



## Fourteenth sitting

Monday 14 June 2004, 10.00 a.m.

*Presidents: Mr. Ray Guevara, Mr. Wade*

### REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (CONT.)

*Original Spanish: The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ray GUEVARA)*

We shall now resume our discussion of two Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

*Original Spanish: Mr. FERNÁNDEZ (Workers' delegate, Uruguay)*

The Uruguayan Workers' delegation would like to congratulate the President on his election.

We agree with what the Director-General's Report says regarding the fact that the benefits of globalization do not reach enough people and that it is not a question of stopping globalization, but rather of managing and structuring it with fair standards.

Humanity has always dreamt of a world that can use its technological progress, as well as its progress in the areas of information and communication, to grant everyone access to better living conditions and human development. However, up to now, globalization has resulted in the exact opposite of this. In Latin America, retrograde trends caused by inequality in the way wealth has been distributed, have resulted in an ever more obvious trend of the wealth being enjoyed by the few, while the majority of men and women on our continent do not have access to adequate living conditions and personal development, leading them to poverty and marginalization.

The Director-General points out that very little has been done to strengthen local communities and markets where people live, and where, given the opportunity, they would like to stay.

Uruguay is a very clear example of this trend. In the last few years, emigration of qualified young workers, who could not find appropriate jobs in their own country, has had negative effects not only on the country, which is losing its most highly-trained citizens, but also on families who are affected by the loss of their members, and by the impact on society which creates the potential for problems in the future.

Decent work as a global objective can be attained if there is coherent national and international policy promoted at all levels. This can be achieved only through dialogue. The social partners and society as a whole have the right to demand that their voices

be heard when national and international policies are being developed; whether or not the objective is achieved will depend on their participation.

As workers, we play an important role in this. Through social dialogue and particularly through collective bargaining, our job is to build this society. Collective bargaining is an essential and irreplaceable tool in building solid, democratic societies in which these values can become reality. However, in many countries – including Uruguay – this does not happen.

The International Labour Conventions Nos. 81, 87, 98, 151 and 154 have been ratified by Uruguay. They promote collective bargaining in both the public and private sector, they protect workers who exercise their rights; and they commit governments to fulfil actively the obligations set out in these standards.

However, reality is very far from that. We are watching with concern the breakdown in mutually agreed procedures for reaching agreement between workers and employers on working conditions. There are currently no negotiations. Some companies go unpunished when they fire groups of workers for trying to form a trade union. The Government stays out of such situations, even seeming to agree with this behaviour. The same applies to civil servants who cannot negotiate their working conditions. The Government itself does not negotiate in some cases while in others it concludes agreements only to break them later.

It is not acceptable that international labour Conventions like the ones I have mentioned are ratified, when, faced with concrete situations, the Government then fails to take on any commitment to ensure compliance with them in real life.

Uruguayan workers have always demanded compliance with Convention No. 131. This would lead, through negotiations, to a minimum wage. However, the Government refuses to comply with this Convention, although it has committed itself to do so in this Organization.

The ILO has launched a major campaign to eradicate child labour and this has received all our support. But if the Government does not promote appropriate conditions for access to education and food for children, as well as fair wages and decent working conditions for their parents, it will be difficult to achieve success.

We would like to conclude by drawing attention to a number of aspects we regard as fundamental.

Social dialogue is an essential means of consolidating democratic states and thus ensuring better and fairer development for its citizens, but that will not be possible without strong trade unions which can act and develop freely, and which can participate in genuine collective bargaining. The ILO has an essential role to play in making this possible, not only by providing technical assistance in creating and consolidating the right conditions, but also in detecting and monitoring non-compliance by governments. As the Director-General says in his Report, if we do not put our own houses in order, if we do not comply with the provisions that we have already agreed on, decent work and a just society will be no more than a pipe dream and will never become reality, and indeed, will continue to deteriorate the social situation. Let us hope that ways can be found of correcting this situation, for the good of everyone.

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*Original Spanish:* Mr. INFANTE (*Workers' delegate, Venezuela*)

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I should like first of all to congratulate the President on his election to preside over this session of the International Labour Conference. I represent here, for the first time, the workers of Venezuela at this, at this, the greatest participated body of the ILO; the only body at which we, the workers, can voice our opinions, thanks to the rotation agreement of delegates which we, the workers' organizations of our beloved Latin-American country, Venezuela, have also signed for the first time.

Allow me to say that my organization, which belongs to the Latin American Central of Workers (CLAT) and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), is totally independent from all other national institutions, be they government, entrepreneur or social institutions, and is truly committed to the needs and aspirations of workers.

For this reason, we share the concerns expressed in the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General of the ILO concerning the application of the Conventions ratified by Governments in 1998. Furthermore, I wish to make it quite clear that in Venezuela many of these fundamental ILO Conventions are still being violated by governmental bodies and by the private sector.

The increase in unemployment, the growing loss of purchasing power of the workers and the worsening of the collective bargaining situation are all things that can only be overcome by the necessary consolidation of democracy, which is the aspiration of all workers and the general public.

It would be wrong to state that these are new problems; as it would be to say that we are in the process of overcoming them. What is even worse is the fact that we live in a country that has an enormous natural wealth which should create better working conditions, and more humane and decent working conditions for all workers.

We should not forget that the Report of the Director-General clearly states that, work is the one and only solution to the problem of social injustice. Thus, the economy must be able to create investment opportunities, entrepreneurial spirit, jobs and a sustainable standard of living.

Lastly, representing Venezuelan workers, I should like to take this opportunity to express our rejection and condemnation of the shameful and barbarous practices of the Government of Burma, where workers are subjected to the wickedness of forced

labour, and sacred human rights are violated. I should also like to express our criticism and rejection of the terrible way in which trade union leaders are dealt with in our sister country, Columbia; they are being physically eliminated. This is the way in which these social warriors, who defend the sacred right to organize, are being silenced.

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Mr. OLA (*Minister of Labour, India*)

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At the outset, let me record my sincere appreciation to the Director-General of the ILO for the detailed and far-sighted Report entitled *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*. The Report seeks to make globalization a positive power for all peoples through a fair share of existing resources. I am pleased that in this context the World Commission has quoted Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation, and I quote "There is enough for everybody's need but there cannot be enough for everybody's greed."

While globalization has created exceptional opportunities, it has also created social disparities and individual insecurities. We agree with the ILO that markets without rules for free and equal access would lead to further division within and between the countries. The greatest challenge before all of us is how to guide growth in the global economy and to ensure the development of society at large with a human face.

In order to achieve the global goal of decent work, we have to ensure the systematic global governance based on democracy, social equity and effective participation of all social partners. In India, we have special programmes for workers in the organized as well as the unorganized sectors.

We feel that suggestions in the Report about agreement between multinational companies and a global employment forum will be impractical at the national level. We therefore strongly feel that all issues relating to labour and decent work should be addressed within the existing ILO framework only.

In India, we are still grappling with the issues concerning unemployment and poverty alleviation. We are sensitive to the needs of our people and are committed to providing them with fair opportunities and decent work. However, at this stage of development, we are not in a position to support the concept of a common socio-economic base standard across the globe but we are agreeable to such a concept for all communities within the country.

On cross-border movement, we support the recommendations of the Report for an effective multi-lateral framework for international migration.

I conclude with a quotation of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India: "[Our] ambition ... has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and sufferings, so long our work will not be over."

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*Original Arabic:* Mr. MAATOUGH (*Secretary, General's People's Committee of Labour Force, Training and Employment, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*)

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I would like to congratulate the President of the Conference on the confidence placed in him, and I hope that it would be possible to achieve all the objectives of the Conference. I would like also to thank the Director-General and the different departments of the ILO for their efforts to ensure that the Organization will achieve the best possible results and meet the aspirations of everybody.

The Director-General's Report is very important in that it emphasizes the importance of decent work at a time when the international system affects all countries. The liberalization of trade and the quest for improved quality have consequences for workers and are resulting in difficulties at the social level, foremost of which is the increased cost of social services such as education and health care, as well as loss of employment for large numbers of people.

The ILO has tried to correct this kind of imbalance by holding conferences and seminars. We would like to emphasize the importance of workers getting a fair share of their production. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has contributed to this, and has implemented effective employment policies and enacted a number of laws stressing the importance of social dialogue, ending forced labour, combating the worst forms of child labour, and providing education for all citizens. We are now trying to develop strategies to maximize our national resources.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has tried to provide decent work for women workers by establishing small and medium-sized enterprises and by supporting workers' efforts so as to enable them to enjoy the conditions envisaged for them. It has also cooperated with other countries in Africa to achieve these objectives.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has adopted a policy aimed at achieving equality for men and women, in particular in the areas of employment and education. The number of female workers has increased at all levels of education, notably pre-university and higher education.

Participation by women in the labour force has reached something like 29 per cent, and many women are completing higher education and holding down important posts.

Many NGOs and other associations are led by women, who are very active in all areas.

The situation in the occupied Arab territories is completely contrary to the aspirations of peoples to international law and to international labour standards.

The occupying forces are destroying houses and productive units. They are killing women and children, while the international community is unable to end or condemn these practices.

The International Labour Organization is trying to do something, but has no influence over the occupying forces. On this occasion, we appeal to the Organization to take the practical steps that are needed to establish the rights of all the Palestinian people.

Our country is extremely concerned with the events in Iraq. There is no justification for what is currently happening there. Serious violations of international law are being perpetrated and we believe that the first step to work achieving stability in Iraq is to accelerate the process of handing over power to the people of Iraq within the framework of international law so that they can use their oil resources in accordance with their own interests.

I would like to conclude by thanking you very much for listening. I wish this session of this Conference every success.

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Mr. SAY (Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation, Cambodia)

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On behalf of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation

in the Kingdom of Cambodia, I would like to thank the Director-General of the International Labour Office very much for inviting the Cambodian delegation to participate in this very important 92nd International Session of the Labour Conference today and the Chairman of the general session of the Conference for allowing me to represent the Cambodian delegation to make some remarks on progress in the field of labour in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform this session of the Conference about progress in the field of labour, especially the implementation of the provisions of the Labour Law concerning the fundamental principles and rights at work of the Kingdom of Cambodia as follows:

- the Labour Law enacted in 1997 has been enforced by publishing and disseminating

- the books of law, conducting training courses under the provisions of the law and virtual guidance on the provisions of the law according to each case which has occurred;

- issuance of ministerial orders to support implementation of the law has played a very important role in protecting the rights and benefits of both parties involved in industrial relations between employers and workers. Most of the ministerial order drafts have been consulted in the Labour Advisory Committee prior to being issued by the MOSALVY;

- the Arbitration Council was established in 2002, started working from May 2003 onwards and has contributed actively in labour disputes settlement;

- the permanent monitoring of the implementation of labour law provisions and regulations has maintained industrial relations harmonization between all parties, employers and workers. From early 2001 and 2002, with ILO technical assistance, two projects have been implemented with the purpose of improving working conditions in Cambodia's textile and apparel sector in order to eliminate discrimination in employment, improve the fundamental principles and rights at work and strengthen the labour disputes resolution. The first is in the Garment Sector Working Conditions Improvement Project and secondly, the Labour Dispute Resolution Project;

- the *Synthesis Report on the Working Conditions Situation in Cambodia's Garment Sector*, based on the findings of independent monitoring, indicates clearly that there is no evidence proving forced labour, discrimination and child labour in this sector;

- the improvement of the effectiveness of human resources development has been implemented and enhanced by upgrading the trainers, building the criteria of the training centres up to standard, formulating skill standards according to the skills of the training courses and the conducting skill testing and certification.

Human resources training is entering a new stage and not only to increase the number of courses or schools or centres. It is important to take into account the qualifications of the schools or training centres and curriculum according to the actual needs of the markets.

I also would like to take this opportunity to inform this session of the Conference that the law on social security schemes for persons defined by the provisions of the Labour Law has been enacted by

the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia and promulgated on 25 September 2002.

The social security schemes defined by this Law are: a pension scheme to provide old-age benefit, invalidity benefit and survivor's benefit; occupational risk to provide employment injury benefit and occupational disease benefit; other possibilities shall be subsequently determined by subdecree based on the actual situation of the national economy.

Last, but not least, I would like to extend my deepest thanks to the ILO that has provided us with efficient and timely technical assistance. I wish this session of the Conference success.

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*Original Portuguese: Mr. SEVENE (Minister of Labour, Mozambique)*

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On behalf of the Government of Mozambique, myself and my delegation, I would like to salute all participants in this 92nd Session and I also congratulate the Chairperson and other members of the panel for their election to guide us through this session of the Conference. I send special greeting to the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, for his commitment and endeavours towards reducing unemployment and poverty alleviation, actions that became clearly evident in his excellent Report.

Mozambique longs for a new world based on justice, peace and social harmony and is committed to this noble task aimed at creating conditions to allow people to enjoy a better life by providing them with fair and decent work.

We are deeply delighted to find these aspects in the Report of the Director-General, which is a starting point, during this session, for engaging in debates related to the social aspects of development policies. We also have attentively analysed the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and we are pleased to congratulate the respective members, the Presidents of Finland and the United Republic of Tanzania, for their clarity in addressing this issue. We therefore think that the recommendations made in the report meet our views on globalization. We believe that globalization should, above all, be a link between peoples.

In the domain of employment, we would hope that more jobs are created and that better working conditions and improved social protection become the results of this system. We join the appeal that has been made to, without exception, engage firmly in building a better world for all our people.

Mozambique has suffered from a series of natural disasters which have ravaged the country, reducing the positive impact of the sterling activities that we have developed to provide our citizens with subsistence means, and my country is going through a very difficult moment as it grapples with the worldwide HIV/AIDS pandemic. The ILO gives us viable strategic mechanisms aimed at preventing and eradicating this worldwide scourge in the labour sector, whose harmful effects are much more felt in countries with a high rate of poverty.

The Report of the Director-General likewise refers to the respect and attention that must be paid to the rights of children and women, and on that basis I am pleased to inform you that my country has already ratified the eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO.

Mozambique believes firmly that policies oriented towards the capitalization of small and medium-

sized enterprises may, within a short space of time, alleviate the pain and suffering that our countries endure. We also give emphasis to vocational training for our workers.

Earlier this year my country hosted the launch of the ILO Global Campaign on Social Security and Coverage for All for the African Portuguese-speaking countries. It is our belief that the right to social security is a fundamental right for all human beings without which it would not be easy to achieve the various Millennium Development Goals set in our countries.

In my country we are presently drafting new social security legislation that will also cover workers in the informal economy and independent workers.

Last May, we started amending the existing Labour Law with a view to bringing it closer to the present social and economic realities. I am sure that, with our total commitment and with the wise leadership of the Director-General, we can, together, bring to this world a true and just social dimension, free from absolute poverty – indeed with more employment and prosperity.

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*Ms. BEAUMONT (Workers' delegate, New Zealand)*

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I would like to congratulate the President on his election to the presidency of this Conference. I would like to congratulate the Director-General on his Report, *ILO programme implementation 2002-03*, and also for sponsoring the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. I bring you warm greetings from the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions to all delegates. We are the largest democratic organization in our country.

As a key part of my speech is about the role of unions in building a strong voice for working people and our families and communities, I must note with concern that the voice of women is limited at this Conference. The representation of women in delegations is unacceptably low, and women make up a very small percentage of the speakers in these plenary sessions. It is incumbent on all of us to rectify this situation. This includes trade unions.

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions is part of a global union movement, which is under significant challenge in an increasingly globalized labour market. This context poses a number of challenges to the union movement: the challenge to build union strength; the challenge to fight for fair trade; the challenge of dealing with globalized companies; the challenge to be relevant to a changing and increasingly diverse workforce; and the challenge to ensure fair global labour standards. Put in these terms, this can seem quite daunting.

In New Zealand we are facing the task of rebuilding a union movement that was severely weakened in the 1990s. We faced a number of challenges; harsh legislation, economic deregulation and privatization, high unemployment and benefit cuts, to name a few.

We survived, but the union movement in 1999, when we had a change of Government, was a very different one to the one that had existed in 1991. We were significantly smaller. Our union density went from 56 per cent of wage and salary-earners in 1989 to 21 per cent in 1999. We no longer had national awards setting out legal minimums, but thousands of collective contracts, primarily at the enterprise level, a legislative minimum wage which had not increased for many years and a majority of workers on individual contracts.

Wages and conditions declined in many areas of the economy as a result. In addition, we saw the wholesale selling of our assets and the reduction of spending on the social wage. The gap between rich and poor grew significantly.

The Council of Trade Unions has focused on improving union organization, campaigning for legislative change and creating opportunities for union engagement as a social partner in a broad range of social and economic issues in our country. Since 1999, the Council of Trade Unions has successfully advocated many improvements in health and safety; paid parental leave; holidays; employment law; minimum wages; support for low income families; and early childhood education funding.

I would like to comment in particular on the promotion of collective bargaining. This is in the context of the objective to promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work. We will keep pushing for ratification of the ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), but I am pleased to note that the New Zealand Government has now ratified the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

This is of particular significance to unions in New Zealand given our experience in the 1990s. We fortunately now have a law that promotes collective bargaining as a primary objective. Currently that law is being strengthened.

Collective bargaining is of vital importance to workers as a mechanism to balance the bargaining strengths of employers and workers. Analysis has shown in many countries that collective bargaining delivers better results for workers, not only in wages and conditions, but also better equity results, better health and safety results and better productivity.

In the context of a globalized world, it will be increasingly important for workers to develop collective instruments that stretch across national borders. Such framework agreements will assist with corporate responsiveness and the internationalization of fundamental workers' rights.

What unions are seeking is not a grudging acceptance by employers of collective bargaining, but active promotion alongside unions and governments.

Such promotion is entirely consistent with broader objectives concerning decent work and income, enhancing social protection and strengthening tripartism and social dialogue.

Although we have relatively low unemployment in New Zealand compared to our performance over the last two decades, we have a dysfunctional labour market. Labour and skill shortages are not feeding through to wage increases, in part because of the absence of really effective instruments to promote collective bargaining. This is a key focus for our current review of employment law.

As unionists, we have an active programme that includes improving our own effectiveness as unions, promoting fair employment laws, as well as social and employment protection provision for all workers and a programme of engagement on key social and economic issues, including industry training, economic development, growth and productivity and quality public services.

