditions, occupational safety and health problems, as well as the protection of the environment, should be addressed. Although the social partners had a lot in common, the Workers' group could not tolerate the unacceptable situation in Eastern Europe, where there was little or no protection for temporary workers. Such abuses could not be sufficiently addressed through social dialogue; they required legislation. In many other areas, however, workers were committed to social dialogue to find a balance.
- 87.** The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic believed that legislation to maintain the balance, making temporary work a limited solution to be used when there was additional work, should be established.

Training, education and lifelong learning

- 88.** The Employer spokesperson reminded the Meeting that education and training were prerequisites to improve the flexibility both of companies and workers. Education increased employability and would therefore increase economic growth for the benefit of society. It was in the interest of governments to provide for a sound technical education, infrastructure and programmes that were in line with changing needs of organizations. Employers needed to develop a culture of continuous job-related learning in the workplace, and workers had a responsibility through investing time or even financial support.
- 89.** An Employer member from Sweden pointed out the declining interest in sciences by youth and that negative effects could arise if governments did not intervene. It was important to seize young people's interest and familiarize them with the world of science. A partnership in education that included governments, employers, schools and society was needed at all levels of education. Matching education and technological progress was an essential requirement for success in this industry.
- 90.** An Employer member from Germany agreed, since the sharing of responsibilities would easily create a "win-win-win" situation. Efforts of this kind in Germany had led to further cooperation.
- 91.** An Employer member from Bulgaria said that following changes in his country during the 1990s, a new education infrastructure was being created. Vocational training centres, which combined academic wisdom with the industries' experience, were opened by the Bulgarian Industrial Association as part of a reform to meet the demands of employers and workers. New elements included the propagation of modern health management systems and ISO standards on environmental management.
- 92.** A Worker member from France said that the quality of vocational training varied largely. Large companies such as MNEs invested in training to adapt their workers' education. This was different, however, in the case of smaller and medium-sized enterprises, and for temporary workers training was often not sufficient. Temporary workers were often involved in workplace accidents and needed better training to ensure that they would not endanger themselves or others. Efforts to include temporary workers in training programmes should be made. Concerning manual labour, it was the governments' responsibility to train people by either providing for it or financing partnerships. Lastly, the situation of training the unemployed needed to be considered. All these issues had led to the recent conclusion of a widely supported agreement in France on training.
- 93.** A Worker member from South Africa stated that Africa was facing a serious funding crisis for educational goals. South Africa had introduced a levy on employers which financed training for workers. A small proportion was used to train the unemployed. This programme and similar legislation in Algeria were good examples that provided possibilities for States to encourage education. Training was a basic necessity and the denial of training opportunities was inhumane and detrimental for society as a whole. Since temporary workers lacked any further training, they would often become a burden for society although they had worked their whole lives.
- 94.** A Worker member from Singapore reminded the Meeting that the fast pace of technological change in the industry required continuous training. By providing a sound training infrastructure a country's capacity was enhanced and unemployment lessened. Workers would also gain self-respect and were able better to cope with ongoing changes. Certification of skills should ideally be made through a tripartite body to ensure that training was in line with current and future requirements. Such a structure was also more receptive to special needs of shiftworkers or older workers and could encourage the

development of different schemes. Singapore had realized this and was on the way to becoming a learning nation through cooperation between social partners and government.

- 95.** A Worker member from Canada identified the age of the labour force in Canada as a challenge for training systems since the needs of the current workforce were different from the needs of the future workforce. But this changing age structure also permitted a transfer of knowledge and skills from experienced to younger workers. A new college degree introduced in Ontario combined vocational training and studies by allowing students to work and study. Other important concepts for a successful education infrastructure, such as lifelong learning, would require long-term commitments possibly in the form of paid education leave.
- 96.** The representative of the Government of South Africa stressed the importance of the South African national skills development strategy (NSDS). This legislation had not been devised as a punishment for employers. The levy mentioned earlier was designed to encourage proactive training management.
- 97.** The representative of the Government of Poland agreed with the Employer member from Sweden and stressed the need for education to provide a good scientific background. The chemical industries was international and needed workers who were not restricted to certain technologies or regional confinements. The European classification of chemical jobs was an essential element to successfully achieve these education goals. Global education programmes were needed and should be devised.
- 98.** The representative of the Government of Italy informed the Meeting of Italian efforts to improve educational infrastructure. These were characterized by the principle of lifelong learning, the existence of training agreements and the encouragement of personal training for career development. The new chemical sectoral collective agreement signed in 2002 reflected the new trends in vocational training, meeting the needs of companies. Legislation now enabled vocational training students to attain diplomas, which could then be used to pursue further studies. This enabled learning to fit the student's needs and permitted him/her to enhance his/her personal skills and employability.
- 99.** The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe stressed the importance of creating an environment that would guarantee everyone access to skills. It was important to consider the worker and the need for multiskilling when developing training. The enterprise had a responsibility to support workers' initiatives to acquire new skills. Governments already funded various types of educational programmes, but they also needed to develop regimes that would guarantee access for all workers.
- 100.** The representative of the Government of France highlighted the government's responsibility to ensure that basic education was provided to both boys and girls. At the same time, consideration should be given to providing such education for all men and women, irrespective of their social category, and preparing them for jobs in the chemical industries' field. The new chemical sectoral collective agreement signed in 2002 reflected the new trends on vocational training meeting the needs of companies. The training of workers in the chemical industries was the responsibility of the employers. Enterprises were also responsible for industrial safety and health and for environmental protection, and had to be able to provide answers based on science to the concerns that had been expressed regarding hazards associated with certain chemicals. Sound risk management required a high level of knowledge and skills. Workers also had a responsibility and an interest in engaging in training in order to adapt to changing technologies and the needs of new organizations for autonomy. In France, the social partners had engaged in a debate on vocational training which had led to an important agreement that provided for a minimum number of training days, whatever the size of the company, to be used throughout an

individual's working life. This established a balance between the efforts to be expected of workers and the primary responsibility of enterprises with regard to training. It would be useful to undertake comparative studies on access to training, both at national and international levels, and to take steps to institute measures to redress the existing inequalities between different occupational groups and between men and women.

- 101.** The representative of the Government of the Central African Republic agreed that responsibility for training must be shared by all three parties if the industry were to cope with the pace of change and the demands of increased competitiveness. The practice of substituting robots for workers needed to be addressed. Such a situation could be avoided if workers were well prepared and trained in advance of the introduction of new technology rather than after its acquisition. In order to do so, governments should formulate a policy of ongoing training which would take into account the human aspect and permit enterprises to remain competitive and adapt to the new issues imposed by technological changes.
- 102.** The Employer spokesperson agreed with the view expressed by the Worker member from Canada about the need to distinguish between training needs for different groups of workers, highlighting the mentoring role which more experienced workers could play in the training process. Similarly, he endorsed the view of the representative of the Government of France that basic education should prepare people for entering the world of business. As to the question of training for temporary workers, raised by the Worker member from France, it was necessary to take into account the culture, traditions, legislation in force, as well as the functioning of labour markets in the different countries concerned. Different roles of stakeholders should be distinguished. While governments could provide the necessary training facilities, the enterprise would need to identify those areas of training which were vital to its survival. As for the workers, their role was to be skilled enough to be employable in all companies in the sector.