For unions there are boundaries as well as linkages between these areas of activity. For instance, whilst we seek fair employment laws, we do not ask

the Government to deliver terms and conditions of work that should arise out of collective bargaining. But we do argue that where workers are organized into unions and bargain collectively, then they are well placed to engage in wider tripartite dialogue on a wide range of crucial social and economic issues.

We have a vision of union members who do not only actively participate in the union at the workplace and industry level, but get really involved through the union and central organization in concrete proposals and dialogues with the Government and the wider community. There are good signs that this is happening, but we have a long way to go. The key objectives and fundamental principles of the ILO, including the specific aspects highlighted by the Director-General in his Report, *ILO Programme implementation 2002-03*, are of great assistance to us in achieving our goals.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. NÚÑEZ SALCEDO (Government delegate, Dominican Republic)*

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The Government of the Dominican Republic would like to congratulate the President of the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference, Dr. Milton Ray Guevara, on his election as President of this Conference and wishes him every success in carrying out the task entrusted to him by members. At the same time, we should like to commend the Director-General for his wise choice of topic for his Report on for the years 2002-03, which surpasses the expectations of countries in terms of the importance it attaches to the role of international cooperation in their development and to the status of implementation of the Decent Work Agenda, which is the cornerstone of protection for the rights and duties of workers in this globalized world.

Undoubtedly, the Office and the Governing Body have done an exceptional job in designing programmes to provide guidance to constituents, such as the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. The World Commission seeks a process of globalization with a social dimension based on universal values and respect for human rights and individual dignity, in other words, one that is fair, inclusive, democratically governed and provides opportunities and benefits for all countries and people, regardless of their class and where they live.

In the Dominican Republic, the ILO has done some excellent and fundamental work in all areas, but particularly in the sphere of international cooperation. Furthermore, the elimination of child labour is one of the priorities of the Government of the Dominican Republic and one of the most important areas of the Secretary of State for Labour's work.

We are continuously struggling to eliminate this scourge and, thanks to God, we have achieved significant results. To date, we have removed over 2,000 boys, girls and adolescents from the coffee plantations; 1,255 from the tomato-picking sector; and over 600 in the Municipality of Constanza who were working in the fields and applying pesticides. These are children who no longer have to work. With the agreement of their families they can now go to school because, of course, work makes children grow up too fast. Childhood is the time to study, and not to work.

As part of the Programme for the Elimination of Commercial Sexual Exploitation, 37 girls, boys and adolescents in the Municipality of Boca Chica in the Province of Santo Domingo are currently being as-

sessed so that they can go to school and we are working with their families to raise awareness and to give these children other alternatives so that they will no longer be victims of commercial sexual exploitation. We have recently launched another similar programme in the Municipality of Sosúa in the Province of Puerto Plata. We have also launched a programme to eradicate child domestic labour in the Province of Santiago, and to date, about 50 minors have been removed from work.

Thus, in the Dominican Republic we are fighting against child labour with the political will and support that His Excellency, the President of the Republic, Hipólita Mejía, has always given us. This programme has been made possible, thanks to the ILO through its IPEC programme and the generous support of the United States Department of Labor. We should like to thank them for their support.

The Secretary of State for Labour is currently developing a youth and work programme for labour training and modernization, with the financial support of the Inter-American Development Bank, which is also supervising the programme, which aims to place 37,500 young people on the labour market.

We have formulated and implemented a programme to help young people obtain their first job. As a result, over 2,000 young people who had dropped out from school have graduated and today, over 60 per cent of these children have a job because of these retraining programmes. We must of course thank the ILO subregional office in San José, Costa Rica for the support it has provided to various programmes that we have implemented in the name of our Ministry and the social partners.

I must point out that the protection of workers in the Dominican Republic is guaranteed through Law No. 87-01 establishing the Dominican Social Security System which protects workers, and their families in terms of health, protects them from risks at work and guarantees them a dignified retirement after having come to the end of their long working lives, through the establishment of pension funds.

The Welfare System and the Workers' Insurance Scheme are now being implemented. The Family Health Insurance Scheme will soon be introduced, which will guarantee comprehensive physical and mental care for Dominican workers and legal residents. This health insurance scheme will benefit 3.3 million people.

Lastly, I should like to mention the important social dialogue between the social partners in the Dominican Republic. We have a true culture of dialogue in my country which helps to prevent labour conflicts in businesses. We firmly believe that the new world order must be based on social justice and the elimination of the barriers of poverty.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. ESPINAL (Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, El Salvador)*

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First, may I congratulate the President of this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference on his election, which is an honour to the region of the Americas and, in particular, to the member States of the Council of Ministers of Labour of Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic. I am very proud to take part in this Conference on behalf of the Government of El Salvador and to represent its President, Elias Antonio Saca. I would like to take this opportunity to convey his warmest greetings to Mr. Juan Somavia the Direc-

tor-General of the International Labour Organization and to all the delegations taking part in this forum and to the special guests who are increasing its prestige through their presence.

On 1 June, a new constitutional Government took office in my country. It emanated from the will of the Salvadorian people, as expressed through an election. It is giving priority to doing everything it can for all Salvadorians in keeping with a government plan entitled "safe country" which focuses closely on the human being and on respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the creation of opportunities for all, consultation and social dialogue, the rule of law and good governance, providing the appropriate physical and social infrastructures and education and training in order to ensure citizens' safety in the widest meaning of the term.

In El Salvador, the world economic debate is again causing us to consider a formula which gives priority to social aspects without abandoning economic stability and sustainable growth. It is quite clear that economic development cannot be maintained without human development. In countries such as ours, it is more important than ever to stress the social aspect because we have learned with difficulty and to our cost that the social aspect is not a complement to anything, but the basis of everything. In order to give priority to the social agenda, our new Government will immediately set about establishing a social welfare network in order to offer the requisite encouragement to all those who are economically challenged or socially marginalized so that they can join productive life and the formal economy.

Increasing employment opportunities and decent work is therefore our main national challenge. Consequently, President Saca, on the very day he took office, called on the social partners to speed up the signature of a pact for employment, in a quest for constant progress and economic and social development, which will depend to a great extent on employment and improved labour relations and, as the Director-General of the ILO says in his Report, *ILO programme implementation 2002-03*, on a real social dialogue within a tripartite framework, in order to help the social actors to achieve better understanding resting on the full exercise of workers' nationally and internationally recognized rights.

To this end, the partnership between the public and private sectors should jointly meet training needs and step up guidance, counselling and capacity building in order to boost productivity and efficiency. As we have said, in this context, matters of gender will be of singular importance and social dialogue will facilitate concerted action between the social partners and government representatives, the improvement of institutions' technical capacity and the promotion of fundamental rights, principles and norms at work as well as more opportunities for decent work for both men and women thereby ensuring that there is adequate social protection leading to better living conditions and thereby demonstrating a legitimate interest in the implementation of the policies and practical recommendations of the International Labour Office in the various areas of labour law.

I take this opportunity to express my country's full support to the central themes of Mr. Juan Somavia's Report, especially the Report, *ILO programme implementation 2002-03*, which reports on progress made in the implementation of the Decent

Work Agenda and which has allowed the Organization to reflect on what it does well and what it does less well in order to use this information to guide future decisions on strategies and means for achieving its main objectives.

The objective of applying the Decent Work Agenda has four interlinked stages: mapping the concept, promoting the integration and coherence of the concept within the ILO, the building of decent work into policy on the world economy and decent work in practice at the national level.

The body of the Report talks about the progress made towards each of these four and considers the goals established in the Programme and Budget for 2002-03. It notes that the aspiration to decent work has become a unifying concept and that it forms part of a policy on a globalized economy. It refers to the Governing Body's decision to set up the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization.

It is clear that the main achievements in the 2003-04 biennium have included the greater importance that is now attached to promoting and complying with fundamental rights, principles and norms at work with special attention going to child labour. As a result, the ILO has greatly widened world awareness of the importance of international labour standards for the process of development. This is proof that this prestigious Organization has continued to enhance the worldwide significance of international labour standards as a legal mechanism by promoting further ratification and implementation of Conventions and by supporting their implementation in practice, backed by a system of effective up-to-date monitoring.

According to this Report, this has had an immediate impact on the number of ratifications of ILO Conventions, which is already high, which means that the ILO's activities in this domain have been successful. It must not be forgotten that the promotion of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the campaign to do away with child labour have aroused great interest all round. Similarly, it should be remembered that much progress has been made towards the inclusion of the Decent Work Agenda in national poverty reduction strategies.

The ILO is likewise making substantial headway towards the objective of implementing the Decent Work Agenda within four years. That shows that this has become a vital element in an interdependent, globalizing world. As the Director-General said in his Report, this has given rise to a greater demand for the expertise of the ILO in the fields of social dialogue and the norms, policies and practices, which are of real importance for workers.

The importance of decent work in the new millennium cannot be denied. We also need training and capacity building for the human resources who have been plunged into a globalizing world. Nor can we deny that the ILO's strength lies to a great extent in the power of its social actors and the lasting nature of its social dialogue mechanisms, which lead to greater participation in the basic process of formulating policies that always recognize human dignity, the latter being the alpha and omega of government action to attain justice, legal security and the common weal.

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Mr. EASTMOND (*Minister of Labour and Social Security, Barbados*)

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Let me first extend my heartiest congratulations to my Caribbean colleague from the Dominican Republic on his assumption of the presidency.

Let me also thank the Director-General for a very balanced Report on ILO programme implementation which identifies the strengths and challenges of the Organization and provides indicators for evaluating its performance.

The Report addresses the strengthening of the contribution of the Turin Centre for the ILO's capacity building, learning and knowledge-management strategy. My Government thanks those agencies which facilitated training for Barbados and member State of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) at the Turin Centre.

However, the cost of participation limits the benefits to CARICOM, and we are seeking a strategic alliance between the Centre and the training institutions in our region. The proposal is currently with the Director of the ILO Caribbean Office, and we sincerely hope that it receives the support of the Governing Body and the Board of the Turin Centre.

My Government commends the Director-General and the Governing Body for their foresight, and the World Commission for its thorough and comprehensive report, *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*. It is a blueprint for formulating strategic solutions to the challenges of globalization, which will benefit both the successful multinational corporations and unskilled workers in the poorest countries.

We agree that the problems associated with globalization can be attributed to deficiencies in its governance and that national commitment is critical. To quote our Prime Minister, Owen Arthur: "We cannot leave people-focused development to the serendipity of market forces. Rather than retreat, this State must forge new smart partnerships with the private sector and with the institutions of civil society."

Developing countries, however, cannot realistically embrace globalization without market access for their products and increased funding for basic infrastructure, health and education projects. Trade, technology, international capital flows, intellectual property rights and market access must therefore be inextricably linked to issues such as poverty reduction, gender equality, social security and workers' rights.

My Government welcomes the ILO's commitment to the promotion of decent work. Employees cannot realize their full potential while working in unhealthy conditions with remuneration that is insufficient to satisfy their most basic needs. Decent work can enhance productivity, competitiveness and efficiency, and improve employees' job satisfaction and commitment.

At the tripartite level, all countries, like Barbados and other CARICOM States, must adopt the ILO's core labour standards – freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the abolition of forced labour and non-discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. We must also be committed to the enhancement and the development of social protection systems which guarantee basic living standards for all workers.

The Barbados Government agrees that international organizations such as the United Nations, the

WTO, the World Bank and the IMF must assist nations in achieving a fair globalization. We support the call for increased accountability for their decisions and the consequences of their policies; also for greater involvement of developing countries in policy- and decision-making and for social dialogue to be reflected in international policy.

Cooperation, understanding and the political will of rich and poor nations can ensure that globalization is not a utopian goal steeped in economic and political rhetoric. Sceptics must not gain credence from the unfortunate impasses of Seattle and Cancún.

Countries will eventually fall into two categories: those which embrace change and the victims of change. The ILO, with its unique tripartite structure, is now better positioned to support the establishment of a "global smart partnership" and the implementation of strategies which can maximize opportunities for all.

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Mr. NICOLESCU (*Employers' adviser and substitute delegate, Romania*)

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I am a member of the Romanian delegation and on behalf of Mr. Costache, the Romanian Employers' delegate, I would like to present our intervention to the International Labour Conference.

Firstly, allow me to extend our delegation's warmest congratulations to the President on his appointment, together with our highest appreciation to Mr. Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO and Secretary-General of the Conference, and his staff for the excellent conduct of this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. Our thanks go also to the representatives of the State and Canton of Geneva for hosting so generously one of the most complex and unique of international events, our Conference.

With your permission, I will briefly outline the major objectives and achievements of the Romanian employers' associations, all in line with the European and worldwide tendencies in the matter.

As you may be aware, Romania has recently become a full member of NATO and is firmly engaged in the process of European integration, aiming at becoming a full member by January 2007. We are convinced that we, the Employers, have a significant role to play in the achievement of this objective.

From this perspective, I wish to underline that our work is rendered difficult by a continuous polarization of the decision-makers' interest in the trade union movement, a fact which is to be seen also in the various reports and resolutions presented in the framework of this Conference.

Allow me to reiterate a well-known saying: "There may be employers without trade unions, but there may not be trade unions without employers."

All the actions of the Romanian employers are, and will continue to be, oriented towards:

- develop and enabling a business environment;
- respecting the property rights;
- developing a transparent, responsible and continuous social dialogue;
- eliminating corruption; and
- achieving the independence of justice by granting continuous support to the enforcement of laws.

Without sustained efforts to achieve these objectives, it is difficult to eliminate barriers preventing

the development of investments, thus depriving the entire society of the benefits of an increase in work productivity and living standards, and of the further development of society, in particular in the context of the globalization era.

Progress in the employers' movement consists in our recent decision to amalgamate all employers' associations and create the Romanian Employers' Union (REU), the aim of which is to align itself, as quickly as possible, with the integration and globalization tendencies that characterize our societies today.

The work instruments of the Union will consist of:

- the active participation of local and central associations of employers in shaping and implementing national policies for harmonization with the provisions of the *acquis communautaire*;
- the promotion of social dialogue with the governmental structures, trade unions and representatives of civil society;
- the creation and implementation of public/private partnerships, including at the community level;
- the creation of a business-friendly environment through the development of training and counselling capacities; and
- public dissemination of employers' success stories.

All these instruments are also helpful for the unification of the employers' associations, thus eliminating all obstacles preventing the equal and fair representation, and the development, of the Romanian Employers' Union.

We wish to confirm that, at the national level, we are in a situation favourable to consensus in which a system of government, incorporating the democratic values and principles of the market economy, offers the opportunity to promote economic and social welfare.

This context has opened the way to tripartite negotiation in order to achieve:

- pay equity;
- poverty reduction, restructuring and accountability of economic reform;
- implementation of international labour norms and standards;
- real social protection of workers and pensioners; and
- encouragement of investors through adequate fiscal policies (reducing fiscality, eliminating tax on reinvested profit and others).

In light of the above, the delegation of the Romanian employers is seeking active support from the international organizations in order to implement a system of binding standards as an instrument of efficiency.

We express our strong wish to share the experience and expertise of the ILO and of other relevant international organizations in the implementation of approved recommendations in order to find and shape the most adequate solutions to benefit from the advantages of globalization and gradually eliminate its negative effects, in particular in countries with economies in transition, such as Romania.

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*Original Arabic:* Mr. DAHLAN (*Employers' delegate, Saudi Arabia*)

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In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! The impressive amount of documentation submitted to this session of the Conference, as well



as the richness and diversity of the subjects raised during the discussion in plenary and in the various committees, bear witness to the scope of the efforts made by the Office in order to ensure that the ILO can assume its rightful place within the multilateral system, with a view to defending its principles, its objectives and its values, and protecting and promoting social justice at the national and international levels. I would therefore like to commend these constant efforts which are reflected in the work of the Governing Body.

Careful consideration of the documents before us this session shows the extent of the challenges and difficulties encountered by the social partners throughout the world.

The Report, *ILO programme implementation 2002-03* bears eloquent witness to what is being done by our Organization at this very difficult time in history. On behalf of the employers in western Asia, and more particularly on behalf of Saudi Arabia, we would like once more to commend the efforts of the ILO's Regional Office for the Arab States in Beirut. At the same time, we would like these efforts to be stepped up in order to keep pace with the transformations that the region is undergoing today.

I would like to draw attention to the fact that the use of Arabic as a language of research and discussion remains at a modest level which falls below the legitimate aspirations of the Arab group to participate more effectively in the work of the ILO. Moreover, Arab representation in the ILO has been reduced despite the professional competence of the Arab world that can be brought to bear at the international level.

The technical cooperation programme should be extended in our region, both in terms of quality and quantity, in order to have a sustained effect and meet the real needs of the social partners.

I would also like to commend the Report entitled *Towards a fair deal for migrant workers in the global economy*. As Employers of the member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council, we would like to see foreign workers benefiting from all the rights specified by ILO Conventions. The considerable increase in the number of migrant workers is an evidence of the positive environment provided to these workers, whose contribution to reconstruction is appreciated alongside that of nationals. This situation reflects a positive image of cooperation among peoples in order to bring about economic and social stability both in the countries of origin and the receiving countries.

As a member of the Governing Body we have followed with keen interest and appreciation the work done by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. We would like to congratulate the Commission on its exhaustive report, which has been discussed at this session of the Conference. We endorse the Commission's proposals and recommendations, as well as its vision of the future. We eagerly await the Director-General's proposals as a follow up to the recommendations made by the World Commission, in particular for the status of our tripartite Organization based on dialogue to be enshrined as the body charged with interacting with international agencies, in particular, the IMF and the World Bank, in order to defend the social and humanitarian dimensions of globalization to protect the people and to strengthen cooperation in the global economy. With that in mind, we would

support the idea of holding a seminar on the social dimension of globalization so that this key issue continues to be given priority at the international level.

I would like at this point to pay tribute to the efforts of the mission sent by the Director-General to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories this year, whose report is yet another international document condemning Israeli practices and policies in the region. There is no need for me to add to what the mission has said in its report on its findings on site. These Israeli policies have resulted in the destruction of infrastructure and an increase in poverty and in youth unemployment. Our Palestinian fellow employers suffer huge losses on a daily basis owing to the discriminatory practices of the Israelis. The list is very long, it has already been mentioned by others attending this Conference and I do not wish to give a detailed account of all these practices which are seen on our television screens and clearly show the sufferings inflicted on the people and affecting every social category.