Priority areas for ILO action

- 103.** The Worker spokesperson saw three roles for the ILO: to examine ways to secure the health and safety of contract workers; to provide insight into the information and communication processes applied with regard to companies which had completely restructured and draw up a repertory of best practices; and to explore possibilities for the ILO to continue monitoring progress in the area of further training and best practices. The ILO should also make it clear that training needs were for all workers.
- 104.** A Worker member from the Russian Federation sought information on how the ILO planned to structure its work in the area of sectoral activities. The speaker understood that meetings were held every four years for each sector, but that smaller meetings were sometimes held to enable the exchange of experience of the parties in relation to the problems being discussed. In developing proposals on discussion points 6 and 7, consideration should be given to setting up a tripartite group periodically to exchange information, given the rapid pace of change in the chemical industries.
- 105.** The Employer spokesperson said the ILO should examine how far national legislation could be adjusted to match the flexibility required to cope with increased competitiveness, employability and economic growth; and provide insight on how best practices could be integrated into education and training programmes so as to stimulate the ability of the enterprise to keep step with a sector undergoing profound change.
- 106.** The representative of the Government of France, speaking for the Government group, listed eight areas where the ILO could play a key role: develop standards and guidelines

and monitor the safety and health of workers in the chemical industries; provide an international forum to discuss best practices in view of shaping an international labour standard; improve the capacity of the social partners to engage in social dialogue and industrial relations; promote the ratification of international standards on safety and health as well as gender equality; provide technical assistance to help countries shape and adopt their own legislation; conduct comparative studies and research on flexible working methods that differentiate between developed and developing countries; establish vocational training systems; and develop appropriate systems and training manuals for the chemical industries.

Consideration and adoption of the draft report and the draft conclusions by the Meeting

- 107.** The Working Party on Conclusions submitted its draft conclusions to the Meeting at the latter's sixth sitting.
- 108.** At the same sitting, the Meeting adopted the present report and the draft conclusions.

Geneva, 31 October 2003.

(Signed) Mr. V. Klotz,
Chairperson.

Conclusions on the best practices in work flexibility schemes and their impact on the quality of working life in the chemical industries¹

The Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries,

Having met in Geneva from 27 to 31 October 2003,

Adopts this thirty-first day of October 2003 the following conclusions:

General considerations

1. In order to compete in a fast-changing world economy, the chemical industries must continuously adapt. Flexibility in all aspects of the industries' activities is a means for increasing competitiveness and assuring continued, quality employment.
2. When properly developed, agreed upon and implemented, flexibility will benefit both enterprises and workers; the former from increased competitiveness and the latter from increased work satisfaction and an improved work/life balance.
3. Social dialogue provides the means to deal effectively with the labour and social issues arising from flexibility in work organization.

Employment security and work flexibility

4. It is important to differentiate between employment security and stability as far as work flexibility is concerned. This is particularly valid in any period of transition between having a "job for life" and having stable but flexible employment as is increasingly common today. Flexibility should not result in the erosion of workers' rights. Nor should it undermine their occupational safety and health.
5. Appropriate work flexibility can have a positive effect on employment stability. It can lead to increased job satisfaction and employment security, especially when combined with multiskilling and lifelong learning.
6. Governments, in exercising their responsibility for building social cohesion, should ensure there is a positive regulatory framework that gives the social partners the freedom to negotiate flexibility at the appropriate level. Such legislation should ensure adequate social protection for workers, particularly for temporary and contract workers. Employers' and workers' organizations² should also be equipped, with government and ILO assistance if necessary, to engage in social dialogue as a means to reach agreement on work flexibility.

¹ Adopted unanimously.

² "Workers' organizations" refers primarily to trade unions.

-
7. An appropriate balance should lead to stable, more secure and meaningful jobs, greater job satisfaction, a better quality of life for workers and a more responsive, productive and profitable industry. The ILO's core labour standards, that are the foundation for decent work, are important elements in achieving a positive outcome for employers and workers' organizations when balancing employment and flexibility.

Benefits and costs of flexible work arrangements

8. When flexible work arrangements lead to additional employment and increased job satisfaction and prospects, its introduction reflects the acceptance of diversity by all parties involved. A constructive relationship between employers and workers and their representatives³ is fundamental to optimizing the benefits and costs of flexible work arrangements. To achieve this constructive relationship, the parties should focus on the mutual benefits that can be realized.
9. A constructive relationship requires a general climate of trust and confidence between the parties; a positive and future-oriented attitude to change; and open communication and dialogue at appropriate levels. As far as possible, the latter should be undertaken well before the introduction of flexible work arrangements.
10. In introducing measures such as outsourcing or temporary and contract work, enterprises in the chemical industries should ensure that the terms of their collective agreements covering these issues are respected.

Female participation in the chemical industries

11. Work flexibility can have a positive effect on female workers' participation in the chemical industries. Equal opportunities and rights for women workers, and equal remuneration for work of equal value, should be practised throughout the chemical industries. As one of the means, audits, developed jointly by the social partners, could help strengthen the measures for equality.
12. Special provision should be made to protect workers from exposure to harmful substances at all times, but particularly women of child-bearing age. If pregnant women and lactating women have to change jobs because of exposure risks, they should be able to maintain a positive career path.

³ Throughout this text, when the term "workers' representatives" is used, it refers to Article 3 of the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), which reads as follows:

For the purpose of this Convention the term "workers' representatives" means persons who are recognised as such under national law or practice, whether they are –

- (a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by the members of such unions; or
- (b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognised as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

Work/life balance

13. Workers are entitled to expect an appropriate balance between working life, family life and social life. An appropriate work/life balance can be advantageous to working women by enabling them to develop their careers. Working men can also benefit by being able to fulfil family and community responsibilities. Enterprises will benefit from having a more motivated and productive workforce.
14. Working time is one of the keys to establishing a work/life balance. Other important factors include: conditions of work; how work is organized; maximizing potential; health and safety; equality; training and development opportunities; and adequate remuneration.
15. There is a need to strike a balance between individual, workforce and company requirements. Collective agreements should give employers, workers and workers' representatives sufficient margin to deal with enterprise and individual issues.
16. The role of government is important in the promotion of work/life balance. Governments should, inter alia, assist workers with training to increase their competencies. Governments should also protect workers' rights, including through the improvement of occupational safety and health.

Temporary and contract work

17. Flexibility may entail recourse to temporary, part-time and contract work. Problems arise when such workers have no rights, no prospects, are poorly paid and have no access to training, pension schemes, sickness and other benefits.
18. Where such work is properly regulated and carried out, it can be a means to combat unemployment.
19. Temporary, part-time and contract workers should have the right to work flexibility arrangements, and to fundamental rights, for example the right to organize. Where it does not exist, legislation to protect temporary, part-time and contract workers, especially in matters of health and safety, should be enacted.

Training, education and lifelong learning

20. Two major issues of training in the chemical industries concern: retaining existing, experienced workers; and recruiting new, young workers. Companies should consider not only their organizational needs but also the needs and diversity of the workforce; of individual workers, both inexperienced and experienced. The two require quite different approaches. Where appropriate, the social partners should develop and implement mentoring systems⁴ as a training tool for inexperienced workers.
21. Funding of training is an important issue, especially in developing countries. Governments, employers and workers share the responsibility for training.