My country suffers as others do from the effects of terrorism targeted against innocent people, and in my country we are committed to the security of our partners at work, whether they are our fellow citizens or foreign workers. We defend their rights laid down in international agreements and those concluded with enterprises.

I would like to take this opportunity, in this international assembly, to address an urgent appeal to the United Nations for observance of international law, i.e. non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

To conclude, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the President and all the Chairpersons of the Committees of this Conference for their unstinting efforts.

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*Original French: Mr. BRIESCH (representative, European Economic and Social Committee)*

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I am delighted to have this opportunity of addressing this session of the International Labour Conference. In particular, I would like to express my thanks to the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia. I would like to thank him for inviting me once again to speak here, and thus to make a contribution to the discussion by describing the viewpoint of the European Economic and Social Committee.

The European Economic and Social Committee considers itself a natural ally of the ILO; it has always followed the Organization's work with great interest. I am convinced that cooperation between our two bodies could be even more steadfast, more fruitful and more efficient than it is at present if, in some way or another, we gave it more of a structural framework – exactly how that would be done remains to be determined.

Allow me to take advantage of this opportunity just to say a little about the social dimension of globalization; this, I know, is the subject of your discussion here, and it is also very close to the heart of the concerns of the members of the EESC.

We can only welcome the initiative taken by the ILO and by its Director-General in drawing up the report, *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*. This report, which results from collective effort and intense dialogue involving representatives of the lifeblood on all the societies in our planet, finally gives us a solid and consensual basis for policies to be developed in order to fill in the

gaps that had been left by globalization, in terms of its social dimension.

I have read, with a great interest, the Director-General's Report on the role of the ILO in the implementation of recommendations arrived at by the World Commission, and I intend to ask the EESC to draft an opinion on the social dimension of globalization.

The communication by the European Commission on 18 May, which asked how exactly European Union policies could contribute to extending this discussion, indeed calls us to do precisely that; in doing this the EESC will, of course, be able to refer to an information report adopted in May 2001 on the topic, *Coping with globalization: The only option for the most vulnerable*. In that report we pointed out that one of the main weaknesses in the globalization process is the fact that it is seen more as a threat to social rights than as an opportunity of possibility to kick-start economic growth and to improve well-being.

It is, indeed, difficult to explain why we have precise rules on trade, or on capital flows, at a time when we have no similar standard for social issues. In our report, we stressed the necessity, in order to develop the social dimension of the globalization process, to enhance the international institution that is most closely concerned by this issue – namely the ILO – and to establish cooperation between the ILO and other international bodies; basically I am thinking of the WTO. The purpose, then, is to make a contribution to the parallel development of rights for workers and liberalization of trade. It is also necessary to promote ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions.

In order to guarantee respect for fundamental social standards in commercial exchange, it would appear more effective to apply a system based on encouragement, based on incentives, a system intended to promote trade with countries that are trying to protect and develop fundamental social rights. We have, indeed, seen some regional integration forums that have taken this kind of approach through charters for social rights. The Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the 78 members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States stipulates explicitly that the “parties reaffirm their commitment to the internationally recognized core labour standards, as defined by the relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions – they agree to enhance cooperation in this area – and they agree that labour standards should not be used for protectionist purposes.” The EU should continue to include similar text in agreements to be reached in the future and that is certainly something that we believe to be of great importance.

It is clear that globalization offers humankind, as a whole, major prospects for development, with the proviso that we can succeed in enhancing the instruments that will allow us to manage this process, which, in turn, will guarantee that it is beneficial to all, and that the inequalities that have been generated thus far are corrected. With that in mind, the EESC is in favour of introducing greater democracy to international society by enhancing existing international bodies and also by facilitating the participation of developing countries in the decision-making processes of those bodies, as well as by making those bodies more externally transparent; this would also involve consultation mechanisms in which civil society can participate.

As you can see, we are very much on the same wavelength as the World Commission and the ILO in all that we are saying; this confirms the relevance of the EU's economic and social model in meeting the challenges that we all face.

In conclusion, we are making considerable effort in seeking to contribute to the promotion of participatory democracy throughout the world by, wherever possible, seeking to establish a culture of dialogue, and structures for dialogue, between representatives of organized civil society and the political authorities.

I am convinced that by taking this approach and working in this way we can create opportunities for all, and can thereby develop the social dimension of globalization.

*(Mr. Wade takes the Chair.)*

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Mr. HAGH-BAYAN (*Employers' adviser, Islamic Republic of Iran*)

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In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! First of all I would like to congratulate the President on being appointed to preside over the 92nd Session.

I would like to bring to your attention certain aspects of globalization and its social impact on societies. Globalization is a social process through which geographical boundaries that influence sociocultural relationships are gradually diminished and the people become increasingly aware of the disappearance of these boundaries. The concept of globalization, from an ideological perspective, is somehow misleading because, as with the earlier concept of modernization, globalization is justifying the idea that the development and expansion of western culture and capitalist society is the outcome of forces that are not under human control, and thus acts towards the changing of the world.

Globalization is a direct result of European culture which was disseminated through immigration, colonization and imitation of other parts of the world. Globalization is also potentially accompanied by the growth of capitalism, but this does not mean that the whole world should become western or capitalist; it means that each social system should be measured, organized and coordinated according to western capitalism, and should realize its actual situation with reference to western economic and cultural criteria.

The social impact of globalization cannot be studied without considering its economic impact; and globalization can impact on nations in various ways. One positive effect of globalization for many nations is that it allows them to achieve higher levels of economic growth. Economic growth would be followed by a higher standard of living for the population, a growth in GDP, increased government revenues, increasing imports and exports, greater labour flexibility and an increase in non-standard forms of employment.

It is difficult to isolate specific impacts of globalization from other processes which, at the beginning, occurred at the same time – processes like macroeconomic changes, the end of apartheid, the creation of democratic institutions and the adoption of new labour relationships. These processes are interactive and influence each other in a cyclical chain.

Globalization also impacts on the quality of life of the world's people; the poor appear to be getting poorer. When countries open themselves up to in-

ternational competition, governments must think in terms of economic rationalist principles.

They may reduce spending in essential areas such as health, welfare and education, thus reducing the quality of life for their nation. In addition, countries with minimal government regulations often attract large transnational companies. This can result in the exploitation of workers and the environment in countries where the quality of life may already be low. From a cultural and sociological perspective, globalization has many negative impacts. National and local cultures are influenced by imported cultural products, and nations must be aware of this danger and be on their guard against such phenomena.

The concept of government is being replaced by the concept of government-nation. Governments are thus not as powerful as in the past, and the responsibility of protecting a nation's cultural heritage, way of life and history falls on the nation, not on the government.

The outcome of such a process is the development of a global culture in which geographical, social, ethnic and national boundaries are virtually abolished, and individuals are the most important factors on which concentration must be focused.

It is not an option for us to choose globalization or reject it. Globalization is a historical process that has happened and will continue.

It is the responsibility of each of us, the people of the world, to care about this, and to consider how to deal with it, how to benefit from its advantages and how to prevent its undesirable effects.

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Mr. ARNOLD (*Employers' delegate, New Zealand*)

The report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is timely. Whilst from a business point of view we do not necessarily agree with everything in the report, it does provide significant scope for ongoing debate as part of the ILO programme and budget discussion in November.

The report identifies the importance of creating the right policy environment conducive to growth and development, which we support.

We agree with the Commission in its report where it proposes a number of policy coherence initiatives to address the view that social progress cannot be achieved solely by social policy, that developments in economy, finance, trade, technology, investment, the environment and other related areas are also important. The ILO's mandate already provides input into such coherence initiatives.

The need for a values-based approach that reflects the free market economy and such concepts as individual responsibility, freedom of choice, competition, reward and recognition, responsibility, respect for the law, respect for the individual and property, transparency, integrity, equality, freedom, intellectual honesty and full respect for the rules of the game is commendable and essential.

In the short time available I wish to focus on some of the new directions that the Director-General's Report identifies.

Firstly, not everything in the World Commission report is directed at the ILO and so not all is relevant to the ILO.

What a country does should be driven at the national level and should not be a matter for international institutions to direct or even try to control. In this regard, the ILO should position itself to respond

to the constituents' needs in regard to the responses they identify.

Matters of national dialogue, structure and labour and social policy can be informed by the debate in the ILO, but the response to be sustainable must come from the national level.

Secondly, the ILO needs to be open to new realities in the workplace, rather than putting reform and new forms of work within the context of existing ILO responses. New times call for new responses.

If the ILO standards system is to remain relevant in the future, it needs to be modernized to address and respond to the needs of the modern world of work.

Thirdly, rather than trying to establish the agenda for change to local development, the ILO should help strengthen the social partners' capabilities in the art of dialogue at the national level. There is no one-size-fits-all response. There is no one model to promote.

A challenge we face in the New Zealand context relates to changes in the balance between labour and social policy and other policy demands necessary to sustain economic growth. The balance needs to recognize that the burdens necessary in a society need to be shared equitably and, from the New Zealand experience, I would caution others to take care that, in creating that balance, the needs of the business community are neither forgotten nor just seen as broad shoulders to bear the cost and delivery of political promises.

In conclusion, if New Zealand business is going to be in a position to contribute to the Director-General's vision, we must have a regulatory framework that is balanced, with a business-friendly emphasis, which encourages growth, innovation and entrepreneurship and celebrates business success because, through that business success, the social dividend can be paid. Without that growth, social development cannot be assured.

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Mr. FARSHORI (*Government delegate, Pakistan*)

Let me congratulate the President on his election at this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. His vast experience and deep knowledge about labour-related issues have added to the richness of the proceedings of the Conference.

Facts of life are bitter. The developing countries are facing multidimensional problems in the economic as well as the social sector. Unemployment is increasing. A large number of people are living below the poverty line, and the income gap between the industrialized and developing countries is on the increase. A large number of countries have been marginalized and live in perpetual fear of becoming a failed state.

These deep-seated and persistent imbalances in the current working of the global economic order call for an urgent rethink of the policies and institutions of global governance. We must understand and recognize the crucial issue of the shrinking of policy space and erosion of economic sovereignty of the developing countries. It is indeed paradoxical that the protagonists of globalization call for improvement in national governance, yet the present set of global rules progressively encroach on their essential policy space.

In this scenario, the ILO's initiative to constitute the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization was highly commendable. The Commission, which was co-chaired by President Ha-

lonen of Finland and President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania, produced a landmark document which has provided guiding principles for handling the issue of globalization.

We agree with the finding of the report that fair globalization will create opportunities for all. However, this requires integration of national and regional policies in a coherent manner, in a global framework with basic respect for justice, fair play and human values. Sixty years ago the Declaration of Philadelphia mandated that "poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere". We must address the issue of poverty.

We wholeheartedly support the recommendation of the Commission to make decent work a global goal. The emphasis on poverty alleviation, employment generation, social protection and social dialogue are steps in the right direction. However, greater efforts are required by the ILO to translate the guidelines into a workable action plan.

We believe that the enforcement of fair trade rules and improvement of financial architecture alone will not resolve the issue of poverty and underdevelopment of developing countries. There is an urgent need for making an international commitment to substantial debt relief and increased flow of resources. In this regard, the ILO should act as the lead agency at the multilateral level under the auspices of the United Nations.

Our Government is fully committed to fulfilling its international obligations to enforce labour standards in line with the Conventions ratified by us. We have ratified seven out of eight fundamental Conventions. We are rationalizing the existing labour laws in conformity with our national aspirations and in line with ratified Conventions.

Now, let me touch upon the issue of Palestinian workers in territories under Israeli occupation. The Director-General's Report, *The situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories*, makes grim reading, with unemployment touching an average of 35 per cent, leading to the strangulation of the economy. The Report documents many obstacles that face Palestinians trying to earn a living with dignity: restriction on the movements of Palestinian workers and of the goods and services they produce are pervasive. The Report also mentions the plight of Palestinians living in Gaza, where 83.5 per cent of the population is living below the poverty line. The problems have been further compounded by the construction of the so-called security wall, which has only served to separate children from schools, farmers from the land and workers from their work.

In the presence of such conditions, we share the assessment of the Director-General that "security in one country cannot be built on creating insecurity in another". Only a complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied territories could lead to a lasting peace in the region, resulting in the improvement of the living and working conditions of people living under occupation.

I thank you once again for providing me with an opportunity to explain the viewpoint of my Government.

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Mr. TONGAAI (*Minister of Labour and Human Resource Management, Kiribati*)

Let me congratulate the President and the Vice-Presidents on the unanimous elections they have secured in obtaining their respective offices. Given the high level of professionalism and experience

they have brought to their respective positions, this session of the Conference is now approaching the end of its final week successfully.

Of equal importance, let me take this opportunity, as well, to express our gratitude to the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, for providing an enabling environment for member States to explore, to the maximum, ways and means of countering the undesirable fallouts of globalization and to identify options for a way forward for all. This has been vividly illustrated in the agenda items of the Conference and the various reports that included labour migration, the fishing sector, human resource development and the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. All such reports, which have been tabled in the Conference for the deliberations of delegates, are of particular importance and concern to Kiribati.

The Decent Work Agenda is the convergence of the many fabrics the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization has been called to address. For its part, Kiribati is therefore committed to developing a decent work national plan of action that includes identification of holistic deficits of the four strategic objectives of decent work, developing a plan of action and the promotion of the decent work principles at all levels of the social partners before it could be adopted for implementation. Labour legislation is one of the areas that has significant shortfalls as far as decent work is concerned. The ILO, through the Multidisciplinary Advisory Team for South-East Asia and the Pacific, in Manila, and the ILO Office for Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and other South Pacific islands, in Suva has provided various technical assistance to align our labour laws with international labour standards and to address the broader aspects of decent work. My gratitude goes to the Manila and Suva Offices for their constant support in the past and I look forward to their continuing support in the future.

A series of promotional workshops on decent work and labour law changes has been carried out in Kiribati to convince the stakeholders of the relevance and importance of decent work, hence the need to change our laws.

For the first time, the principles of decent work and the role of trade unions in our national development are now reflected in the 2004-07 Kiribati national development strategies. In addition, my own Ministry, for its part, has set its own mission to "improve the quality of life of all I-Kiribati through equitable access to decent work and active social dialogue". In pursuing this mission, the operational plan of my Ministry details the activities it will engage in for the next four years, which are oriented to the Decent Work Agenda.

These are some of the major tasks Kiribati needs to do, for its part, within the ambit of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. This is the beginning of a long-term process of responding to a call by the World Commission to work nationally to develop a coherent and consistent policy that provides an environment conducive to reaping the benefits of globalization by all our citizens.

Before concluding, please allow me to say briefly that although the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is comprehensive and provides options for a way forward for all member States, the scope of consultation did

not include the Pacific region with its cultural, social, economic and political diversity that is capable of offering the World Commission a unique beauty of its own and that could be of equal interest to the work of the Commission as well.

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*Original Arabic: Mr. AL-KUHLANI (Workers' delegate, Yemen)*

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Let me first of all, on behalf on the Workers' delegation of Yemen, congratulate the President on his election to this important position as President of this 92nd Session of the Conference, which is marked by the economic and political upheavals facing our world. We expect from the Conference decisive resolutions that will define the key factors in peace, stability, and peace in our world, and consolidate the labour principles and standards based on equality, justice and human rights.

I should also pay tribute to the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, for all his efforts in preparing these excellent Reports dedicated to globalization, trade union rights, freedom of association and collective bargaining. These Reports address very important issues, such as the unfair effects of globalization – poverty, unemployment and uncontrolled migration. These issues are to be studied as a priority by our session of Conference. They are very grave matters, as we see clearly today that migration is increasing and work under indecent conditions is becoming widespread. These phenomena have very serious repercussions, especially for developing countries, including my own, Yemen.

We have made great progress in Yemen as regards workers' rights, and we have ratified 29 Conventions, including the fundamental Conventions, which are of great importance in the context of a reform and modernization campaign which is ongoing in Yemen and aims, above all, to develop civil society, ensure the participation of local communities in decision-making processes, and facilitate the integration of women in the world of work and in political and social activity. We reaffirm here that dialogue based on partnership, and not just the outward form of dialogue, is desired by all societies that wish to strengthen such mechanisms.

We commend the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the work they have done in the areas of labour legislation, trade union rights and freedom of association. This is very positive, and will help us to initiate dialogue between the social partners in the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and in other countries.

Globalization is tending to produce a global monoculture, and this poses a threat to human civilization. This situation would make it impossible to realize the aspiration of the world's peoples. The challenge facing us is to promote dialogue over conflict, to accept diversity and differences and to invest in pluralism in order to work successfully towards a more stable and peaceful world. But in order to do this, the ILO must play a strategic role in economic development, especially of the developing countries, in order to combat poverty, unemployment, and uncontrolled migration and to reinforce the capacities of trade unions and social partners in taking up the challenges. We therefore support the recommendations and solutions advocated in the Director-General's Report.

We are extremely concerned by the situation in the occupied Arab territories, which are constantly aggravated by Israeli policies and by the erection of

the racist separation wall. We are also concerned by the failure of all attempts at dialogue, especially of the Road Map, and on the flouting of international standards and laws. The international community must redouble its efforts to end the occupation of Palestinian territories, and to allow the Palestinian people to establish an independent State with the holy city of Al-Quds as its capital. The international community must also work to end the occupation of Golan and South Lebanon. In Iraq, only an end to occupation and a return of sovereignty to Iraqis will bring peace and stability. The policy of containment applied against Iran, and sanctions against Syria, can only increase instability in the region.

In conclusion, I assure you of our determination to work towards the success of current and future projects of the ILO in the framework of its strategic objectives, so that justice, equality, progress, trade union rights and fundamental rights at work can become a reality for all.

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*Mr. ABDELLA (Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Ethiopia)*

Allow me, to begin by congratulating the President and the Officers of the Conference upon their election to preside over this Session of the International Labour Conference and to assure them of the Ethiopian delegation's full cooperation in discharging their important responsibilities. I would like to thank the Director-General for his Report to the Conference. The Report will guide our debate and enable us to reassess the ILO's past achievements and look forward to the future challenges ahead.