⁴ Mentoring is normally understood to apply to the situation where an experienced or senior person provides personal help and guidance to a younger or less experienced person.

-
22. Certified, transferable skills will enhance workers' mobility and employability in an increasingly flexible environment. Training programmes should take into account the special needs of plants and of different groups of workers.
 23. Continuous technical development means that lifelong learning is an imperative in the chemical industries. To this end, the social partners, governments, schools and academia should work closely together to anticipate education and training needs and develop and implement them accordingly.

Priority areas for ILO action

24. The ILO should collect and disseminate examples of best practices on exchanging information and on communicating corporate changes and restructuring in the chemical industries.
25. The ILO should examine how national regulations might be adjusted to enable the work flexibility required to cope with increased competitiveness, employability and economic growth.
26. The ILO should identify how best practices could be integrated into education and training programmes to stimulate the ability of enterprises to keep abreast of continual change.
27. On request, the ILO should improve the capacity of the social partners to engage in social dialogue.
28. The ILO should examine and disseminate examples of best practices in order to promote good industrial relations in the chemical industries.
29. The ILO should enhance its cooperation with other relevant international organizations.
30. On request, the ILO should provide technical assistance on the ratification and implementation of the ILO Conventions related to occupational safety and health in the chemical industry, notably the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174).
31. The ILO should carry out comparative studies on vocational training in developing countries, intermediate countries and developed countries. On request, the ILO should provide the social partners and governments with assistance on vocational training systems in the chemical industries.

Part 2

Resolution

Consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the draft resolution

At its fourth plenary sitting, the Meeting set up a Working Party on Resolutions, in accordance with article 13, paragraph 1, of the Standing Orders.

The Working Party, presided over by the Chairperson of the Meeting, consisted of the Officers of the Meeting and three representatives from each of the groups. The members of the Working Party were:

Officers of the Meeting

Mr. V. Klotz (Chairperson)
Ms. A. Cizmek (Government Vice-Chairperson)
Mr. P. Tomek (Employer Vice-Chairperson)
Ms. C. Fraser (Worker Vice-Chairperson)

Government members

France: Ms. J. Ory
Poland: Mr. J. Kijenski
South Africa: Mr. S. Nakanyane

Employer members

Mr. F. Ernst
Mr. G. Hamon
Mr. R. Nanjari

Worker members

Mr. K. Fukunaga
Mr. N. Kpoh
Mr. T. Thomas

At the Meeting's sixth plenary sitting the Chairperson, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Working Party on Resolutions, and in accordance with article 14, paragraph 8, of the Standing Orders, submitted the recommendations of the Working Party on Resolutions regarding the draft resolution before the Meeting. As required by the same provision of the Standing Orders, the Vice-Chairpersons of the Meeting had been consulted on the contents of his oral report.

The Working Party had before it one draft resolution submitted by the Workers' group. The text of draft resolution WPR/D.1 concerning future ILO work programme for the chemical sector was declared receivable. The Working Party amended the text of the resolution on the basis of proposals made by its members within the time limit set by the Officers of the Meeting. The Working Party recommended the adoption by the Meeting of the amended draft resolution.

**Resolution concerning future ILO work programme
for the chemical sector**

The Meeting unanimously adopted the resolution.

Text of the resolution adopted by the Meeting

Resolution concerning future ILO work programme for the chemical sector ¹

The Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries,

Having met in Geneva from 27 to 31 October 2003,

Adopts this thirty-first day of October 2003 the following resolution:

The ILO Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries invites the Governing Body of the ILO to:

- (1) promote social dialogue, in particular, through the application of the principles and rights contained in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up in the chemical sector;
- (2) continue to take into consideration the importance of and the follow-up to the three resolutions ² adopted unanimously by the Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries, held in Geneva from 22 to 26 February 1999;
- (3) promote the ratification and implementation of the ILO's Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174);
- (4) promote and strengthen activities aimed at increasing cooperation between employers, workers and their respective organizations ³ and, as appropriate, with governments in all aspects of health, safety and environmental protection in the chemical industry;
- (5) promote and support the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy;
- (6) request the Director-General to:
 - (a) examine the possible effects of subcontracting on health, safety and environment in the chemical sector;

¹ Adopted unanimously.

² Resolution concerning employment creation in the chemical industries, resolution concerning industrial relations within the global chemical sector, resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises in the chemical sector, which are appended to this resolution.

³ "Workers' organizations" primarily refers to trade unions.

-
- (b) consider, in consultation with the tripartite constituents, an appropriate mechanism for follow-up and continuity of activities in the chemical industry in order to avoid the “stop-start” approach that has characterized the activities so far.

Annex

Resolution concerning employment creation in the chemical industries¹

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries,

Having met in Geneva from 22 to 26 February 1999,

Recalling the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), which calls on member States to stimulate economic growth and development, on the basis of full, productive and freely chosen employment,

Considering that economic difficulties are causing widespread unemployment and poverty in many countries and have an adverse impact on the workforce of the chemical industries,

Considering that chemical industries are an important factor for the development of national economies and the improvement of living standards and quality of life,

Considering that successful enterprises are necessary for employment creation,

Considering that product and process innovation are fundamental to successful chemical enterprises,

Pointing out that a severe deterioration of general economic conditions in any country may have negative consequences for economic activity and employment in other countries as well,

Considering that increased economic activity and employment creation are of common interest to employers, workers, their representatives² and governments,

Recognizing the contribution that industry makes to training, education and research,

Considering that appropriate labour market arrangements are a factor for the success of the economies in general and of structural changes caused by globalization;

Adopts this twenty-sixth day of February 1999 the following resolution:

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:

- (1) to appeal to governments to continue efforts to:

¹ Adopted unanimously.

² The term “workers’ representatives” refers to Article 3 of the Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), which reads as follows:

For the purpose of this Convention the term “workers’ representatives” means persons who are recognised as such under national law or practice, whether they are –

- (a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by the members of such unions; or
- (b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognised as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

-
- (a) use appropriate measures to facilitate an environment that encourages investments and promotes entrepreneurship leading to successful enterprises and employment creation, sustainable development and growth;
 - (b) take appropriate actions to facilitate innovation and creation of an environment that promotes competitiveness and investment leading to job creation by successful enterprises;
 - (c) improve science education and infrastructure for academic research and encourage development of partnership between the companies in the industry and education at all levels;
 - (d) implement financial measures through appropriate financial institutions designed to help countries most seriously affected by economic crises to begin recovery;
- (2) to request the Director-General of the ILO to:
- (a) undertake a survey of successful general economic and enterprise-level measures taken by governments of member States in the field of employment creation and their impact in order to enable governments, employers, workers and their respective organizations to benefit from experiences around the world and adapt them to their local needs;
 - (b) provide the necessary expertise and technical assistance within its mandate to promote and assist projects undertaken or planned in member States in order to aid economic recovery and employment creation.