The challenging international situation has a direct bearing on the outcome of all our countries' plans and strategies. For a weak economy like ours in Africa, freeing itself from the multi-dimensional problems besetting it is by no means an easy task. However, with the changing times, there is now a growing realization that assisting Africa's development is more of an issue of partnership for a common good and less of a purely humanitarian action meant only in Africa's favour. In fact, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of September 2000 can be seen as a sign of recognition of such an understanding taking root. In the Millennium Declaration, member States of the United Nations made a most passionate commitment to addressing the crippling poverty and increasing misery that grip many areas of the world. Although the primary responsibility for our development rests with us, the developing nations cannot achieve such a huge task set forth in the MDGs alone. We strongly need the support of the rest of the world.

It would be appropriate for me to mention the ILO's contribution to African countries in their all-out effort towards poverty alleviation. The Organization's commitment was further expressed during the Tenth African Regional Meeting of the ILO held at the end of last year in our capital, Addis Ababa. I should like to note here that this meeting provided an effective forum to discuss the challenges ahead for Africa and to draw up concrete guidelines on the major subject of decent work for Africa's development, including economic growth, employment creation and poverty eradication through dialogue. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my country's gratitude to the ILO for giving us the opportunity to host this important meeting, which will be remembered as a memorable landmark in the enhancement of the social and economic progress of

Africa. I must commend, the ILO's subregional office for East Africa and the East Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (EAMAT) in Addis Ababa for their active role in and constant support of our work. Their assistance has been invaluable to my country and we look forward to their continued support in the future.

My country always attaches considerable importance to the work of the ILO. More especially, I would like to emphasize the ILO's constructive and consistent approach to attaining the declared objectives of providing workers with decent and productive work. In order to uphold and implement fundamental principles and rights at work, Ethiopia has now ratified all the fundamental ILO Conventions. Furthermore, I am happy to announce that following extensive tripartite dialogue conducted over several months, the Government of Ethiopia enacted a new Labour Law in February this year with a view to harmonizing the labour conditions in the country with international labour standards. To this end, the new Labour Law permits trade union diversity and prohibits administrative dissolution of trade unions, and the ban on strikes is limited to enterprises that provide essential services to the public.

Turning to the other agenda items before the Conference, my delegation appreciates the reports submitted for our consideration. The issues are all timely and pertinent to the work of our Organization. In particular, the report that focused on the real issues has clearly indicated the tools that should be used to provide solutions to the real problems. These are the Decent Work Agenda as an instrument for development, employment as the main route out of poverty, and achieving a fair globalization as a means to secure global stability. The Global Report, which focuses on freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, is of primary importance since it provides a global picture and widens our outlook relating to the implementation of these basic human rights.

In closing, I wish the ILO, the Director-General and his staff, and the Conference every success in their important work.

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*Original Farsi: Mr. QARQEIN (Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Afghanistan)*

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The Report of the Director-General covers progress in attaining these goals, commenting specifically on the promotion and realization of standards and fundamentals principles and rights at work; the creation of greater opportunities for men and women to secure decent employment and income; measure to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and the strengthening of tripartism and social dialogue. Let me take this opportunity to assure you of Afghanistan's sincere commitment to working towards achieving the objectives in these areas of common interest.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation for the constructive assistance provided by friendly countries to help fulfil the requests of the Afghan nation and to those who gave their support to Afghanistan.

During the past difficult year, the transitional Islamic Government and the people of Afghanistan have experienced the effectiveness of the ILO through its activities in Afghanistan. We are presently receiving direct support in the areas of the review of the Labour Code and the Organization of

the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Practical assistance is ongoing with the National Emergency Employment Programme. New employment centres are being established. Business development projects have commenced as well as microfinance training. We are receiving assistance on ways to support the disabled. We are getting support from ILO on ways to encourage women into the workforce and to help them establish enterprises. In the skills development area we are obtaining support to establish a range of non-formal vocational training centres. Employer and worker representative bodies have received assistance as part of the plan to promote tripartism. My country is committed to making these programmes work and we are extremely grateful for this practical support.

At the same time, I would like to draw the attention of the Director-General to the continuing requirements of my country and people.

The recent civil wars had their effects where social order was threatened by dictatorship and conflicts. Since the Bonn Conference, and later the Tokyo Donors Conference, we have experienced a hard but constructive time.

We have seen the establishment of the Interim government, the reconstruction of dispersed organs of Government, the successful holding of the emergency Loya Jirga Grand Council, the establishment of a transitional Government, the appointment of a constitution commission, the commencement of the Consolidation of Peace (DDR) programme, the continued rehabilitation of the country and the provision of the chance to all to select their president. Even though we have managed to prepare a new constitution and continue to try to implement it so that our people can enjoy the benefits of democracy, social justice, freedom and basic rights, we need a solid, effective and active administration in the country to make it work effectively.

To achieve this goal, a separate commission of administrative reforms has been established by the Government and this commission is responsible for specifying priorities and bringing about needed reforms in government administration.

This project is important for two reasons: to build the capacity for attracting foreign aid and to successfully implement this aid; and to match international developments and achieve international standards in our society.

This project is strongly in need of the international community's support.

Afghanistan has been a member of the ILO since 1934 and over many years my country has worked diligently to establish and maintain the ILO goals of creating opportunities for employment, industrial relations, social security, effective use of manpower, vocational training, advancement of working capabilities, etc. But during the recent decades of war and disaster, we have not been always able to maintain these standards. We also have suffered a brain drain, losing many of our most talented and skilled people. We have also lost much of our physical capacity. To restore these we need the continuing attention of supporting communities.

The fundamental goal of the Government of Afghanistan is to provide employment opportunities for people in all areas, according to Islamic regulations and in accordance with the statement of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, free from any sort of discrimination, having the right to work, and freedom in their choice of occupation.

Within a few months, we will see the election and establishment of a new Government in Afghanistan. This will be a historical event for our country and also a significant event in the international community because it is only through the establishment of an elected lawful government in Afghanistan that we will remove the frustration of terrorism and such problems as the export of poppies, drugs and insecurity. This will give our people hope for a bright future.

Before going to a free democratic election we have the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration on our hands. This will help remove the pressure from any side opposed to a democratic and justified election.

Before the civil wars, the important sectors of our economy were largely agriculture and livestock production. Today, as a result of the civil wars, these sectors need rebuilding and construction and to do so require investment, particularly from private investors. We will facilitate investment in Afghanistan to achieve economic development and so provide employment opportunities for our people. A further effect of war in our country was the destruction of economic records and economic foundations and networks, either public or private. Their reconstruction is impossible for the Government to achieve on its own.

At the Tokyo and Berlin conferences, as well as the recent regional conference of the European Union's Humanitarian Aid Office held in Kabul and in other trips of official representatives from Afghanistan we have endeavoured to attract foreign investors to invest in Afghanistan to establish industries and to promote business in our country. But, as you all know, Afghanistan has had to begin from scratch. We therefore have a long way to go before we reach the stage of self-sufficiency and self-dependency. To help us reach that goal, we are hopeful that the international community will continue to provide humanitarian, technical and economical assistance.

We acknowledge that whatever we have done so far in our country after the establishment of the Interim Government, it is because of the support of the international community. Achievements such as the preparation of a new constitution, freedom of speech, women and children's rights, development of the domestic economy, and free and democratic elections are all noteworthy, but they are not sufficient. There remains much to be done.

I appreciate the assistance of the Director-General and the assistance of all other members in helping us to solve these problems. The people and the Government of Afghanistan remain hopeful for further cooperation and assistance from your side as our country endeavours to enter into new social, political, economical and cultural life.

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*Original Arabic: Mr. ABDULHUSAIN (Workers' delegate, Bahrain)*

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In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

I would like to congratulate the President of the Conference on his election and wish him every success.

I am also pleased to be able to transmit to you the compliments of the workers of Bahrain and of the new General Federation for Bahrain Workers' Trade Unions, which was established between 12 and 14 January this year. The Bahraini trade union

movement is entering a new phase in its history. The workers' dream, which dates back seven decades; has been realized: Workers now have free, independent and unified unions within the Federation, following the adoption by His Majesty the King, of the Trade Union Act on 31 September 2002.

Allow me also to congratulate the Director-General of the Organization, Mr. Juan Somavia, for his excellent work in preparing for this session of the Conference and the Reports which he and his team have prepared, which reflect the desire to improve the working conditions for the workers in the face of modernization.

I think that these Reports constitute a method of work and guidelines for workers because of the detailed in-depth information that they contain about the reality of work and workers in the world. The Report, *Organizing for social justice*, is a very important tool because it sheds light on key issues, such as trade union rights and collective bargaining, which can serve as a basis for the development of democracy. We cannot talk about democracy while trade union rights and freedom of association are restricted and when collective bargaining between the social partners is at a standstill. The dialogue serves as a basis for development, strengthening it and allowing more balanced development. Moreover, it serves to solve existing and potential problems which makes it possible to create good conditions for reducing poverty and encouraging the creation of decent jobs.

There are challenges which must be taking up. The world is turning more and more towards globalization while the periphery is facing marginalization which leads to economic crises, an increase in domestic and foreign debt and the inability of various countries to pay back their debts. This leads also to increased unemployment and threatens social stability in the countries of the South.

Today, globalization cannot serve as a model because of its very brutal nature. The economic powers monopolize the infrastructure of the world economy with no regard for poor countries which need support and major projects that would allow them to rescue their economies in a way that is compatible with the world we want to live in. We have to realize social justice and fight against poverty, disease and unemployment. There are conditions and requirements which must be met for a fair globalization. The social dimension is a key factor in this. The Report of the Director-General on the World Commission on Social Dimension of Globalization is very important, because it determines an approach that allows us to deal with this crisis and to correct the present imbalance through decent work, whilst finding ways of drawing up national policies, which try to put an end to this brutal globalization. The Report also raised the issues of economic growth, investment, employment and rallying forces in order to establish effective social partnerships capable of achieving decent work.

The intensification of globalization has created more privatization without studying the negative effects that has workers laid off without social guarantees or compensation, which will certainly lead to an increase in unemployment and will have negative impact on social stability.

We read with interest the Report of the Director-General on *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*, and I would like to emphasize here

that the occupation is terrorism. A just and lasting peace in Palestine cannot be achieved without an end to the occupation of Palestine and the Syrian Golan, and unless the Palestinian people is granted the right to decide its own future and to establish its own independent State with Al-Quds as its capital. It is also important to end the American/British occupation of Iraq so that the Iraqi people can establish their own independent State and establish a legal and sovereign government on its territory.

We would also like to emphasize the rights of all workers in the State and private sector to establish trade unions in my country, Bahrain, in accordance with the reform directives of His Majesty the King, with the National Charter and with the Trade Unions Act. We also respect the international Conventions and we hope that through social dialogue we will be able to ensure respect for all the basic principles of the International Labour Organization, particularly those relating to freedom of association and collective bargaining, through the ratification of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

On the other hand, I would like to point to the steps which have been taken in the area of trade union rights and freedom of association in countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. I am also certain that these steps will be followed by others which aim to guarantee the fundamental rights and principles at work laid down in the Declaration of Philadelphia.

In conclusion, I would like to wish the Conference every success and I reiterate my thanks to the Director-General and to the President and his team, as well as to everybody working in the wings in all areas of the Organization in order to facilitate our work.

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Mr. TUGUSHI (*Workers' delegate, Georgia*)

The years following Georgia's regaining independence were marked by a drastic fall in living standards, the collapse of the system of social guarantees and growth of unemployment. A lot of Georgian citizens left the country because of civil war and political instability. The situation in the country became further aggravated by 300,000 refugees from Abkhazia and Samachablo, which is also known as South Osetia.

As a result of widespread corruption, the country's economy fell into deep stagnation. The falsification of the parliamentary election in 2003 by the Government was the last straw that provoked the well-known "Rose Revolution", which was followed by the President's resignation. At present, the new Government faces a lot of complex problems and challenges that need to be resolved.

In conditions of high levels of unemployment and poverty, the trade union movement of Georgia has been doing its utmost to promote effective social dialogue. The ILO's support and promotion of social dialogue in Georgia should be particularly emphasized. Successful collaboration between the Georgian Trade Unions Amalgamation (GTUA) and the ILO Moscow Office in the project, designed to establish productive cooperation with the parties of social dialogue partners, has been very helpful. In this context, the ILO's assistance in strengthening the trade unions' role in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process is of particular importance. We greatly appreciate ILO assistance in

providing expertise for the draft Labour Code, which was carried out at our request.

The GTUA, as an organization affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, systematically participates in the implementation of the projects meant to popularize the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Despite the GTUA's activity, the question of social dialogue has not become a real priority in the political life of Georgia. Against the post-revolutionary background, the Government tries to deal with social problems without consulting the social partners.

Last year was marked by gross violations of trade union rights on the part of the old Government. Particular attention should be drawn to the event which took place in one of the regions of the country not long before the parliamentary elections of 2003, when the governor of the region, following intimidation and harassment of the local trade union leaders, forced the primary trade unions of the GTUA affiliated organizations to join a so-called regional trade union, established by his order. The GTUA considered this a gross intervention into trade union activity violating fundamental rights guaranteed by the ILO Conventions.

For several years now, labour inspectors in Georgia have been denied entry to any enterprise or organization in order to carry out monitoring of the workplace and the labour situation unless they have permission from a court of law. Despite the GTUA's repeated attempts to convince both the executive and legislative powers that such a decision is unlawful, the above-mentioned rule still remains in force.

The GTUA hopes that now, when the promotion of democracy is declared as a top priority by the new Government, all the barriers to effective cooperation for the establishment of social justice will be removed, especially since the GTUA openly supported the "Rose Revolution", by expressing an uncompromising position with regard to corruption and the rigging of elections.

Hopes are also raised by the steps made into the social sphere, particularly the trends related to increasing pensions and salaries for civil servants, as well as the uncompromising struggle against corruption and contraband.

In addition to the positive impulses, the GTUA considers it necessary to draw attention to the Government's ignorance of labour rights, which is becoming more and more frequent. The point is that civil servants, at all levels and without exception, are being asked by the newly appointed officials to leave their jobs of their own free will, which is a gross violation of the labour rights guaranteed by the international and national legislation. The GTUA considers such actions to be, at best, attempts by the Government to avoid its social responsibilities and, at worst, an expression of violence at the workplace.

With the entry of foreign investment into Georgia, the number of actual violations of labour and trade union rights is increasing. The provisions of Georgian legislation as well as of international Conventions are periodically violated by the company that is involved in the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Jeihan oil and gas pipeline in Georgia.

The violation of trade union rights are common by Georgian employers too, and trade unions are involved in daily struggles against such occurrences.



In this connection, I would like to express the hope that social justice and genuine social partnership will become the rule in Georgia.

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*Original French: Mr. TARTAGLIA (Workers' delegate, Italy)*

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On behalf of the Italian Workers' delegation, I should like to express my congratulation to the President on his election, as well as congratulate the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, on his election to his second term.

I would like to begin my comments by recalling an event held in Florence last month. More than 120 young boys and girls from all countries of the world participated in the first World Congress of Children against Child Labour organized by the Global March Against Child Labour, the NGO Helping Hands and the three Italian trade union confederation CGIL, CISL and UIL. In the final declaration, which the children drafted themselves, it states that before we begin to discuss child labour we must emphasize that children's rights can only be recognized in a situation of peace. Peace is the most fundamental human right and we must ask ourselves why not has everyone the opportunity to enjoy such a fundamental right. Were they to live in peace, each child would have the possibility of seeing their rights recognized and also of being able to improve the world for themselves and for future generations.

Children have thus reminded us of the priority of having a commitment towards peace in a world in which war and terrorism continue to develop rather than being definitively banished from the face of our planet. The Italian Constitution, and I quote: "repudiates war as an instrument for resolving international controversies" and we, the Italian workers, are committed, together with workers' organizations around the world, to translate this principle into reality. This is why a large number of worker delegates have submitted a resolution concerning peace and social justice, two terms that are closely linked.

In Florence, the young people asked very simple questions of the representatives of international institutions present: why are we spending so much money on arms and investing so little in education in order to free children from child labour and finally give decent work to their parents?

The IPEC report, *Investing in Every Child*, suggests that an annual investment over 20 years of just a small percentage of all world military spending would be sufficient in order to eliminate child labour and to confer on all children the right that they deserve to education. It is thus our desire that, out of this report of the World Day Against Child Labour, the efforts of the ILO and all international institutions, arise precise plans for debt servicing and military spending be converted into investment in the future of children. Of all inequalities in globalization today, child labour is surely the most unacceptable. But it is not the only one. The ILO has therefore done well to promote the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, the conclusions of which are, by and large, agreed with and we strongly support follow-through on it.

I should like to emphasize some points regarding the commitment to a more fair globalization. We must engineer wide-ranging change in the action of many international institutions: first and foremost, in the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO. We must introduce more democracy and transparency in their decision-making processes. These institutions have

almost always laid down, in developing countries and countries in transition, economic policies which have sacrificed to free markets, and above all free financial markets, investment in social services, health, education, housing and the rights of workers.

We support ILO action to ensure that all fundamental labour standards and the concept of decent work is made a priority in all of the decisions and policies which other international institutions will make with regard to developing countries and between developing countries and the developed countries. Developed countries must act responsibly towards their populations and the entire world and implement the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Kyoto Protocol to protect the environment and to direct, in a real and targeted way, 0.7 per cent for development aid to the poorest countries.

The instruments elaborated by the OECD and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy must become instruments that are accepted and recognized by all parties in economic intervention on the part of business in each country. Productive and economic activities must always be based on the respect of labour rights and on all human rights. This framework is the one that will best allow us to work towards the objects laid out in the Report, *Organizing for Social Justice*. In this area, we believe, once again, that it is primarily governments which must create favourable conditions for the full enjoyment of freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. We are convinced that there exists a positive link between these rights, decent work, employment and economic growth. The Report underlines the need to increase efforts in involving governments of important countries which have yet to ratify the Conventions on freedom of association and on collective bargaining. Such efforts will be even more effective if all international actors in multilateral relations and governments in bilateral relations exert pressure aimed at respect of all the rights of workers in these countries.

By the same token as the Report also highlights, enterprises, which seem to give a lot of attention to what is called the social responsibility of the enterprise, should be more coherent. The proliferation of unilateral initiatives on the adoption of codes of conduct or other rules of behaviour, on the part of enterprises, seem more to meet the requirements of their marketing than those of any real acceptance of social and environmental rights. We must state clearly that there is no social responsibility if the enterprise refuses, in the area of codes as in all areas, to negotiate with the free and representative trade union organizations. The true path leading to social responsibility on the part of businesses is negotiations with trade unions and the application, worldwide of fundamental labour rights and decent work. Social responsibility must be an additional element based on the foundation constituted by ILO standards, and not a substitution of these.

We must also call on all governments to be consistent and coherent always as regards tripartism. The trade union confederations in Italy have often had to remind the Italian Government of this. The Italian Government tends to forget that the social partners must be involved in all projects and initiatives. Tripartism is not like donning one's Sunday best; it is something which must be enforced every day.

We hope that, through the coherence of its constituents, the ILO will be able to truly play an important role in contributing to peace and fighting inequality, building a just and fair globalization, affirming everywhere workers' rights and decent work.

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Mr. WOJCIK (*Workers' delegate, Poland*)

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On behalf of the Polish Workers' delegation and on my behalf, I would like to congratulate the President and all the Vice-Presidents on their election to chair this august body, the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. I would like to extend my congratulations also to the Director-General for his Report: *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*. Similarly, as in previous years, the Report is of the highest quality. It is an instant and concrete reaction to the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization.

"Labour is not a commodity." Sixty years ago, the International Labour Conference confirmed this fundamental truth in the Declaration Philadelphia. This truth must be remembered constantly by everybody. I believe that 'considerable part of contemporary economic and employment problems is provoked by the incorrect implementation of this idea in practice or by lack of its implementation at all.

We appreciate very much the trend in ratification of eight fundamental Conventions. According to the Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2004, results seem to be very promising. The number of ratifications has increased significantly since the Declaration has been adopted.

By the year 1998, 69 per cent of the ILO Members had ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and five years later, 80 per cent of them had already done it. Respective figures for the other core Conventions are as follows: 79 per cent and 87 per cent for the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); 85 per cent and 92 per cent for Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); 76 per cent and 91 per cent for Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); 39 per cent and 71 per cent for Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); 0 per cent and 83 per cent for Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); 77 per cent and 91 per cent for Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); and 75 per cent and 90 per cent for Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

Recalculation of the same ratifications in terms of percentage of population of the respective ILO member States shows quite a different, unpalatable picture. Today, some 54 per cent of the world population cannot be assured of freedom of association, 51 per cent of freedom of collective bargaining. Some one-third of the world population still have no legal guarantee against forced labour, child labour and discrimination at the workplace. This is the real picture of labour conditions in the world. With this view, I am entirely convinced that liberalization of trade cannot lead to better prosperity, equitable economy and fair distribution of goods in the world. Without globalization of at least core labour standards, without globalization of the solidarity, a fair globalization will remain only a beautiful, unrealistic idea.

Non-payment of wages and salaries due has become a problem in Poland in the latest years. Employees are very often deprived of their wages or payment of their wages has been significantly delayed.

However, Poland has ratified the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), yet more and more cases of non-observance of its provisions have been recorded. In 2003, in the State Labour Inspection (SLI) of the Katowice District, in 38 per cent of enterprises investigated undue payment of wages were recorded and in 32 per cent of enterprises wages were not paid on time. In the other district (Lubuskie) the State Labour Inspection issued at the same time 313 orders concerning non-payment of wages for 6,149 employees.

These unacceptable practices are very widely exercised in the whole country and what is more one can observe a serious lack of effective sanctions in such cases. As was stated by the Polish Workers' delegate in the course of the Committee on the Application of Standards of this session of the International Labour Conference, two-year-old cases are daily practice as regards workers' complaints for non-payment of wages, while at this time the workers concerned are usually deprived both of work and remuneration. This is only an example.

I am deeply regretful that my compatriots from the Government, as well as from the Employers did not mention even one word concerning labour standards in their speeches to this session of the Conference. This is of special importance because they underlined the necessity of good governance and flexibility of labour relations.

I would like to express my strong conviction that good governance cannot exist without the observance of labour standards and the flexibility of labour relations is in clear opposition to labour standards.

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*Original Arabic:* Mr. GHANDOUR (*Workers' delegate, Sudan*)

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In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Speaking personally and on behalf of the General Confederation of Sudanese Workers, I would like to congratulate the President on the trust the Conference has placed in him to guide our deliberations and arrive at decisions consonant with the aspirations of the social partners that make up our Organization.

The ILO endorses all action that is likely to promote the achievement of the aspirations of the social partners, that is to say decent work and a decent life for all. Despite achievements in the context of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the adverse influences of the economic programmes that dominate today's world jeopardize all these achievements, because the international economic institutions, multinational companies and international decision-taking centres today pursue policies that merely increase poverty, hunger and illness, particularly in the third world. Today while the rich are getting richer, we can see the number of poor rising because international labour standards are being less strictly applied and because of the structural adjustment policies and smaller monetary flows that have to be accepted by some countries. Nor must we forget the exorbitant interest rates that are being charged on debts that have brought no benefits for the people of these countries. Unless urgent measures are taken to establish economic and social justice, we will all be

threatened for poverty of any kind threatens prosperity anywhere.

The General Confederation of Sudanese Workers is in favour of the theme of migrant workers which has been chosen as a topic for discussion at this Conference. The world today has become a global village owing to advances in transport and communications. We also know that international trade agreements will make borders disappear and will increase workers' mobility. We hope that we will arrive at constructive recommendations which preserve the fundamental rights and dignity of workers.

In Sudan, thank God we are engaging in a fruitful tripartite dialogue which has enabled us to achieve much for workers since the last session of the International Labour Conference. In the legislative field, for example, a great deal has been achieved for the Government and the employers' federation have agreed to amend our Labour Code. We have also amended two pieces of legislation on pensions and social security with a view to offering additional benefits to those who are approaching the statutory retirement age after a long period out of work. Since April this year, Sudanese workers have received a 66 per cent rise in the minimum wage, the biggest per wage increase in the history of Sudan.

As far as trade unions are concerned, Khartoum hosted the Eighth Conference of African Trade Unions last January. It was attended by the Deputy Director-General of the ILO, the Director of the Bureau for Workers' Activities at the ILO, a number of his staff and the Chairperson of the Workers' group. The opening of the Conference was attended by three African Heads of State and a number of ministers of labour and social affairs. The Federation of East African workers brings together 13 national federations in East Africa which all work for peace and stability in this strategic area of the world.

The Sudan has recently signed a peace agreement putting an end to the longest civil war that Africa has ever known, a war that even predated Sudanese independence in 1956. The signature of this agreement in Naivasha in Kenya was directly brokered by the Kenyan Government and by countries partners to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

The General Confederation of Sudanese Workers played a role in these negotiations. These began more than ten years ago and resulted, after direct contacts and nine months of negotiations, in the signing of a peace agreement. We reaffirm that peace will have a beneficial effect on economic, political and social development. We call on the international community to help us to rebuild what the war destroyed and to improve the skill of trade union leader in the region.

We must not forget the other peoples who are suffering from war. Indeed, the Palestinian people regularly suffer from murder, the destruction of homes, the devastation of land and the uprooting of trees, under a policy of collective sanctions and state-sponsored terrorism. Let us not forget the Separation Wall, which is in itself an act of racism. The international community and the ILO must put an end to this human disaster. Nor should we forget the people and workers of Iraq who, every day, are being murdered and subjected to forms of torture that make the blood of any free human being run cold. We should also remember the Syrian Golan and the Chebaa farms area in Lebanon. Syria is be-

ing subjected to unprecedented blackmail in the guise of the act on sanctions against Syria, which was recently adopted by American Congress, whereas Syria is still suffering from injustice and occupation.

We are also thinking of Cuba and Afghanistan.

In conclusion, the world today calls for a review of the prevailing standards of justice, for the injustice which is now widespread in various regions is at the root of the catastrophes from which the world is suffering. If we do not react very soon, I fear that we will be unable to avert an imminent disaster.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. FLORES FLORES (representative, Trade Unions International of Workers of Energy, Metal, Chemical, Oil and Allied Industries)*

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As the secretary-general of the Trade Unions International of Workers of Energy, Metal, Chemical, Oil and Allied Industries, belonging to the World Trade Union Federation, I bring you my fraternal greetings. It is usual in fora such as this, in tripartite meetings and now within the framework of the Mexican Government to hear that work is not a commodity. This sort of statement is made around the world at meetings that presuppose and promote economic development. Furthermore, current governments, who are immersed in globalization, are called on to promote human development. However, the realities in the workplace show us that bosses, governments and the economic policies applied by both are such that they do exactly the opposite of what is preached. The precise measurement of productivity is obtained as the primary indicator of work and production, and never of the commitment of the owner or manager of the company, and never of the performance of investments or the responsibility to innovate or assess directives. Any adjustment in profits are linked to the workers or the costs of collective agreements. Dismissal on grounds of cost is usually used to increase productivity. Work is, of course, a commodity.

Recently, retirement schemes have been thought of only from the point of view of expenditure and liabilities. Sometimes, it is even said that slow economic growth and the current forms of retirement are responsible for hampering and even for causing the bankruptcy of some businesses and even public institutions.

New ways of benefiting have been created, such as domestic pension savings schemes on the basis of the model adopted in Chile where new financial companies use the current contributions of workers for the purpose of investing them. These savings funds are now generating funds to pay for the future retirement of workers. In other words, work is a commodity, it is an income that must be made to work.

Governments are proposing that legislation be amended in order to increase workers' contributions, to increase the age of retirement and to set up financing mechanisms so that the worker has more responsibility towards his or her own retirement. In the last two decades, widespread privatizations have been called for as the most appropriate way to release the federal budgets of governments, to make our economies more competitive and, of course, to change the collective labour agreements that are considered to be too rigid and too obsolete, but most of all are considered by governments to be perks and very costly. In other words, of course, work is a commodity.

The living conditions of our people are socially polarizing our existence. In the present model, the ever-shrinking number of rich people have a growing amount of wealth and more and more poor people are increasingly destitute. This situation of growing social polarization leads many workers in rural areas and the cities to look for more solvent economies or to work on the streets. In both cases, present governments, who are incredibly cynical, include them in the GDP, either because of the money sent back by the migrant workers to their families or because this takes care of their own fundamental needs. Remittances and informal work are becoming decent work, but above all in terms of accounting. So work, of course, is a commodity.

We resolutely, firmly and clearly oppose this vision of the world of work. We oppose and resist privatization that subjects people and national sovereignty to the wishes of the multinational companies, where the thirst for profit controls the development of new public service entities.

In Latin American countries the workers are against the speculative management of these savings funds for retirement, where minimal importance is given to the quality of life of pensioners and retired persons. In Argentina and Chile and even in the United States, we saw clearly that the privatization of electricity increases costs, reduces the capacity to respond to demand, reduces government control over energy and reduces the quality of services. Of course, conditions of work were amended beforehand, as were collective agreements, many jobs were lost and salaries reached a very low level. Therefore, there is growing social and worker resistance in our countries against all these. We therefore call for the existing economic model to be halted and amended. Neo-liberalism globalization is producing destitution and social exclusion and is subjecting national sovereignties to the utilitarian interests of multinational companies. This is our proposal, our declaration to this International Labour Conference. Only work, public education, social justice, in health, the sovereignty of our people, and the strengthening of internal markets against indiscriminate liberalization, higher salaries and the curbing of financial speculation, will allow independent growth and social development. Only this way will we have truly decent work. Constant progress must be based on freedom of expression and association without any restrictions. Social inequality causes poverty in the world. We will fight against it, until it is stamped out completely. This is our objective as trade unionists and our declaration as workers. No more should we condone a policy of exclusion or development without us. Another political model is possible, another economy may be born where the people will be the basis and the focus of development. Let us distribute economic wealth and socialize power in order to achieve social development and to ensure that workers' rights and justice are paramount in the world. We want no more, but no less. Long live the class struggle! Long live the workers of the world!

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Mr. SUKHBAATAR (*Workers' delegate, Mongolia*)

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First of all, I would like to congratulate, on behalf of the Workers of Mongolia, the President and the Vice-Presidents on their election to preside at this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference.

Let me also express our appreciation to the Director-General for his Report, *ILO Programme implementation 2002-03*, and particularly on the assessment of the progress made and the challenges faced by the ILO in implementing the Decent Work Agenda.

I wish to welcome the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization which includes a series of concrete proposals.

The policy recommendations made by the World Commission to promote "a fair globalization" are positive and realistic. I fully support making decent work a global goal. The report calls, at the global level, for a greater presence for the ILO in a multilateral system, in line with its constitutional mandate "to examine and consider all the international economic and financial policies and measures". At a national level, this entails reinforcement of the ILO's current efforts to promote decent work and the four strategic objectives. The tripartite constituents of Mongolia have developed the national action plan on decent work in line with the ILO's strategic objectives.

The World Commission's report emphasizes the value of tripartism and the role it can play in making decent work a global goal. We fully agree with the statement in the Director-General's Report, *A fair Globalization: The role of the ILO* that "the ILO's success in surviving for 85 years is a testament to tripartism's ability to continuously reflect the changing world of work". We therefore strongly support the further strengthening of tripartism at international and national levels.

The tripartite machinery introduced a decade ago in Mongolia is working well. The National Conference on Tripartism and Social Dialogue in Mongolia, held last year in cooperation with the ILO, has summarized the success of challenges facing tripartism and social dialogue in our country. The Conference has endorsed a plan of action for further strengthening this machinery. We are happy to note how the ILO has involved Mongolia in the follow up to the resolution, adopted in 2000 at the International Labour Conference, on tripartism and social dialogue.

We fully support the report of the World Commission which raises some of the ways in which the ILO is currently attempting to influence national policies, including through involvement in poverty reduction strategies. By effective involvement in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the ILO must have the opportunity and the capability to influence the macroeconomic debates and decisions that determine whether resources are available for social policy and poverty reduction at national level.

We are pleased that migrant labour is one of the issues on the agenda of this session of the Conference. Concerning migration, Mongolia is both a sending and receiving country. Our delegation supports the concept of a new multilateral framework on migration, but such a framework must be prefaced on preserving and extending the concept of "equal treatment" and "equal opportunity" which are contained in the existing ILO Conventions on migration.

The strengthening of the international labour standards system is becoming more important in the era of globalization. We consider that each State has made every effort for ratification and proper implementation of the core international labour standards. The social partners in Mongolia are currently

examining the ratification of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No 29)m and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No 105), and in spite of some differences among our constituents, we believe Mongolia will be included soon in the list of countries which have ratified all of the international core labour standards.

In recent years, Mongolia, as a transition economy, has seen the majority of new jobs and the income opportunities emerge in the informal economy. We are happy to note the ILO project on in-

formal economy initiatives with their focus on strengthening the voice and representation of workers in the informal economy and ensuring the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining.

In conclusion, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for the assistance and cooperation extended to Mongolian trade unions by the ILO and its Bureau for Workers' Activities.

I wish every success to this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference.

*(The Conference adjourned at 1.00 p.m.)*

## Fifteenth sitting

Monday, 14 June 2004, 3 p.m.

Presidents: Mr. Wade, Mr. Attigbe

### REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (CONT.)

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*Original French:* THE PRESIDENT

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We shall now resume our discussion of the report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

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*Original Spanish:* Mr. CELI VEGAS (*representative, Exchange and Cooperation Centre for Latin America*)

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It is a great honour for me to address this august assembly and, on behalf of the Exchange and Cooperation Centre for Latin America, to congratulate Mr. Ray Guevara on his outstanding work as President of this Conference.

The Global Report of the Director-General, *Organizing for social justice*, recognizes the efforts of the ILO to promote freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Most of the populations of developing countries do not necessarily enjoy these freedoms, and their conditions are tending to deteriorate. To the structural problems of the world, linked to the inequitable distribution of wealth, must be added the effects of economic globalization. For the workers, this means mass unemployment and instability; for enterprises, increasing relocation mergers in all sectors; and for governments, lack of the efficiency needed to establish a re-distributive regulatory framework governing the economic players.

Economic globalization has also brought with it political globalization. The leaders of the developing countries are challenging the decisions of the industrialized countries concerning their vision of a future world. Multilateralism has become one of the major mechanisms to be strengthened and extended in the different sectors, with the involvement of all the economic factors. It is worth mentioning the recognition of civil society by the international community. In addition, parallel sessions and specific proposals have accompanied recent international meetings such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the International Conference on Financing for Development of UNCTAD, the Doha and Cancún Ministerial Conferences of the WTO, and the EU Latin America and the Caribbean Summits held in Rio de Janeiro, Madrid and Guadalajara.

The Global Report of the Director-General examines the framework agreements concluded between transnational corporations and trade unions over the last 20 years. It is worth mentioning the agreement

signed in 2001 between Chiquita Brands International, the International Union of Food, Agricultural Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) and the Latin American Coordinating Committee of Banana Workers' Unions (COLSIBA). Under the agreement, suppliers are required to provide evidence that they respect national legislation and fundamental labour rights, including the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. We believe that dialogue between companies and trade unions furthers the application of the standards adopted by the ILO since it was established in 1919, with the aim of achieving a balance on the labour market. We also believe that the technical cooperation programmes implemented by the ILO in sectors which are not regulated by governments owing to a lack of legislative provisions or the fragility of state institutions is a vital means of securing application of minimum standards for respect of these workers' dignity.

We realize that these advances are an important step forward, but in Latin America the economic recession and the fragility of political structures have contributed to the proliferation of the informal economy. Informal workers and enterprises are on the increase, in the absence of regulatory machinery put in place by the State. This situation is conducive to exploitation of the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

The lack of resources prompts governments to focus their policies – where such exist – on the major urban centres, leaving marginalized urban and rural areas to the dominant forces in a market economy, speculators and mafia networks. The rights to food, education and formal employment are thus denied to large segments of the population in Latin America.

Organized civil society can play an important role in filling the gap left by governments. The basic framework is democracy, which exists in most countries, as well as the economic agreements increasingly being concluded between European and Latin American countries. NGOs, with their projects in remote areas, their experience in international networks and their contacts and knowledge of the local population, are well placed to play a major role in local and regional development in Latin America. This will require an extension of programmes and projects, with the involvement of enterprises, governments and international organizations.

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Mr. KARA (*Workers' delegate, Israel*)

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I wish to congratulate the President and his deputies on their election to preside over this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference and the Director-General and his staff for the Report submitted to this session of the Conference.