Resolution concerning industrial relations within the global chemical sector¹

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries,

Having met in Geneva from 22 to 26 February 1999,

Noting the many challenges facing the global chemical industry, including financial, structural and organizational changes such as company investments, mergers and acquisitions, employment losses and creation,

Noting that the dependency on the global chemical sector and many of its products is increasing,

Noting the rapidly increasing educational and technical demands on companies and workers,

Noting also the increased pressure from continuing public scepticism and mistrust of a number of aspects of the chemical sector and its products,

Recognizing that such scepticism and mistrust are sometimes based on insufficient understanding and misinformation,

Considering the importance of the need for mutual trust and cooperation between employers, workers and their representatives² to face such challenges,

¹ Adopted unanimously.

² The term “workers’ representatives” refers to Article 3 of the Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), which reads as follows:

For the purpose of this Convention the term “workers’ representatives” means persons who are recognised as such under national law or practice, whether they are –

- (a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by the members of such unions; or
- (b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognised as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

Considering the benefits provided by genuine mutual respect and cooperation between employers, workers and their representatives in their industrial relations;

Adopts this twenty-sixth day of February 1999 the following resolution:

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries:

- (1) calls upon the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to request the Director-General to:
 - (a) conduct a comparative survey of industrial relations systems in the chemical sector with the cooperation of all ILO constituents;
 - (b) produce a report on the industrial relations practices in the chemical sector with a view to promoting mutual trust and openness;
- (2) requests the ILO to assist in the above by providing assistance to develop and promote programmes aimed at improving industrial relations within the chemical sector.

Resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises in the chemical sector¹

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education and Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries,

Having met in Geneva from 22 to 26 February 1999,

Recognizing the important position of the chemical industry and its products in both the industrialized and developing economies of the world,

Noting the extremely important role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the chemical sector as a factor that is critical in economic growth and development and that is increasingly responsible for job creation throughout the world,

Recognizing that the challenges facing SMEs and their workers can be of a different nature and scale to those being faced by the larger enterprises in the sector;

Adopts this twenty-sixth day of February 1999 the following resolution:

The Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education and Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries calls on the Governing Body of the International Labour Office:

- (1) to promote and strengthen activities to identify the needs of workers and their representatives² in SMEs in the chemical sector, in order to promote the improvement of industrial relations practices;
- (2) to encourage all member States to ratify the ILO Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174), and to apply their accompanying Recommendations;

¹ Adopted unanimously.

² The term “workers’ representatives” refers to Article 3 of the Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), which reads as follows:

For the purpose of this Convention the term “workers’ representatives” means persons who are recognised as such under national law or practice, whether they are –

- (a) trade union representatives, namely, representatives designated or elected by trade unions or by the members of such unions; or
- (b) elected representatives, namely, representatives who are freely elected by the workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognised as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

-
- (3) to encourage all member States to ratify and apply the fundamental Conventions relating to freedom of association and collective bargaining, forced labour, discrimination and child labour;
 - (4) to encourage all member States to respect, promote and realize in good faith the objectives of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998.

Part 3

Other proceedings

Panel discussions

Social dialogue in the chemical industries

Moderator: Mr. Ludek Rychly, InFocus Programme on Social Dialogue, Labour Law and Labour Administration (IFP/DIALOGUE), ILO, Geneva

Panellists: Mr. Kee Beon Kim, Multinational Enterprises Programme (MULTI), ILO, Geneva

Mr. David Ogden, Executive Coordinator, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Mr. Sylvain Lefebvre, Fédération chimie énergie (FCE-CFDT), Paris

Mr. Kim, indicated that employment levels in foreign affiliates of multinational enterprises from Germany, Japan and the United States in the chemical industries were fairly significant. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) was gaining in momentum and included: codes of conduct; social labels; management frameworks; and intergovernmental initiatives. From a sectoral perspective, company codes of conduct were most prevalent for the textiles, clothing and footwear industries (almost one-quarter) followed by the chemicals industry with 16 per cent. The vast majority, almost 80 per cent, of these codes were either formulated by the company or industry associations, and made few references to international labour standards. When codes were elaborated by multi-stakeholders, such as international framework agreements (IFAs) between multinational enterprises and global unions, the chances were higher that ILO standards would be referred to and therefore lead to an increase in social dialogue.

He introduced the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, which was adopted in November 1997, revised 2001. He hoped that knowledge of this instrument – which had been adopted by tripartite consensus – would provide a basis for CSR initiatives. The Tripartite Declaration was unique in being addressed to the tripartite constituents, MNEs and domestic enterprises alike. Although it was voluntary, it contained references to Conventions and Recommendations, as well as to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It also covered industrial relations, freedom of association, child labour, non-discrimination, health and safety, wages, employment, training, and conditions of work.

The MNE Tripartite Declaration had specific paragraphs on responsibilities for governments and for MNEs, as well as statements of rights or principles including specific roles for employers and workers. It was followed up by means of a special Governing Body Subcommittee, a survey, an interpretation procedure and other promotional activities, including technical cooperation which could lead to plans of action. The MNE Declaration could provide a specific reference point for the Meeting on how to promote CSR by inspiring company policies and programmes, offering benchmarks for corporate performance and providing baselines for global framework agreements. Of the 24 IFAs between MNEs and global union federations, several were with chemical, petrochemical and oil and gas companies such as: Statoil, Endesa, Freudenberg, and ENI.

Mr. Ogden of UNEP believed that social dialogue at the level of international agreements was necessary in view of the importance of chemicals in the world economy, accounting for 7 per cent of global income and 9 per cent of international trade. There was an increasing shift of production, use and trade in chemicals to developing countries and

there was a need to ensure that in this shift that chemicals were managed in an environmentally sustainable manner consistent with development strategies and worker protection. Three intertwined UNEP conventions provided a system for a multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) regime to manage the life cycle of chemicals, which included:

- the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, adopted in 1989 which entered into force in 1992;
- the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, adopted in 1998 which will enter into force after the 50th ratification (there were 49 now, plus the EC); and
- the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), which was adopted in 2001, and will also enter into force with 50 ratifications (there were 40 now).

In brief, the Basel Convention covered hazardous waste that was explosive, flammable, poisonous, infectious, corrosive, toxic or eco-toxic. The Rotterdam Convention covered 22 pesticides and certain formulations of others, plus five industrial chemicals. The Stockholm Convention covered nine pesticides and three industrial chemicals and by-products. Most POPs are covered by all three Conventions and many pesticides are also subject to the three of them.

Social dialogue played a role in framing the MEA regime. There was social dialogue in the initial negotiations and subsequent amendments, as well as in the development, updating and promotion of national implementation plans. Social dialogue ensured that the needs of the public were addressed, that the concerns of the affected industries were considered and that all sectors of society were involved in problem solving. For example, industry, environmental and other public interest groups were involved at all stages of the negotiation of the Stockholm Convention and in its subsequent follow-up. NGOs have helped focus attention on environmental problems, and civil society has a role to play in environmental protection.

Mr. Sylvain Lefebvre spoke at the plant level and the content of social dialogue within the enterprise. Although it was true there had been some agreements on responsible care, and certain minimum requirements had been defined, on the whole the amount of social dialogue which took place was still insufficient.

Training for social dialogue was required. Ethical statements had been signed in some groups, whereas for others, companies were issuing unilateral statements. The advantage of negotiated statements was that trade unions could participate in their follow-up. Discussions were ongoing with many chemical companies. Europe was progressively becoming an area of social regulation. The European works councils (EWCs) were a forum which compelled both sides to come together to discuss the future of the enterprise. Real dialogue was taking place here with over 750 EWCs established and over 20,000 participants. Representatives of non-EU countries were also present and they had the legitimate right to express their views. The current European Commission Directive was limited to information and consultation which of course did not include negotiation. While a certain amount of dialogue could take place, workers were limited to being informed about a decision after it had been taken; ideally they wanted to be informed and consulted before a decision was taken. A new Directive aimed to include a much greater number of workers. Although many initiatives were underway at the global, European and sectoral level more efforts were required to make social dialogue effective in all social, economic and environmental matters.

A Worker member from Brazil supplemented the presentation of Mr. Lefebvre with a presentation on the BASF Workers' Network in South America. This loose federation had grown since its inception in 1999 and had members from ten countries in South America. It was not a sectoral union nor an extension of ICEM. It provided a place to exchange information and experience and to debate common problems. Its aim was to develop social dialogue in South America. It sought to establish contacts with unions in the United States, Canada and Mexico, and to keep in touch with the IG BCE (Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Chemie, Energie) and the BASF Works Council in Germany. The Network's overriding philosophy was a union response to globalization through social dialogue and a desire to see BASF participate fully in the Global Compact.

Discussion

A general discussion followed on the ramifications of EU expansion. A representative of an employers' association indicated that EWC would start to function in the accession countries and that the EU had training projects in all applicant countries to extend and broaden social dialogue. This would not be a quick process but it was ongoing. A Worker member noted that the threat of relocation of businesses to lower-wage countries always existed with or without EU expansion. Wage levels were not the same in the Nordic, Mediterranean or Eastern European countries, but the adoption of the Euro was increasing the possibility of comparisons. The EWC provided a forum to discuss the issues involved. Another Worker observed that often the representative sectoral employers' federations did not exist or were too small and understaffed to engage in social dialogue. This problem was compounded when foreign MNEs did not even join local employers' associations.

In response to a question about dangerous chemicals being shipped to and stored in developing countries, the representative from UNEP replied that this was exactly why the Basel Convention on the transport and disposal of hazardous wastes and the Rotterdam Convention on prior informed consent had been elaborated in order to prevent such occurrences in the future. More social dialogue on these issues would lead to better decision-making which would result in better policies and regulations resulting in a win-win situation for everyone.

ILO tools for improving occupational safety and health in the chemical industries

Moderator: Dr. Jukka Takala, InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment (SafeWork), ILO, Geneva

ILO standards-related OSH activities – Recent developments

Presenter: Ms. Catherine Brakenhielm Hansell, Standards Policy Branch (POLNORM), ILO Geneva

Ms. Brakenhielm provided an overview of ILO tools related to occupational safety and health (OSH) and recent activities to promote their implementation. To put the Decent Work Agenda into practice, the ILO operated with a comprehensive toolbox: the primary tools were international labour standards, codes of practice and other guidelines. There were 47 instruments (Conventions, Recommendations and codes of practice) that covered safety and health issues, 12 of which specifically addressed the handling of chemicals. However, the level of ratification was not very high.

There was a general discussion at the 91st Session of the International Labour Conference on the relevance of OSH standards and their effectiveness. It was agreed that an integrated approach was needed to improve the coherence, relevance and impact of standards-related activities. The method of the new approach was to identify major problems in specific areas of ILO activities based upon which a plan of action could be developed and implemented. For this purpose, a preparatory report provided an overview of ILO standards-related OSH activities together with a survey based on 47 instruments. The report identified a lack of awareness of OSH issues and formulated five areas for ILO action: promotion of OSH and international labour standards – a world OSH day; framework OSH instrument and updating of international labour standards; systematic identification of national needs for technical assistance and cooperation; free and user-friendly access to ILO information; and improved international collaboration on OSH.

Ms. Brakenhielm noted that some of the international labour standards concerning the chemical sector were currently up for revision. Specific areas that were to be addressed included individual substances, and specific limits and prohibition of work for women in certain situations. Revisions of standards for the guarding of machinery and chemicals, action on ergonomics, biological hazards and updating of codes of practice were other activities that were being considered.

Strengthening regional and national capacities for implementing the globally harmonized system of chemical classification and labelling (GHS)

Presenter: Mr. Jonathan Krueger, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Geneva

Mr. Krueger provided a background to the UNITAR/ILO globally harmonized system of chemical classification and labelling (GHS) training and capacity-building pilot programme initiated in 2001. The GHS system had 26 classes and included physical, health and environmental hazards. The key label elements in the GHS included product identifier, supplier identifier, chemical identifier, standardized hazard pictograms, signal words, hazard statements and other precautionary information.

The objective of the UNITAR/ILO programme was to assist countries to develop and implement chemical hazard communication systems. This contributed to the development of legal and institutional measures needed to implement the GHS; catalyzed a multisectoral and multi-stakeholder process; produced a comprehensive situation analysis and needs assessment; ensured the effective use of labels, safety data sheets and other hazard communication tools in all relevant sectors; and provided feedback to international discussions. The project had undertaken a number of regional and country-based projects in Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Zambia and was funded by the Governments of Switzerland and the Netherlands. Activities have included the development and testing of guidance materials and national action plan methodologies, specific advisory services and updates provided to UNSCEGHS and other relevant bodies, for example the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS). An extension was envisaged subject to financial resources.

Mr. Krueger explained the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Global GHS Partnership that was formally launched in Johannesburg on 30 August 2002. The Partnership set out to mobilize support and catalyze partnerships for concrete activities at the global, regional and national level. It also sought to strengthen capacities in developing countries and countries in transition towards effective implementation of the GHS for industrial chemicals, agricultural chemicals, chemicals in transport and consumer chemicals.

Addressing OSH problems in the chemical industry – The Russian Federation experience

Presenter: Mr. Alexander Sitnov, President, Russian Chemical and Allied Industries Workers' Union, Moscow

Drawing on experience from the Russian Federation, Mr. Sitnov gave several examples of OSH problems related to the sector and ways of overcoming them. According to the legislation, the employer was responsible for OSH at the workplace. At the federal level, the labour inspectorate, through its regional offices, was responsible for monitoring and enforcing the law. The labour inspector had the power to close down a workplace if there were serious breaches of applicable laws. Since the resources of the labour inspectorate were too limited to adequately cover all enterprises, a complementing framework of monitoring and enforcement had been established. Both the general and sectoral tariff agreements between the employers' and workers' organizations included a compulsory section on OSH that an enterprise must apply in order to be registered. A compulsory section on OSH was also included in the collective agreement at the enterprise level and compliance was monitored by workers' and employers' organizations. Failure to comply can be reported to the labour inspectorate who can take action.

Experience from the Russian Federation had indicated that while laws often exist, the institutions enforcing them were often weak and must be strengthened. Such action should be based on tripartite cooperation and ongoing dialogue to resolve future problems.

The international chemical safety cards in the ILO's occupational safety and health strategy

Presenter: Mr. Emmert Clevestine, International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS), ILO, Geneva

The international chemical safety cards (ICSCs) have proved to be an important and successful hazard communication tool. An ICSC was a single sheet of paper that presented important facts about a chemical substance. It was intended to warn workers of the hazards of chemicals and to protect people and the environment from those hazards. Each ICSC was drafted by specialists at a single institution, and checked in a second one, but it must be approved by an international group of experts before publication. The ICSC was compiled with standard phrases according to fixed rules, in order to ensure consistency from one card to another, and to make it easy to translate an ICSC from its original language into others.