Like others, I would like to focus on the role of the ILO in implementing the recommendations of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and to welcome the Report submitted to this session of the Conference by the Director-General, which deals with one of the most difficult questions, how the ILO's tripartite constituents can bring the benefit of globalization to all people throughout the world. We think that the ILO can meet the challenge and could be at the forefront of the struggle for a fair globalization.

We have in front of us proposals of the utmost significance. These proposals deserve our support and we are following the ICFTU policy in this regard. It is clear to us that tripartism and social dialogue can be efficient tools to achieve a fair globalization.

My organization, Histadrut, the general federation of trade unions in Israel, strongly supports the initiatives of the ILO which deal with decent work and poverty reduction strategies. In the meantime, we are pleased that the Commission gives the ILO a key role in implementing its mandate to influence national and international policies, promoting social justice and poverty reduction.

We wish to refer to some of the points made by the Director-General. We can see that the ILO has started doing more for the implementation of workers' fundamental rights, the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, but there are still restrictions in many countries.

We want strong backing from the Director-General to take steps to ensure workers' rights everywhere and to do more for the application of the core ILO Conventions that have been signed. We think that programmes must be introduced in order to guide the constituents in this regard. Consequently, with this, we would like all these decisions to be implemented by concrete steps.

The issue of migrant workers' rights is on the agenda of Histadrut, the general federation of labour in Israel, which I have the honour to represent. We started a debate on a new regulation to ensure migrant workers' rights. This goes along with the Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work focusing on freedom of association.

In my country, the migrant workers are 10 per cent of the workforce. They work in construction, agriculture and domestic work. We are making the necessary efforts to protect them, but we need the support of the ILO to do more to achieve and maintain their rights.

As the representative of the workers of Israel, we are concerned about the violence in our region, which affects both sides (Israelis and Palestinians). We support the immediate return to the dialogue for peace. Only in this way will it be possible to ensure employment and economic recuperation and growth.

Histadrut was, and still is, seeking ways to build constructive dialogue with Palestinian workers in order to enhance cooperation and progress. It is important to comment on this issue, the fundamental

role of the ILO's technical cooperation. We are looking forward to the next session of the conference with the wish that this will become tangible and peace will be a reality.

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*Original Portuguese: Mr. MUSSANHANE (Employers' delegate, Mozambique)*

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On behalf of the Confederation of Economic Associations of Mozambique, I extend greetings to all participants in this session. I also congratulate the President, on his election and the Director-General of the ILO on the Reports he has presented to us and on his defence of decent work and social justice.

Labour legislation in my country needs to be amended so as to bring it into line with the market economy which we have today in Mozambique. It is our wish that the interests of the social partners be reflected in the forthcoming labour law which is currently being revised, and we feel that it is important to respect the following principle: free initiative; the decisive role of the private sector in modern development; constantly increasing productivity; quality of products and services; competitiveness in enterprise; decent work; fair remuneration; a tax system which encourages the growth of enterprises; and the transfer of the knowledge needed for business.

We feel that social dialogue is a fundamental instrument for relations between government, employers and workers, and the law should reflect the interests of them all. I would like to recognize the work that the social partners have carried out, as a result of a very positive and encouraging partnership.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent most of the industrial sector in Mozambique. We must therefore maximize their potential and amend our legislation so that it differentiates properly between SMEs and large enterprises. At the present time, SMEs are being dealt with as if they were large enterprises and this obviously gives rise to problems. Attempting to transfer the informal economy into a formal economy without a proper understanding of the concept of SMEs leads to confusion and uncertainty over their true function in the national economy. We wish the ILO to play an ever more active role in dealing with these problems. We therefore call on the ILO to intensify its noble actions of assisting our countries to find ways of establishing and maintaining relations with other international bodies, and also of cooperating with us in formulating labour policies and defining strategies on SMEs based on technical matters and professionalism, never on linguistic and cultural factors.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. ALVIS FERNÁNDEZ (Workers' delegate, Colombia)*

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Allow me, on behalf of the workers of Colombia and their national trade unions, the CUT, CTC and CGTD, to express our congratulations to the President for having been elected to lead the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference.

The Director-General, in his Report, urges us to reflect upon the working conditions of migrant workers, upon fairness and the importance of decent work as part of the social dimension against the backdrop of inequality and poverty in a globalized world.

This forum of the international community is unique for workers in terms of giving them an opportunity to establish criteria and express their grievances with respect to social policy, human rights and trade union rights when these are infringed upon. Hence, it is important to speak out here about the situation in Colombia in the hope of finding redress to our grievances through the observance of the fundamental standards and use of the supervisory bodies of the ILO, going beyond mere technical cooperation.

Despite widespread poverty, unemployment, underemployment and the displacement of farmers from agricultural areas to cities as a result of the armed conflict, the Government and Parliament are enacting laws in the area of labour legislation, tax legislation, social security and legal reforms which are regressive and reduce the income of workers; they levy the same taxes on the rich as on the poor, thereby increasing the level of poverty, which has already reached 58 per cent of the Colombian population of 44 million people.

Colombian trade unions are still suffering from the tragic situation of violence. The fact that there are fewer murders of trade unionists does not mean that crimes have ceased. In the past 12 months, 108 trade unionists were murdered. The breach of human rights has taken other forms, for example, harassments, forced movements, threats, mass detentions and unlawful entries have all increased. This is a stark contrast to the shocking impunity for these crimes which reaches 98 per cent. So, trade union activity in Colombia is still a high-risk activity and will continue to be so as long as such is impunity continues.

Against this background, a policy is emerging that could be considered a policy of the State which is aimed against the trade unions. This can be seen in the low profile given to the handling of the rights and conflicts that affect workers and trade unions. Other examples of this policy are the fact that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has been done away with; the failure to implement the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), thereby contravening the standards of social dialogue; the new forms of recruitment through cooperatives and enterprises which prevent workers from joining trade unions; restrictions on collective bargaining both in the public and private sectors, in clear violation of the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151); state-imposed decisions on conflicts, such as the Workers' Trade Union (USO) case. We also see that in 2003 only 49,200 of the 4 million workers in the formal sector benefited from the process of collective bargaining.

The state policy of modernization led to the break-up of the TELECOM trade union, and throughout the communications industry the presence of trade unions in the sectors of social security, health care and in the National Service for Training (SENA) among others, was reduced.

The unions and social sectors lack guarantees that ensure the right to social protest, which will be restricted even further by the establishment of the Anti-terrorist Statute.

Recently, on 18 May, in the city of Cartagena, and in other cities of Colombia, worker rallies were brutally disbanded. They were protesting against the negotiation of the Free Trade Agreement between Colombia and the United States.

Allow me to state that the recent strike of petroleum workers in Colombia requires the same treatment by the ILO as that given to the cases in Costa Rica and Venezuela.

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Ms. VALKONEN (*Workers' delegate, Finland*)

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The World Commission's report is of exceptional significance. The implementation of the World Commission's recommendations requires strong political will and extensive commitment. The ILO has a particularly important role in strengthening the social dimension of globalization and the ILO should actively promote the establishment of the globalization policy forum.

The Report of the Director-General is an excellent outline of the ILO's activities. The basic structures of the ILO are in good condition and the mandate is up to date. Decision-making is democratic and transparent. As many speakers have already noted, the strength of the ILO is its tripartism. It is this that makes the ILO unique. The ILO's status must be consolidated further and all the constituents – governments, employers and trade unions alike – must become more committed to the ILO's activities.

The World Commission's report underlines strongly that tripartism and social dialogue are essential for promoting social justice. Global tripartism should be strengthened but, in order for the tripartite system to be effective globally, it must also be effective at the national level. In this respect, we still have a lot of work to do.

The Global Report under the Follow-up to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, *Organizing for social justice*, has also been discussed at this session of the Conference.

The Report states that, as to trade union rights, some progress has been made, but serious problems still remain. Freedom of association is continuously violated in many parts of the world, as we just heard.

Free and strong trade unions are a necessary prerequisite in implementing social justice. There are still countries where workers lack the right to organize. The right to organize and to conclude collective agreements are basic human rights. All the ILO member States should ratify and implement the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). The strengthening of the international standards system is also discussed in the Director-General's Report. The review carried out by the Governing Body has resulted in the identification of 71 Conventions and 73 Recommendations as fully up to date. Now we need measures to promote ratification and implementation of the ILO Conventions. Effective technical cooperation is, of course, most important.

In Finland we have a solid tradition of tripartite cooperation. I would like to stress that the Finnish welfare society has been built based on tripartite cooperation. Free and powerful trade unions have played a significant role here. In Finland, the Government has launched an extensive preparation for a national globalization strategy. Also, the social partners participate in this process. The sectoral dialogue of the employers' organizations and trade unions on the future of each sector is an important part of this process. It is not yet possible to discuss the results here, but I do believe that this process will,



at its best, improve further the cooperation of the social partners and tripartite cooperation in Finland.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. MANCILLA GARCÍA (Workers' delegate, Guatemala)*

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It is a great honour for me, on behalf of the workers' sector of Guatemala, to congratulate Director-General Somavia on the Report that he has submitted to us, and we hope that it will be addressed in a tripartite way, as the Director-General mentioned.

The topic of decent work and the fight against poverty should be addressed in an urgent way, because the vast majority of the population in my country, Guatemala, struggles between poverty and dire poverty. People often rely on jobs without any guarantees and salaries that do not make it possible to satisfy the minimum basic needs, because the salaries are not consistent with the real cost of the average basket of staple goods. As a result of this, there are thousands of children who work in order to shore up the income of their families, robbing themselves of the right to study, to obtain training and to prepare themselves for the future. Thus, they will become adults who will not be able to provide qualified labour in a globalized world.

Globalization is now a reality: it causes hunger, poverty, pain and death to thousands of inhabitants of Guatemala and to a considerable share of mankind. Globalization in practice does not have a human face. It has the face of the market, of poverty, of exclusion. In order to turn this situation around, we need the provisions of social organization and transparent mechanisms at the international level; thus, we should support the ILO, as a unique tripartite organization, in order to ensure the observance and application of international standards, ensuring they are beneficial to everyone and not just to a minority.

The right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is another fundamental key point for the workers of Guatemala. However, despite the fact that Guatemala is a signatory to the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), of the ILO and other fundamental Conventions, the dismembering of trade unions has continued and the establishment of new trade unions, both in the public and the private sectors is being prevented. An example of this is that, before the signature of the peace agreements, the percentage of labour union affiliation nationally was 5 per cent, and currently it is about 2.5 per cent of the active population.

As a result of this persecution of trade unions, 38 workers have been jailed, including Rigoberto Dueñas Morales, who has been accused of embezzling millions from social security, despite the fact that we have demonstrated many times that he is completely innocent of the charges of which he is accused, including embezzlement, fraud and others. And, despite the fact that these charges do not carry a prison sentence, he has been in prison since 8 June 2003.

Victoriano Zacarias has also been detained in prison since 25 February 2004, as have another 30 drivers of heavy trucks. They were put in prison because they supported the resistance of workers belonging to the Trade Union of Heavy Transport Drivers against measure adopted by the Municipality of Guatemala City to restrict traffic of heavy

vehicles in eight of the main streets of the capital. This made it necessary for the drivers to find other routes to drive their trucks and to work night hours, putting their physical well-being, their safety and their lives in danger, given the high level of crime in the country and the fact that they are often the victims of attacks. These colleagues are now in jail and accused of terrorism.

The people of Guatemala are at a crucial moment. We have a recently elected Government, and, during the week of 17-20 May 2003, it had to justify its activities to a direct contacts mission from the ILO on the anti-union activities that have been carried out for many years in the country, and that, given the violations of freedom of association and collective bargaining, there are thousands of workers in the rural, *maquila* and *public* sectors, with greater emphasis on the municipal sector, that have been affected and are still awaiting anxiously for their cases to be resolved and to be reinstated in their posts. This particularly in light of the fact that it is now eight years since they were dismissed for establishing or belonging to a union. There are also cases of many families who hope that the murders of their family members who were trade unionists will be resolved.

We hope that the current Government complies with and respects the international Conventions on freedom of association, collective bargaining and minimum wages, ratified by Guatemala, and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and that it also complies with what it has stated with regard to its desire to settle existing labour conflicts. Finally, we hope that the visit of the ILO direct contacts mission will produce the hoped-for results that will benefit the workers of Guatemala.

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*Mr. LAWAL (Minister of Labour, Nigeria)*

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The Nigerian delegation congratulates the President and all the other Officers of the Conference on their election to steer the affairs of the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. I also thank the Director-General of the International Labour Office for his excellent Report: *ILO programme implementation 2002-03*.

We are pleased to have this opportunity for an exchange of views on the excellent report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization.

There is no doubt that the ongoing process of globalization has tremendous benefits. However, I should like to point out that such advantages appear distant to billions of ordinary people in many developing countries of the world. We are therefore happy to note that the report of the World Commission has placed the necessary emphasis on localization, fairer rules and better governance in the process of globalization.

In Nigeria, we acknowledge that a great deal ought to be done at the national level to meet the challenges of development in our contemporary world. It is on this premise that the Government of Olusegun Obasanjo has articulated and introduced an economic blueprint known as the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, otherwise called NEEDS. The strategy seeks to reposition the economy by achieving a GDP growth rate of 7 per cent and by creating 7 million new jobs by 2007. The provision of decent work is one of the cardinal objectives of these Nigerian strategies,

which is in consonance with the call by the Director-General of the ILO for decent work to be made a global objective.

I wish to observe that domestic initiatives in this direction will amount to nothing, no matter how laudable they may be, in the absence of a fairer process of globalization. It has therefore become imperative to overcome the existing democratic deficit in global governance by increasing the voice and participation of developing countries in decision-making and rule-setting at the international level.

The Nigerian delegation concurs with the World Commission that the application of the principles of globalization should be based on a strong ethical framework and universally shared values.

The Report of the Director-General: *ILO programme implementation 2002-03* provides useful information on the progress made in implementing the four strategic objectives of our Organization. In particular, I note that, in this Report, the Director-General has indicated that the process of reviewing ILO standards might reveal the need for new instruments that will help to bring about a more rational framework linking existing Conventions and Recommendations. Indeed, this goes to the heart of policy coherence which will promote greater efficiency in the work of the ILO and contribute to the normative dimension of decent work. More needs to be done as our Organization celebrates its 85th anniversary. We look forward to laying the foundations for its future in terms of providing a solid framework for strengthening the ILO's normative mission. We would welcome further elaboration on this point by the Director-General.

In conclusion, Nigeria appreciates that the ILO has come a long way in the realization of its global mandate. It is, however, important to note that a lot more ground still has to be covered by this Organization. It is therefore my sincere wish that the outcome of our deliberations here and in the various committees of this Organization will help bring us closer to achieving the four challenges that the Director-General outlined in his introductory remarks.

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Mr. SUNMONU (*representative, Organization of African Trade Union Unity*)

I would like, on behalf of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity to congratulate the President and the Director-General for their excellent reader-friendly reports. We are happy to note that the Governing Body cooperates with the Director-General and the International Labour Office in executing the programmes of the ILO and in raising its profile within the United Nations family.

The visionary set-up by the ILO, of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, whose excellent report has been jointly presented to this session of the Conference by President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania and President Halonen of Finland, will rank as one of the best contributions the ILO has made to the socio-economic development of peoples and countries. We extend our profound gratitude to the two eminent co-chairpersons and the distinguished members of the World Commission for a job that has been very well done.

The report of the World Commission could not have chosen a better title than *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*, which fully captures the essence of the entire report. The Organization of

African Trade Union Unity and all the workers of Africa fully support the report and endorse its implementation at local, national, regional and international levels. Tripartite and stakeholders committees for implementation of the report should be set up at all the abovementioned four levels to ensure effective implementation of the report. In our view, the report should also form the basis of the design of a new development paradigm which, in essence, should be people-centred and which should replace the present neo-liberal paradigm that was based on the Washington Consensus. My suggestion is based on the reported admission by Mr. James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, at the Shanghai Conference on Poverty which the Bank organized last month that the Washington Consensus, with its emphasis on open markets, fiscal stringency and privatization has been long dead.

Our organization also endorses the Director-General's Report on the suggestions for the role the ILO has to play in the search for fairer globalization. In order for the ILO to play a leading role, as envisaged, the Governing Body has to substantially increase the budget for our unique organization. The three partners of the ILO should rise to the challenge of fairer globalization that creates opportunities for all.

Coming from Africa it makes me happy that the African Union's Heads of State and Government will convene an Extraordinary Summit in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 8 to 9 September 2004 on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa. I am happy to inform this session of this august conference that African workers and employers will effectively participate in the Social Partners Forum which will take place in Ouagadougou from 3 to 4 September 2004 and deliberate on the theme of decent work: a new development strategy for Africa. The conclusions of the Social Partners Forum will be submitted to the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union as a contribution to the Summit.

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the ILO, its African Regional Office and the Bureaux for Workers' and Employers' Activities (ACTRAV and ACT/EMP) for their support for the effective participation of African workers and employers at the Ouagadougou Extraordinary Summit of the African Union.

We also thank the Commission of the African Union, as well as the host nation, Burkina Faso, for their kind assistance.

The OATUU believes that there is no better way to poverty reduction and eradication than through decent well-paid jobs. In this regard, it is in collaboration with the ILO designing effective African trade union and countries' participation in decent job creation.

On the Global Report, on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, I congratulate the Office for the well-prepared Report. Progress has been made in the application of the principle of freedom of association and the recognition of the right to collective bargaining. A great number of workers in the cultural sector, export processing zones and in the informal economy are still denied their rights to form and join unions and bargain collectively. In some countries, civil servants are still denied their fundamental rights to form and join unions. We should all work hard to protect the rights of the affected workers. We therefore call for increased workshops and

seminars for workers and trade union leaders by experts from the standards sector, to assist in fighting violations of ILO Conventions.

On human resources development and training, we appeal to all the delegates to this session of the Conference to vote for the adoption of the Recommendation concerning human resources development and training. We should all play our part in working for the early ratification and implementation of the Recommendation by ILO member countries.

I thank the Director-General for his Report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories. The Report paints a sombre picture of what Israeli occupation does to the lives of Palestinian workers and people, particularly to women and children. The OATUU at its Eighth Ordinary Congress in Khartoum, Sudan, in January this year, adopted a unanimous resolution of support and solidarity with the Palestinian workers and people in their struggle against Israeli occupation. African workers and trade unions support the creation of the State of Palestine alongside that of Israel, with Jerusalem as capital.