The International Programme on Chemical Safety and the European Commission had established a system for producing ICSCs and had produced 78 ICSCs in all the languages of the European Communities two years after the ILO Chemicals Convention and Chemicals Recommendation were passed in 1990. In the ten years since, only a few countries have ratified the Chemicals Convention, but many more countries have used the Convention and Recommendation as guides for national chemical safety regulations without entering into any formal agreement with the ILO. A particularly successful example of this was the widespread use of chemical safety data sheets with 16 sections that follow the 16 headings proposed by the Chemicals Recommendation. After appearing in a number of voluntary standards, the headings have now been taken up in the globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals that had been accepted by the United Nations and by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The ICSCs did not conform to the 16-heading data sheet format required by the globally harmonized system (GHS), but experience indicated that a document with a full

treatment of the different kinds of data covered by the 16 headings was so long and complicated that it risked being ignored. There was a need for a document that was brief and concise. Furthermore, all of the information that fell under the 16 headings was present on an ICSC in a different order than that laid down in the Chemicals Recommendation. The ICSCs were therefore an excellent means for popularizing the symbols of the globally harmonized system.

Discussion

Replying to a question on whether the OSH laws and the monitoring framework currently in use in Russian Federation also covered part-time and temporary workers, Mr. Sitnov answered that in principle all workers were covered according to the law. He added, however, that the emerging use of labour-only contractors in the industry had complicated enforcement as it offered a possibility for the chemical industry to transfer responsibility. He urged that measures should be taken to close this loophole.

Responding to a question on whether any training was provided to use the ICSC, Mr. Clevestine replied that many technical cooperation projects had included a strong component of training in the use of ICSC. The ILO had also developed some training material, and efforts were currently under way to improve access to this kind of information, for example through the Internet and other dissemination methods.

Answering why the ILO and UNITAR were relatively unknown in countries such as Indonesia, Mr. Krueger from UNITAR explained that it was up to the countries to identify their needs and call for assistance. Organizations such as UNITAR and the ILO would be able to provide support. He added that coordination between organizations must be improved.

Ms. Brakenhielm emphasized that collaboration with countries should start with the development of national policies for OSH. There was a need to cluster standards and activities to provide better visibility and thereby an improved possibility for funding.

Mr. Takala added that collaboration also needed to be strengthened between the national institutions that cover issues related to the chemical industry. Success relied on activities at the national level.

Replying to whether the right of the worker to stay away from hazardous conditions was covered by ILO instruments, Ms. Brakenhielm answered that while such provisions were included in Convention No. 155 it was not explicitly expressed as a right. Practice on how to apply it had been developed at the national level. One way of improving the position of the worker had been the concept of reversal of proof whereby the burden of proof lay with the employer.

In answering a question, Mr. Takala explained that accident statistics were not available at the level of detail which covered the number of accidents caused because workers refused to leave their workstation.

The moderator concluded the session by expressing his thanks to the presenters and the participants. He emphasized that these forms of dialogue were important in order to raise awareness and enhance working conditions in the sector.

Closing speeches

The Secretary-General provided information on participation in the Meeting. The Governing Body had invited all interested Governments, 20 Employers' and 20 Workers' representatives. The Meeting was attended by 28 Government delegates, 20 Employers' representatives, 20 Workers' representatives. There were six observers from non-governmental organizations. In total, 93 delegates and advisers were present at the Meeting. Women made up only 18 per cent of the participants, compared with the Office's target of 30 per cent. She noted that the active participation and the number of governments represented attested that the Meeting made great progress in programmes and activities of the ILO's Sectoral Activities Department. Their seriousness and willingness to seek consensual and pragmatic answers to major work flexibility challenges were good indicators that the social partners in the chemical industries around the world can work together with government in order to resolve these problems. A set of conclusions and the resolution unanimously adopted by the Meeting provided the framework for the Governing Body and the ILO in formulating future programmes of work for the chemical industries initiated by the Sectoral Activities Department. The ILO was adopting a more flexible approach to sectoral activities, shifting from large formal meetings in Geneva to programme-driven, more pragmatic and focused approaches to important issues in the industries. The conclusions and the resolution demonstrated that the social partners in the chemical industries and government can take advantage of the opportunities to place the chemical industries in the new flexible framework. The Secretary-General highlighted the importance for ILO constituents, as well as for the Office, of putting the conclusions and the resolution into action.

Mr. Ernst (Chairperson of the Employers' group) paid tribute to the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons and the Employers' group for guiding the Meeting to a successful conclusion. He admired the timeliness of the theme for the Meeting and stressed the importance of cooperation between the social partners and governments in addressing numerous challenges in order to support economic growth and employment in the chemical industries. Although the report prepared by the Office for this Meeting provided a good framework to discuss best practices in work flexibility schemes in the chemical industries, he suggested the Office interact with relevant social partners prior to the Meeting in order to obtain more practical and up-to-date information for the report.

Mr. Mersmann (Chairperson of the Workers' group) thanked the Chairperson, the Secretary-General and the secretariat of the Meeting. The Meeting was a good example that the social partners can produce progressive and forward-looking results in the chemical industries. The Meeting played an important role in discussions among social partners on how to improve the protection of workers as well as maintain competitiveness.

Mr. Mutetwa (Chairperson of the Government group) thanked the Chairperson and the Secretary-General and the ILO on behalf of the Government group. He felt that the Meeting bore precious fruit that formed the basis on which flexible work schemes could be developed and implemented among the member States. He also thanked his colleagues from the Government group for the support and cooperation given to him during the course of the group discussions.

The Chairperson congratulated the Meeting on achieving its mission to identify and analyse existing problems in the chemical industry and address them through tripartite social dialogue. The conclusions and the resolution demonstrated the importance of good industrial relations and social dialogue to this vital sector in each country. The Meeting had heard informative interventions by the tripartite participants. This underscored that communication and understanding were important between the social partners and

governments to promote social dialogue. The most important fact that he observed during this Meeting was how the social partners valued working in the chemical industries, and the Meeting demonstrated that social dialogue was a useful and effective instrument to redress disputes and difficulties. The Chairperson declared the Tripartite Meeting on Best Practices in Work Flexibility Schemes and their Impact on the Quality of Working Life in the Chemical Industries closed.

Evaluation questionnaire

A questionnaire seeking participants' opinions on various aspects of the Meeting was distributed before the end of the Meeting.