We call on Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories, in conformity with UN Security Council resolutions. The ILO should increase its financial and technical cooperation programmes to the Palestinian workers and people.

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Mr. ALEMAYEHU (*Workers' delegate, Ethiopia*)

On behalf of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions and for myself, I would like to congratulate the President and the two Vice-Presidents for their election to preside over this session of the august International Labour Conference. I would also like to express my appreciation for the Reports of the Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body and of the Director-General.

The report which was prepared by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization entitled: "*A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*" takes a holistic approach to a complex issue. Therefore, I support the report, because decent work is the most important component necessary to create a fair globalization.

Decent work can be achieved in open economies and open societies if we pursue strategic objectives such as employment rights, social protection and dialogue. Decent work is a development approach based on the realities on the ground, because it is first and foremost a listening agenda. Workers need access to basic social protection and employment because poverty and employment are inextricably linked. The principal manner of linking them is a sound national development policy that puts sustainable growth at the heart of national objectives.

Democratic stability and good governance are essential to economic growth and social development. Employers' and workers' organizations are critically important for more effective policies, particularly to combat poverty. Social dialogue and strong tripartite institutions and practices can ensure greater coherence between economic and social policies. The capacity of social partners to engage in dialogue is critical for enhancing productive employment opportunities, extending social protection and focusing on poverty reduction. Workers need comprehensive training and education programmes to be productive and enable them to contribute to the development of their country.

Employers' organizations and the government have to respond rapidly to the changing needs of their workers. In order for them to be able to do so, they need supportive, transparent and accountable partners for effective social dialogue at the national level. The challenge is to create an environment based on democratic principles that encourages and guarantees respect of human rights, including fundamental freedoms and rights at work. International labour standards should be respected and should be part of the national labour laws.

In this regard, the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions has made great efforts to bring about the amendment of the previous labour legislation of our country. In doing so, the part played by the social partners and the support of the ILO needs to be mentioned and appreciated. In spite of the fact that the new Labour Law was adopted around the end of the year 2003, we have found it to contain certain provisions that are not in line with the interest of workers. We therefore submitted our requests to the Government for revision.

A very important issue that I would like to address is HIV/AIDS. For us it is a priority because our members are dying of this pandemic. To tackle this pandemic, our Confederation conducts many workplace interventions such as awareness creation, care and support programmes, but the magnitude of the problem is increasing. In this regard, I appreciate the support that we have been given by the ILO, but we need more support to carry out additional activities to challenge the problem and to protect workers.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the ILO should further strengthen its support to African countries, especially those efforts that are targeted at the alleviation of poverty and unemployment; strengthening social dialogue and capacity-building should be seriously backed up. Strengthening of trade unions and their efforts to secure the livelihoods of workers should be given the necessary support. Our Confederation has already established good grounds for effective work cooperation with the ILO subregional office in Addis Ababa and I thank the Office for its unreserved support. Hopefully, we shall better strengthen our cooperation for better results.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. CORRIES (representative, World Confederation of Teachers)*

First of all, may I congratulate the President on behalf of the World Confederation of Teachers (WCT) which is affiliated to the World Confederation of Labour, for his election to preside over this assembly. The WCT welcomes the decision of the Director-General to dedicate his Report to decent work. In the reports prepared by the World Confederation of Teachers and presented to the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), we once again, as we did in 2001, emphasize the generalized deterioration of the working conditions of teachers during the last decades. This deterioration should be considered within a context of fragile social dialogue which, as indicated in the recent report by the Committee, only leads to the further deterioration of the situation. Social dialogue, carried out between all of the partners involved, is indeed a dynamic force towards change and progress.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the major live forces of education are teachers who are motivated, qualified and dedicated on a daily basis to the service of young people and society. One of the crucial questions in the field of education today is the shortage of teachers. A dearth, on the one hand, because within the framework of the knowledge-based society and the Dakar objectives, more and more young people have access to education, for which we can only be grateful. All we need now is to take the necessary steps so that all young people may have access to quality education provided by qualified teachers. We cannot fail to mention all the groups of young people that cannot exercise their basic right to education, inter alia, the children of immigrants, children from regions in conflict, the children of socially and economically marginalized populations, and also girls who, despite the Dakar objectives, continue to be excluded from education to a much greater extent. Ensuring the right to education for all young people is the best way to combat child labour.

Ensuring quality education for all young people is a responsibility that we all share. It is a responsibility that requires important investments in terms of teacher training, both initial and ongoing. Investments also need to be made in the working conditions of teachers, in ensuring proper salaries and in creating a stimulating pedagogical environment. In other words, if we really want quality education for all, we have to put the students and teachers at the centre of the debate and invest in that which is essential for education, namely teachers. Teachers are not a "human resource"; we are not a means of production; we are not an added value for acquiring knowledge, know-how and know-how-to-be; we are not tools of economic production. We are men and women who very much take to heart our mission to train young people and support them in their education as individuals and responsible citizens.

Thus, we congratulate and thank the ILO for the efforts deployed and for the results already achieved in ensuring decent work, as described in the Director-General's Report, especially in the light of the budgetary restrictions imposed by the zero growth. We share the views of the Director-General and of the ILO concerning the priority to be afforded to action within countries. But, in the knowledge-based society, we want to achieve significant progress in the medium- and long-terms in the field of decent work and with initiatives to endow globalization with a human face. And thus, it is absolutely necessary to implement in full the Recommendations concerning the status of teachers.

Here, there is, of course, the collective responsibility of the ILO but also the individual responsibility of each member State of the ILO. Would it still be decent today to ask teachers to be more professional and to have more expertise, to pay more attention to the quality of education, to be more open to the world, to show more commitment in local communities, more, more, more, but to deny them a decent salary? In many developing and transition countries, the salary received by a teacher is far below the minimum wage.

On 5 October 2006, we will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Recommendation concerning the status of teachers. Would it not be the ideal opportunity for the ILO to launch a campaign for decent work for teachers and for all teaching personnel? In the WCT, it is clear that if

we seriously want to campaign against the shortage of teachers, we must create decent working conditions and at the very least respect the international standards approved by the ILO.

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Mr. JENNINGS (*representative, Union Network International*)

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UNI is a global union federation committed to union organizing. One thousand affiliated unions are recruiting in over 150 nations. Each year, hundreds of thousands are joining unions in the services sector, both full time and part time as well as a growing number of freelance workers. UNI globalizes union organizing with campaigns for young people, for women, for professionals and in companies from Hollywood and the media sector, through telecoms, graphics, finance, commerce, post, IT business services and social insurance to cleaning and security.

A global labour market with global companies and global outsourcing requires global union recruitment initiatives. We targeted a thousand call centres in 30 nations in Asia, Africa, America and Europe. The results, more members and new agreements. Tomorrow, UNI Telecom will sign with telecom employers a European agreement on labour standards in call centres, including the right to organize. Proof that you can bring labour standards to a new economy.

Offshore outsourcing must not become a race to the bottom. The new UNI offshore charter deals with the migration of people and jobs. We do not accept, that, as one minister said, the entrepreneurial spirit is sufficient to deal with this. It needs active labour-market policies. UNI's affiliates have given collective agreements a global dimension, dealing with outsourcing at home and too often the rights deficit abroad. Globalization agreements has been entered with Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds TSB and British Telecom. We have an agreement with Barclays for the continent of Africa. Global companies should globalize their relations with global union federations like UNI.

We have welcomed the World Commission's report on the social dimension of globalization, as we have welcomed the Global Report *Organizing for social justice* and the Director-General's Report, *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*. They each recognize that with global production systems, global agreements are a way forward, while exploiting rights-free export processing zones is a step backwards. The ILO Declaration and the OECD guidelines on multinationals have political and moral but not legal force. So companies can wriggle free from compliance.

As the Reports point out, we welcome the strengthening of the ILO knowledge-base – but it is not enough. We accept your offer to support the development of institutions that strengthens the dialogue to achieve decent work – but this is not enough. A pity that President Bush was not listening. For the first time in the history of G8 Summit, he refused a dialogue with the global union movement last week. We can only assume that he does not care about what is on the mind of working people around the world.

We welcome the ILO's commitment to monitor global agreements and provide advice and assistance – but it is not enough. We ask the Director-General to rapidly convene a tripartite policy forum on corporate social responsibility and global framework agreements. We must ensure that global labour standards apply to companies, that there is a

mechanism to hold them to account. On 24 June, the Global Compact Summit will take place in New York and we will have the list before us of about 1,500 companies that have signed up. The Compact needs more integrity, a system of checks, a system of accountability. After all the corporate corruption and lies of recent years, we need mechanisms to build trust within which we have confidence.

Companies do not always do what they say or write in their annual reports. Look at Group 4 Falck. They claim to recognize unions everywhere, but their subsidiary Wackenhut does the opposite in the United States. Group 4 Falck should accept the right to organize everywhere.

The ILO can put backbone into the Global Compact by monitoring compliance in dealing with disputes, but for companies in UNI sectors, we say that when you sign the Global Compact, you should enter negotiations with us for a framework agreement.

We will expose the union busters. Let us reject Wal-Mart in the process of Wal-Martization, a company for whom decent work, union recognition and collective bargaining are dirty words in the United States. Wal-Mart has announced a corporate face-lift. Perhaps liposuction would be better; that way we could suck out all of their anti-union policies. Wal-Mart is taking advantage from the shocking finding that half of the world's workers remain unprotected by ILO Conventions Nos. 87 and 98.

In conclusion, we look forward to the ILO insisting on compliance with labour standards throughout the multilateral system, from the IMF and World Bank to the WTO, that the ILO will campaign for all governments to apply core labour standards by 2015 at the very latest.

Wal-Mart and Zimbabwe make curious bedfellows. We salute the courage of Zimbabwean union members' Leaders arrested. Workers summarily dismissed or locked out in banks, posts and telecoms. Shame on the regime that so hammers working people. Our message is that you will not succeed, you will not crush the desire of ordinary working people for change. As we say, shame on the repressive measures in Myanmar, China, Colombia, Nepal and the Russian Federation.

Working people face fire and rain. Last year 129 union leaders and members were murdered. May they rest in peace.

We shall not rest, we shall walk through the storm in our fight for rights to be respected, for corporate abuses of the working people to end and for decent work for working people everywhere, and we look forward to working with the ILO in the implementation of the World Commission's recommendations.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. PUGA RODRÍGUEZ (Workers' delegate, Panama)*

The topic of unemployment and the need to create decent jobs is one of the top priorities of the democratic governance agenda of my country. However, it is also true that the work of trade union organizations encounters serious obstacles, given that successive governments as a maker of policy have refused to accept the fact that both Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 do not exclude, for the purposes of freedom of association and collective bargaining, any segment of the labour force. On this point we would like to speak out, as we have done on other occasions, about the fact that freedom of association in our country is subject to all kinds of restrictions and interference, with respect to certain groups such as

bank employees, public sector employees, as well as workers in the free economic zone of Colon. In fact, with regard to freedom of association, our domestic legislation does not make any distinctions either.

Furthermore, free and voluntary bargaining as enshrined in Convention No. 98 has also met with obstacles. The labour authorities of our country use all kinds of regulatory loopholes when they examine union lists of demands, and use various formalities to delay or put off the collective bargaining processes. Indeed, they even conclude arrangements with non-unionized workers and disregard the existing unions. This is not in keeping with the spirit of our law, which is consistent with ILO Convention No. 98.

We would also like to mention the situation of public sector workers who are denied their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. What is even more serious is the fact that they lack effective procedures for collective bargaining, and, as if that were not enough, they are discriminated against because, although forming part of the Panamanian workforce, they still do not have a minimum wage scale, as successive governments have still not complied with section 198 of the Administrative Careers of Law, No. 9, of 20 June 1994, according to which a general law on salaries should have been adopted.

We would not like to leave this podium without also referring to a topic which is of great concern to all sectors of Panamanian society, and specifically for all workers. For several weeks now the Government of Panama has been involved in a process of fast-track negotiations for a free trade agreement with the United States, with the aim of finalizing it by next September. Workers have not been invited to participate, even as an afterthought. Now we know, from the example of other countries, that this participation would not necessarily be negative. It is thus more a matter of principle that this treaty should reflect the various social clauses, especially those relating to internationally recognized labour rights as set out in the ILO Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up of 1998, specifically paragraph 5. This means that these treaties must not lead to the weakening or reduction of the fundamental principles and rights recognized by the ILO – including the right of freedom of association, the right to strike, the right to collective bargaining on a minimum wage, working hours and safety and health, as well as having clearly established procedural guarantees. We therefore urge the ILO to play an active role in demanding strict compliance by all countries with the commitments agreed in Conventions ratified by them.

We would like to thank the this Conference for allowing us to make our case and speak out against the violations of trade union and human rights by the Government, and to reiterate the complaint and that the Panamanian workers submitted in 2003.

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*Original French: Mr. LEDOUBLE (representative, International Christian Union of Business Executives)*

UNIAPAC, the International Christian Union of Business Executives, would like to express here its appreciation for the work done by the ILO on *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*, not just for the contents of the World Commission's report, but also for having involved the World

Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in its preparation. In our opinion, this sort of cooperation needs to be strengthened to make sure that everyone feels truly concerned by this global challenge.

We share many of the views expressed in this Report. First of all, about the current state of globalization, which is neither satisfactory nor sustainable because of the inequalities, and consequently the injustices to which it gives rise. In our view, any economic order that does not respect human dignity, which restricts the responsibility or freedom of action of human beings, is unfair, even if it generates enormous wealth, and even if that wealth is fairly distributed. We also share the values set out in the report; in particular, the need for us to be at the service of those people who have the greatest need, and the importance of doing this through dialogue. Lastly, we share the conviction that we can do an awful lot better.

All this is directly linked to our current theme for reflection which concerns corporate social responsibility. We are particularly concerned with the social responsibility of Christian businesses with particular attention to our responsibility towards the poor.

UNIAPAC is a federation made up of 26 national associations of executives, business leaders and employers throughout the world, but predominantly from Europe and Latin America. The members of UNIAPAC are therefore right at the heart of the decisions being taken in the business world.

Our activities focus on reflection and raising the awareness of business leaders, particularly during seminars and summer courses; the next one will take place in Lisbon and will focus on the following topic: "Business ethics, a personal challenge for leaders". In 2005, the summer course will take place in Rome, and we are planning to hold the 2006 summer course in Geneva, which will give us an opportunity for further contact with the ILO.

In March, we organized a seminar in Rome, with the Pontifical Council for "Justice and Peace", which was attended by more than 70 world business leaders from large and medium-sized companies, who discussed the general theme of the corporate social responsibility of business leaders in the context of globalization. Work concentrated on the objectives for business and profit, on the fight against corruption, the social responsibility of business leaders in combating poverty, the personal development of the workforce in the face of the financial pressures which businesses are under, as well as on the cultural impact of marketing and advertising policies.

This gives me an opportunity to recall that the *raison d'être* of business and of profit is not in the acquisition of profit in itself, but in the existence of a community of persons who are trying to meet their own basic needs whilst being at the service of the whole of society

Our aim is thus to support the ILO's endeavours to establish a fairer world, but by taking a complementary approach: the ILO acts by framing regulations, for example on respect for freedom of association, which allows workers to take collective action and influence their own development; UNIAPAC's challenge is to bring about a change in the attitudes of business leaders to ensure that the freedoms afforded by economic activity and legisla-

tion are used to the full in the service of human development.

Our two approaches are complementary. They reaffirm the benefits of the partnerships between UNIAPAC and the ILO and give me the opportunity to thank the ILO for promoting dialogue with civil society and for having given us the opportunity to share our thoughts with this plenary session.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. PARRAS ROJAS (Employers' delegate, Cuba)*

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First of all, allow me to congratulate the President on his election to preside over this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference.

I agree with previous speakers in recognizing the importance of addressing the subject of globalization, taking an approach based on justice and the creation of opportunities for all.

The scale of the problems facing humanity in the third millennium compels us to address the problem with a sense of urgency and a practical approach, manifested in the will to implement specific plans of action which could solve the major problems identified.

Although there has been progress in the fields of social protection, decent work, and the promotion of and compliance with standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, we are concerned that this is only a small part of the overall problems which exist and which are growing day by day. None of these objectives can be fully achieved without economic growth, particularly in the countries of the South, where problems are accumulating to an alarming extent.

I would like to make the following comments on this point. The liberalization of trade, far from decreasing trade imbalances between developed and developing countries, has increased them. It opens up markets to manufactured products while protecting agricultural products or introducing non-tariff barriers.

The liberalization of financial markets has given rise to speculation, capital flight and the growth of the external debt burden of developing countries at an alarming rate, jeopardizing the social stability of many countries.

There are considerable imbalances between North and South in terms of access to knowledge and technology, and to this we must add the harmful practice of encouraging the brain drain and continuing restrictions on transfer of technology.

These are three examples of ways in which the process of globalization is taking place and which, among other things, prevent many employers in the developing countries from maintaining the necessary growth rates to allow an increase in decent and productive employment.

Cuban employers, whom I represent, are now in the process of enhancing entrepreneurship and promoting more flexible and competitive enterprises to keep pace with the constant changes on the market, by introducing quality management systems and developing training and skills upgrading for their workers in line with the needs of enterprises.

In addition to these challenges, which are to be expected in a globalized world, the employers of Cuba also have to face the effects of the measures applied by the Government of the United States to intensify the economic blockade, which places obstacles in the way of international trade and ham-

pers the efficient performance of Cuban entrepreneurs.

A contribution of the ILO, together with the other agencies of the United Nations system, would be to take a decisive stance against the adoption of such unilateral measures by one State against any other with the aim of attaining political objectives and with the sole effect of increasing the suffering of the people.

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Mr. MONONGA (*Government delegate, Malawi*)

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May I begin by congratulating the President and Vice-Presidents on their successful elections. We all have confidence in your skills and abilities to make this session of the Conference successful and memorable, bearing in mind that we are also having a triple celebration – the ILO is now 85 years young; the Declaration of Philadelphia is now 60 years and still fresh; and our Organization has, for 35 years, now been a proud holder of the much-respected Nobel Peace Prize. It is therefore with great pleasure that Malawi feels greatly honoured to be part of the family of ILO member countries participating in this auspicious Conference.