1. How do you rate the Meeting as regards the following?

	5 Excellent	4 Good	3 Satis- factory	2 Poor	1 Unsatis- factory	Average score
The choice of agenda item (subject of the Meeting)	13	22	2	0	0	4.3
The points for discussion	11	21	5	0	0	4.2
The quality of the discussion	4	28	3	1	0	4.0
The Meeting's benefits to the sector	7	24	6	0	0	4.0
The conclusions	3	25	9	0	0	3.8
The resolution	8	17	10	0	0	3.9
Panel discussion on social dialogue	4	15	7	3	0	3.7
Panel discussion on OSH	3	16	8	2	1	3.6
Opportunity for networking	10	19	7	0	0	4.1

2. How do you rate the quality of the report in terms of the following?

	5 Excellent	4 Good	3 Satis- factory	2 Poor	1 Unsatis- factory	Average score
Quality of analysis	7	23	6	1	0	4.0
Objectivity	10	19	5	1	1	4.0
Comprehensiveness of coverage	4	25	8	0	0	3.9
Presentation and readability	9	22	4	1	0	4.1
Amount and relevance of information	6	22	8	1	0	3.9

3. How do you consider the time allotted for discussion?

	Too much	Enough	Too little
Discussion of the report	1	33	2
Panel discussions	2	30	1
Groups	1	29	1
Working Party on Resolutions	2	28	0
Working Party on Conclusions	1	22	4

4. How do you rate the practical and administrative arrangements (secretariat, document services, translation, interpretation)?

	5 Excellent	4 Good	3 Satis- factory	2 Poor	1 Unsatis- factory	Average score
	27	8	2	0	0	4.7

5. Respondents to the questionnaire

Government	Employers	Workers	Advisers	Observers	Total	(Response rate: %)
8	15	10	2	1	36	39

6. Participants at the Meeting

Government	Employers	Workers	Technical advisers	Observers	Total
28	20	20	19	6	93

7. Delegates/technical advisers

	Government	Employers	Workers	Total
Delegates	28	20	20	68
Technical advisers	12	2	5	19

8. Female participation

	Government	Employers	Workers	Total	Percentage women delegates
Delegates	9	1	2	12	18
Technical advisers	3			3	

List of participants
Liste des participants
Lista de participantes

Representative of the Governing Body
of the International Labour Office
Représentant du Conseil d'administration
du Bureau international du Travail
Representante del Consejo de Administración
de la Oficina Internacional del Trabajo

Mr. Valentin Klotz, Social Attaché, Permanent Mission of Germany in Geneva

Members representing governments
Membres représentant les gouvernements
Miembros representantes de los gobiernos

ANGOLA

Sra. Edaltina Mónica De Souza Carlos, Inspectora Geral Adjunta do Trabalho, Ministerio da Administratção Publica, Emprego e Sugurança Social, Luanda

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Sr. Diogo Cristóvão Neto, Técnico Responsavel Pelas Actividades da OIT,
Ministerio da Administracas Público Emprego e Sempranes Social, Luanda

AUSTRIA AUTRICHE

Mr. Georg Zwerenz, International Social Policy Unit, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour, Vienna

**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC RÉPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
REPÚBLICA CENTROAFRICANA**

M. Alexandre-Désiré Yango-Sindo, directeur général de l'Emploi et de la Prévoyance sociale, ministère de la Fonction publique, du Travail, de la Sécurité sociale et de l'Inspection professionnelle, Bangui

CROATIA CROATIE CROACIA

Ms. Ankica Cizmek, Head of Section, Ministry of Economy, Zagreb

CZECH REPUBLIC RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE REPÚBLICA CHECA

Ms. Lenka Forstova, Desk Officer, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Praha

EGYPT EGYPTE EGIPTO

Mr. Mohamed Aboharga, General Director, General Organization for Industrialization, Cairo

Adviser/Conseillère technique/Consejera técnica

M^{me} Nadia El-Gazzar, conseillère des affaires du travail, mission permanente d'Égypte à Genève

FRANCE FRANCIA

M^{me} Françoise Le Gac, chargée de mission à la sous-direction des conditions de travail de la Direction des relations du travail, ministère des Affaires sociales, du Travail et de l'Emploi, Paris

Adviser/Conseillère technique/Consejera técnica

M^{me} Joëlle Ory, chargée de mission aux affaires internationales, Service des industries manufacturières et des activités postales, ministère de l'Industrie, Paris

GREECE GRÈCE GRECIA

M^{me} Antonia Biri, chef d'unité, Egalité des chances, ministère du Travail, Athènes

GUATAMALA GUATEMALA

Advisers/Conseillers techniques/Consejeros técnicos

Sra. Angela Chavez, Ministro Consejero, Misión Permanente de Guatamala en Ginebra

Sr. Carlos José Arroyave, Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente de Guatamala en Ginebra

INDONESIA INDONÉSIE

Mr. Muzni Tambusai, Director-General of Industrial Relations, Department of Manpower and Transmigration, Jakarta

Adviser/Conseillers techniques/Consejeros técnicos

Mr. Edison Situmorang, Senior Adviser to the Minister, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Jakarta

Ms. Zulmiar Yanri, Director, Occupational Health Standards, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Jakarta

Mr. Ade Padmo Sarwono, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Indonesia in Geneva

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN RÉPUBLIQUE ISLAMIQUE D'IRAN
REPÚBLICA ISLÁMICA DEL IRÁN**

Mr. Mohamad Reza Haidarzadeh, Adviser to the Deputy of Industries and Mines, Ministry of Industries and Mines, Tehran

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Hekmatollah Ghorbani, Permanent Mission of Iran in Geneva

ITALY ITALIE ITALIA

Ms. Carmen Ferraiolo, Direzione Generale della Tutela dell Condizioni di Lavoro Divisione II, Affari Internazionali, Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, Roma

JAPAN JAPON JAPÓN

Mr. Masahiko Hayashi, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva

MALAYSIA MALAISIE MALASIA

Mr. Bin Wan Setapa Wan Zulkfli, Labour Attaché, Permanent Mission of Malaysia in Geneva

MOROCCO MAROC MARRUECOS

M^{me} Siham Bouassa, conseillère, mission permanente du Maroc à Genève

PHILIPPINES

Ms. Yolanda Porschwitz, Labour Attaché, Permanent Mission of the Philippines in Geneva

POLAND POLOGNE POLONIA

Mr. Jacek Kijenski, Director of Chemical Industry Research Institute, President of Association of Chemistry Engineers, Warsaw

PORTUGAL

M. José Neto, Inspecteur du travail, Institut du développement et inspection générale du travail, Lisboa

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

M. Paulo Bárcia, Labour Attaché, mission permanente du Portugal à Genève

RWANDA

M. Fidèle Rwigamba, Secretary-General, Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development and Labour, Kigali

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

M. Ephrem Karangwa, chef de division, ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, de la Promotion des investissements, du Tourisme et des Coopératives, Kigali

SLOVAKIA SLOVAQUIE ESLOVAQUIA

Ms. Nora Septakova, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Slovakia in Geneva

SOUTH AFRICA AFRIQUE DU SUD SÚDAFRICA

Mr. Sabata Nakanyane, Senior Researcher, Department of Labour, Pretoria

**SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE
REPÚBLICA ARABE SIRIA**

Mr. Khalaf Al-Abdallah, Director-General, Public Institution for Social Security Schemes, Damascus

Advisers/Conseillers techniques/Consejeros técnicos

Dr. Mahmoud Al-Chakmi, Dirección General de la Seguridad Social Jefe de Servicio de Tratamiento Medico de Rehabilitación, Damascus

Mr. Mohamad Khafif, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic in Geneva

TAJIKISTAN TADJIKISTAN TAYIKISTÁN

Mr. Bakhridin Djaborov, Deputy Head, President's Office, Department of Employment and Social Protection, Dushanbe

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Kholnazar Khalikov, General Director, Anzob Gok, Dushanbe

THAILAND THAÏLANDE

Mr. Pakorn Amornchewin, Minister-Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Thailand in Geneva

TUNISIA TUNISIE TÚNEZ

M. Rachid Larbi, sous-directeur de l'industrie chimique et des industries diverses, Direction générale des industries manufacturières, ministère de l'Industrie et de l'Energie, Tunis

VENEZUELA

Sr. Rafael Hands, Consejero, Misión permanente de Venezuela en Ginebra

ZIMBABWE

Mr. Benjamin Mutetwa, Chief Research and Development Manager, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, National Social Security Authority (NSSA), Harare

Members representing the Employers

Membres représentant les employeurs

Miembros representantes de los empleadores

Mr. Subir Bhattacharyya, Secretary, Employers' Federation of India, Mumbai

Mr. Dimiter Brankov, Director, Bulgarian Industrial Association, Sofia

Ms. Kerstin Brodowsky, General Manager, Swedish Industrial and Chemical Employers' Association (CEO), Stockholm

Mr. Ali Buyukuslu, Secretary-General, Chemical, Petroleum, Rubber and Plastic Industries (KIPLAS), Istanbul

Mr. Paul Clerinx, Director, Labour Relations, Fédération de l'industrie chimique de Belgique (FEDICHEM), Brussels

Mr. Fanie Ernst, Strategic Business Partner, Business South Africa (SASOL), Johannesburg

M. Gabriel Hamon, directeur du département social, emploi, formation, Union des industries chimiques, Puteaux

Mr. Banja Junhasavasdikul, President, Chemical Innovation Co. Ltd., Bangkok

Mr. Erik Kjaergaard, Director, Confederation of Danish Industries, Copenhagen

M. Ali M'Kaissi, Conseiller social international, Union tunisienne de l'industrie et du commerce (UTICA), Tunis

Sr. Ricardo Nanjarí Román, Gerente de Recursos Humanos, Enaex SA, Santiago

Mr. Martii Niskanen, Deputy Director-General, Chemical Industry Federation of Finland, Helsinki

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Pekka Hotti, Assistant Director, Chemical Industry Association of Finland, Helsinki

Mr. Gianluca Ostini, Officer, Industrial Relations Department, Italian Federation of the Chemical Industry (FEDERCHIMICA), Milan

Sr. Lorenzo Peláez, Director General, Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana, México

Sr. Emilio Sardi Aparicio, Vice-Presidente Ejecutivo, TECNOQUÍMICAS S.A., Cali

Mr. Jeswan Singh, Branch Chairman, Malaysian Employers' Federation (MEF), CCM Fertilizers, Selangor Darul Ehsan

Sr. Egon Sudy, Presidente, ASIQR - CIU, Montevideo

Mr. Peter Tomek, Head of Division Personnel and Legal, Federation of Austrian Industry, Vienna

Mr. Friedrich Karl Weinspach, former General Executive Manager, Association of Chemical Industry of North-Rhine-Westphalia, Monheim

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Markus Handke, Head of European Office, Bundesarbeitgeberverband Chemie – BAVC, Wiesbaden

Mr. Laval Wong Moi Sang, Environmental and Industrial Relations Adviser, Mauritius Employers' Federation, Port-Louis

Members representing the Workers
Membres représentant les travailleurs
Miembros representantes de los trabajadores

M. Mohamed L. Bedreddine, secrétaire général, Fédération des travailleurs du pétrole, gaz et chimie (UGTA), Alger

Mr. Juraj Blahak, President, Trade Union of Chemistry of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Erik Macak, Secretary, Odborovy Zväz Chemia SR, Bratislava

Ms. Johanna Bögner, OGB Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, Wien

Ms. Val Burn, GEC Representative, Transport and General Workers' Union, International Chemical Energy Mineworkers, Hull, United Kingdom

M. Achille Costin Dutu, coordinateur du bureau de liaison pour l'Europe centrale et de l'Est, Fédération mondiale des travailleurs de l'industrie, Bucarest

Ms. Carol Fraser, National Representative, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers' Union of Canada, Innerkip, Ontario

Mr. Koji Fukunaga, President, Japanese Federation of Chemical Workers' Unions, Tokyo

Advisers/Conseillers techniques/Consejeros técnicos

Mr. Bunzo Katsuo, Executive Committee of UI Zensen, Tokyo

Mr. Shinichi Iwanaga, Vice-President, Japanese Federation of Energy and Chemistry Workers' Unions – JEC Rengo, Tokyo

Sr. Stefano Galante, Dirigente, FEMCA-CISL, Roma

Mr. Napoleon K. Kpoh, General Secretary, Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union ICU, Accra

M. Sylvain Lefebvre, Fédération chimie énergie (FCE-CFDT), Paris

Mr. Michael Mersmann, IG Bergbau Chemie Energie, Hannover

Sr. Juan Carlos Murgo, Secretario General, Sindicato de Empleados del Caucho y Afines (SECA), Buenos Aires

Mr. Boniface Y. Nkakatisi, General Secretary, Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers, Dar es Salaam

Mr. Welile Noling, General Secretary, Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers' Union (CEPPWAWU), Johannesburg

Sr. Sergio Novais, National Coordinator, Confederación Nacional del Sector Químico, São Paulo

Mr. Somyot Pruksakasemsuk, Chemical Workers Unions' Alliance (CWUA), Bangkok

Mr. Alexander Sitnov, President, Russian Chemical Workers' Union, Moscow

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Vladimir Tribunskiy, International Secretary, Russian Chemical Workers' Union, Moscow

Mr. Jyrki Suihkonen, lawyer, Union of Salaried Employees TU, Toimihenkilöunioni Tury, Helsinki

Mr. Thomas Thomas, General Secretary, Shell Employees' Union, Singapore

Mr. Jia Xiaodong, Direction of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Department, Committee of Energy and Chemical Workers' Union of China, c/o All-China Federation of Trade Unions, Beijing

Adviser/Conseiller technique/Consejero técnico

Mr. Yong Peng, Chief of the General Office International Liaison Department, All-China Federation of Trade Unions, Beijing

Representatives of non-governmental international organizations

Représentants d'organisations internationales non gouvernementales

Representantes de Organizaciones Internacionales no Gubernamentales

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

Confédération internationale des syndicats libres (CISL)

Confederación Internacional de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres

Ms. Anna Biondi, Assistant Director, Geneva Office

International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mines and General Workers' Union (ICEM)

**Fédération internationale des syndicats des travailleurs de la chimie,
de l'énergie, des mines et des industries diverses**

**Federación Internacional de Trabajadores de la Química, la Energía,
las Minas y las Industrias Diversas**

Mr. Reg Green, OHSE Officer, Brussels

Mr. Marc Welters, Chemical and Process Industries Officer, Brussels

Ms. Noriko Miyazaki, Japanese Liaison Officer, Brussels

International Organisation of Employers (IOE)

Organisation internationale des employeurs

Organización Internacional de Empleadores

Mr. Jean Dejardin, Adviser, Cointrin/Geneva

World Confederation of Labour
Confédération mondiale du travail (CMT)
Confederación Mundial del Trabajo

M. Hervé Sea, représentant permanent, Genève