The Malawi delegation has read the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General of the ILO, and we are satisfied that the institution is indeed moving successfully towards its niche area of social peace and justice through its rights-based normative approach in this globalizing world.

As we can all recall, it was very, very difficult to envisage the relevance of the ILO at the end of the twentieth century because it was not clear as to what role an institution based on the mission of norms could play after the Cold War, and when the world was coming close together as a global village driven by openness, liberalization and deregulation. Honestly speaking, a number of people were not sure about the future of the standard-setting role of the ILO in this new millennium, and some of us were worried about the future status of this value-based institution.

The Malawi delegation is, however, very grateful to learn from the excellent Reports put at the disposal of this Conference that, contrary to the fears some of us had had, the ILO has become even stronger now than it was at the end of the last century. Malawi is extremely proud to be a Member of the ILO today because the ILO has delivered, and continues to deliver, quality products and services in Malawi.

We are aware that, at the centre of the ILO Decent Work Agenda, is a child labour free world. Malawi, with the help of the ILO, is doing all it can to fight the evils of child labour. Today, the majority of Malawians are aware that child labour is a serious sin and a crime against the future generations of our country.

With ILO assistance, Malawi has been able to conduct a national child labour survey and we have just completed the survey report which we shall be launching very soon. The ILO has also helped us to train our labour inspectors, employers and trade unions on the issues of decent work, particularly on the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, through the ILO/SLASA, Strengthening Labour Administration in Southern Africa project, which has now been transformed into International Labour Standards in Southern Africa (ILO/ILSA). It is our sincere hope that the

ILO/ILSA project will complete all the activities started by ILO/SLASA including, of course, the purchase of equipment and motorcycles for the labour inspectors.

Since Malawi is the spokesperson for the African group in the Technical Cooperation Committee of the Governing Body, let me end by requesting the ILO and the donor community to kindly ensure that Africa becomes one of the major recipients of ILO technical cooperation assistance.

We note that, apart from the Arab world, Africa was the recipient of the least technical cooperation assistance from the ILO during the 2002-03 biennium, according to Appendix II of the Report of the Director-General on *ILO programme implementation 2002-03*. With the current levels of poverty in Africa, it is only moral and imperative for the ILO to devote more technical cooperation activities to the African continent.

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Mr. REPOSSI (*representative, Association of Volunteers for International Service*)

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First of all, I would like to thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of AVSI, a non-profit-making international development NGO and to share some thoughts on the topic of human resources development and training, including insights which have emerged from our years of working with people, especially youth, in more than 30 countries in the world.

We at AVSI appreciate the focus on human resource development, understood as education, training and lifelong learning and valued as a fundamental motor of development at all levels. It should also be noted that we are in complete agreement with the recommendation's holistic approach to this issue, which recognizes that the need for education and training exists alongside the need for economic, social and labour market policies and programmes. One of the most challenging dimensions contained in the proposed Recommendation is the need to encourage individuals to pursue their own development, further their education and take responsibility for their lives.

Please let me set forth three suggestions for human resource development in keeping with the goals of the ILO in the present Conference.

Firstly, policies and programmes can deliver only when one fundamental factor is properly taken care of, that is the person. The person and his or her full human growth are the keys to lasting and fruitful development. Each person can contribute to the common good by building on the very first resource everyone is equipped with, the desire for happiness and the need for love and, being loved, the yearning for good and the need to share it with others.

It is from this basis that we can speak of the right to education and training. All partners in development must work with a positive attitude towards reality and a desire for common good.

The Recommendation emphasizes strategies of lifelong learning, and rightly so, since the limitations of formal education as a means of facilitating the transition into the labour force are clear. In addition, the Recommendation specifically advocates promoting access to education and training for people with special needs, notably youth.

Youth are the source of economic growth and social change and need to be seen as primary agents of such change. Their asset is their self, their desire for truth, for happiness and for meaning, which needs

to be awakened and discovered, sustained through education and in companionship. The lack of meaning keeps them far away, or even unwilling to accept a job or an opportunity.

Relating with youth at this level is fundamental, if any job training or entrepreneurship course is to take root. We need to be committed to youth, so that they can perceive work as a way to express and build their own capacity and assets and thereby make an invaluable and long-lasting contribution to society and the nation.

At a more practical level, I would like to stress the value of collaboration with, and among, government agencies and local institutions, mainly the service-providing non-profit-making organizations, in order to strengthen capacity and to address the population's needs for education to work and services that facilitate employment matching and creation. Let us also point out the need for any national policy to be effective and sustainable. It has to draw on the lessons and findings that civil society, youth groups and social entrepreneurship have gained from their day-to-day experience and involvement in the field, seek to establish a conducive environment which facilitates and supports the efforts of the groups involved in youth education, in education to work and in the accompaniment of young people in their jobs and careers, develop action-oriented strategies in order to actually meet the needs of youth at the most ordinary grass-roots level and promote consultation, forums, seminars etc., where the actors of the various initiatives in job creation and employment, particularly those in innovative initiatives, could come together, share their methods, constraints, challenges and results with the goal of contributing to the adaption and refinement of national policies and programmes.

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Mr. MD. ZAFRUL (*Workers' delegate, Bangladesh*)

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First of all I wish to congratulate the President, the Vice-Presidents and other officials on their respective elections and sincerely wish that this session of the Conference, under their able leadership, moves towards a productive conclusion.

I also wish to extend my thanks to the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the World Commission and the Director-General of the ILO for their very useful, timely works, as reflected in the Reports. My thanks to all members of the secretariat for their efforts organizing and running such a big event.

While we are discussing the social dimension of globalization and other related issues in this Conference hall, please allow me to recall what millions of our fellow workers, women and men, back home in my country and other places think about globalization.

I am sure many of you here are quite familiar, even better informed about the situation.

To tell you the truth, in the eyes of millions of them, globalization is a monster. Why? Because globalization has upset the whole system, values and culture of the lives of common people. With the march of globalization and its inevitable companion, the market forces, many of the industries have been closed down on grounds of financial non-viability resulting in thousands and thousands of workers losing their jobs.

More and more industries will be closed and more jobs will be lost. Poverty, income inequality, insecurity, all those are taking place openly in front of

their eyes without anyone listening to their voices because of the process of globalization.

As a least developing country, what are our main concerns? We have a population of 130 million, 39 per cent of them living under the poverty level earning less than \$1 a day, 20 million unemployed young people are looking for jobs in a barren labour market and every year, there are more and more. Owing to a better agricultural harvest though, the GDP is showing a slight upward trend, but the industries sector is constantly declining. Owing to the opening of the economy without due preparation, taking advantage of the unfair situation, more experienced outside companies and big multinational companies are taking over and local industries are forced to close down.

Globalization in its present form instead of industrialization, job creation and economic growth, is creating conditions of de-industrialization, increased unemployment, a widening gap between the rich and the poor and creating insecurity and social instability. External pressure is also there to withdraw subsidies from the only contributing agriculture sector. The Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty thus remains a dream that will never be fulfilled.

Here, I wish to mention another dimension of globalization as seen by our common people.

The common people's idea of creating opportunities from globalization can be seen from the following example.

As a consequence of globalization, owing to a policy shift, unregulated market access has taken place in social sectors like health and education. As reform measures, downsizing, and budget cuts are affecting the ability of the community hospitals and the education institutes to provide health and education at affordable prices to the common people, a few affluent beneficiaries of the globalization process are sending their children for better education at very great expense, at home and abroad, using Medicare for themselves and their families in world-class hospitals wheresoever, at costs unimaginable to the common people, thus creating another imbalance in terms of capacity, future skills and adjustment for the whole future generation.

This is an example of the process of globalization creating advantages for the rich few and far-reaching disadvantages for the majority of the common people.

Some time ago, 30,000 workers in one industry in Bangladesh lost their jobs all in one go when the mill was closed. There was no social security, no safety net. This is a big one, but there are many others. I just wish to remind you that under whatever circumstances or whatever pretext a worker loses his job, typically, as the only breadwinner of the family, it is often not very plain and easy for him to lose his job, to go home in the evening and have to tell his family "look, I have no job and no income today to support you". It is not easy and simple for those who have not been in such a situation to understand what it is like. I am not sure how many will be able to visualize the expressions of those scared faces, the amount of despair, grief and uncertainty.

From my, yet, incomplete study of the Reports – the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body, the World Commission Report on Globalization, the Director-General's Report and, most particularly, from listening to the speech of the Direc-



tor-General on 7 June, introducing and summarizing his report: *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*. I have developed a feeling that the people behind this, the authors of these Reports, the co-chairs and other members of the World Commission, the Director-General and the Governing Body of the ILO, did not fail to read the language on those scared faces, whether in Bangladesh or in any other part of the world. To this session of the Conference, on behalf of those toiling workers whom I represent, this is my simple comment on those Reports.

In the interest of the majority of the world population, the ILO has to continue its endeavours to shape globalization in its fairest form, creating opportunities for all, establishing decent work, social protection and fundamental rights. The messages and the goals for the ILO have been set. The duty for all of us after this session of the Conference will be to carry the mandate forward. For our own good and for a better future world the workers of Bangladesh will try to play their correct role.

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Mr. DAVID (*Workers' delegate, Indonesia*)

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First of all, allow me to congratulate the President and the Vice-Presidents on their election at the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. I also congratulate the Director-General on his second mandate, and on his excellent Report to the Conference. Concerning the report entitled *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*, prepared by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, I would like to take this opportunity to dwell very briefly upon this topic and to express the Indonesian workers' views on various aspects.

As you will have heard, the Indonesian Government has ratified a total of 15 ILO Conventions to date, including the eight core Conventions on fundamental human rights, i.e. Conventions Nos. 29 and 87 and many others.

As regards these Conventions, certain labour laws have recently been approved, such as Law No. 21 of 2000 on trade unions, Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning manpower, Law No. 2 of 2004 which is a new law on industrial labour dispute settlement, and a law concerning labour inspection in regard to ILO Convention No. 81.

These ratifications must be followed by the next important step, which is to publicize the content of these Conventions among the partners concerned, especially the trade unions, in Indonesia to ensure that all workers are fully apprised of their rights at work and of the provisions of the Conventions, as well as of the various national laws and regulations which relate to them. This is a crucial task which must be undertaken not only at the government level, but also at the level of the social partners.

To this end, we would like to call upon the ILO to provide assistance and, if possible, to finance this campaign in order to increase national awareness regarding the fundamental principle of workers' rights. We would be more than happy to prepare and to submit our detailed proposals in this matter for your review and, hopefully, your approval.

Another important issue is the supervision of ratified Conventions, which needs to be taken into account in order to ensure the proper implementation of the Conventions in Indonesia. In this regard, I would like to recommend the following points.

Firstly, empowerment of the Indonesian trade unions should be ensured through short seminars

and/or discussions designed to give a clear understanding of the Conventions and of the role they should play.

Secondly, the trade unions should be able to participate, along with the Government, in the supervision of the implementation process.

In line with these two points, we should like to prepare a training package for the national trade unions and would welcome any financial assistance in order to be able to carry out this project. This project is more relevant than ever in today's globalized world, since the majority of Indonesian workers are under-educated and, consequently, have limited skills to enable them to compete with incoming workers from all over the world.

On the topic of job opportunity, up to now we have been facing a multidimensional crisis which has hit Indonesia since 1997. The uncertainty of the political environment has had tremendous consequences on the economy, leading to the demise of many companies and the loss of thousands of jobs. We are facing a high supply of jobseekers. Employment opportunities are very limited and the workforce also faces obstacles, as most of them are low-skilled.

In ensuring the decent work of those employed informally, Indonesia has set out a policy to protect and develop the informal sector. It is also introducing the concept of community economic development, which focuses on the role of small and medium-sized businesses and cooperatives.

To overcome the situation mentioned above concerning Conventions, we need to keep in mind when drawing up Conventions, that they should not be counter-productive at a later stage, by over-emphasizing the protection of workers who are in employment, but we should also take into account all those who are unemployed or entering the job market.

Finally, allow me to express my appreciation to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) for their comment concerning the Conventions, especially Convention No. 29; we realize that these are the mechanisms regarding the preparation of documents in the Committee on the Application of Standards.

We also appeal to our colleagues from the European trade unions, to assist the trade unions in Indonesia in the framework of their new strategy of the technical assistance, in what is called the "informal economy".

To conclude my statement to all the participants, since the opening of this session of the Conference, we are all of us now in the spirit of "a fair globalization".

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Mr. SITHOLE (*Workers' delegate, Swaziland*)

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As this is my first time to come to the podium to speak in this session of the Conference, please consider all protocols observed.

It is my singular honour, on behalf of my organization and some members of the broad-based workers' organizations and civil society in Swaziland, to address this august assembly under the auspices of the ILO, whose mandate is to promote and advocate economic and social justice, respect for the rule of law and civil liberties for all working people.

We are heartened that the ILO in its 1970 session of the Conference adopted a resolution that reads as follows: "The rights conferred upon workers' and employers' organizations must be based on respect

for those civil liberties which have been enunciated in particular in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that the absence of these civil liberties removes all meaning from the concept of trade union rights.”

The Committee on Freedom of Association has also expressed the view that “a system of democracy is fundamental for the free exercise of trade union rights”.

The democracy-loving people of Swaziland have, over time, been heartened each time their Government has ratified one of the ILO Conventions or other human rights-related treaties from the United Nations, the Commonwealth or the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union.

Swaziland is a voluntary Member of the following international organizations whose various treaties and declarations advocate respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and social justice: the ILO, of which Swaziland has ratified all the core Conventions; the United Nations; the Commonwealth, membership of which means that Swaziland is bound by the Harare Declaration; and the African Union.

Unfortunately, Swaziland is on a list of countries known to be the best ratifiers of international treaties and declarations, and yet it is one of the worst violators of all the voluntarily ratified human rights-related covenants.

Over time, during the apartheid era, Swaziland was dubbed an “the island of peace in a sea of turmoil”. This “peace” was enforced silence, mistaken for peace, and managed in accordance with the draconian 1973 Decree before Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa were liberated. And the truth now is that Swaziland is an “island of dictatorship in a sea of democracies”.

These assertions are supported by a number of realities that have been systematically sustained by the draconian 1973 State of Emergency Decree. Swaziland remains the only undemocratic country in the sub-Saharan region; the only country ruled by decree in the region; the only country where fundamental freedoms were nullified following the Decree of 1973; the only country where political parties have been banned since 1973; the only country where all dialogue initiatives proposed by stakeholders, other than the Government, are undermined in favour of government-imposed talk shows, in which the Government dictates the agenda and only hand-picked individuals are supposed to participate in the dialogue but organizations are not invited and not recognized; the only country where Court of Appeal judges have resigned en masse owing to the blatant refusal of the Executive to implement its decisions; the only country where the Executive can interfere with the Legislature; the only country where all arms of governance are vested in the office of the King; the only country in the region where peaceful protest actions are brutally dispersed and trade union leaders sometimes denied freedom of movement during lawful protest actions; the only country where the Government, on 28 November 2002, openly pronounced that certain decisions of the Courts will not be observed by the Government (to the nation’s amazement, these decisions included decisions that allow citizens a right to return to their place of birth after having been maliciously evicted by the authorities); the only country where

bail money is accepted but the authorities refuse to release the suspect.

Whilst the Government has ratified and enacted all the core labour standards in legislation, in practice the situation is diametrically the opposite. Freedom of association is deliberately undermined by the armed forces during peaceful protest activities. The Government systemically denies trade union recognition in the textiles industry.

The right to free collective bargaining is subject to total government interference, both within the private sector, in parastatal bodies and within the civil service.

The Minister of Finance announced in his budget speech that there would be no negotiations this year, and no wage increase, but there will be retrenchments of 1,000 people, without any negotiation with the legitimate organizations.

The Government has ratified the forced labour Conventions, but forced labour is legalized by the Swazi Administration Order of 1998 which was used in maliciously evicting two village chiefs and over 200 of their subjects, who are now refugees in South Africa. It is unfortunate that whilst the Court declared this Order unlawful, the State still vehemently applies it in its entirety, which is yet another proof of its total disregard for the rule of law.

The Law in question has reduced the Swazi citizen to the level of squatters or farm dwellers in their own country, and leaves them with no right to land.

The workers and other progressive forces demanded the Constitution-writing process, but when it was eventually put into operation in response to both internal and international pressure, Decree No. 2 was put in place. Under this Constitution, all powers are vested in the King, and the King appoints the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, the judges and the principal Secretaries. This draft includes derogating clauses.

In these short comments, on behalf of the suffering, bonded and oppressed masses of Swaziland, we appeal to this democracy, peace and social justice-loving international organization, and other organizations of which Swaziland is a member, to apply all forms of pressure to force the Government to address the concerns of its people and allow the people of Swaziland to enjoy their God-given basic fundamental human rights, democracy and dignity.

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*Original Spanish: Mr. YAGUAL (Workers' delegate, Ecuador)*

I bring greetings from the Ecuadorian workers and congratulations to the President on his appointment to chair this session of the International Labour Conference, along with congratulations to the Director-General

The economic crisis resulting from the economic strategies imposed by the IMF and the World Bank has become the actual plan of many governments across the world, and Ecuador is no exception. We must also recognize the role played by the traditional economic classes who have taken advantage of these strategies, leading to a deterioration in working conditions, low wages and the limitation of labour and union rights, affecting the quality of life of 80 per cent of the population.

In Ecuador we have not yet recovered from the crisis which resulted from the looting of Ecuadorians’ savings by unscrupulous bankers in 1999. This led to hundreds of people secretly leaving the country each week in search of work and a better future for their families, risking their lives crammed into

boats heading to the United States, or flying to Europe on tickets bought months in advance. This desperate action is all part of an international trafficking network, which does not get a mention in the international press. It is not newsworthy because our migrants do not have a political impact or cause any scandal, but it does have an impact on employers in the countries to which they go and work as semi-slaves. It means that these countries can improve their GDP, accumulating money by paying poverty wages and failing to recognize basic human rights, particularly those contained in the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), which seeks to eliminate forced labour. Migrants have to accept forced labour, otherwise they will be deported and have to return to a life of poverty and crime in Ecuador.

This phenomenon is not unique to Ecuador; it is faced by all countries of the region and other continents where living and working conditions are deteriorating daily.

This total lack of respect for working conditions enjoyed by "legal" workers and the imposition of awful working conditions as a result of the trafficker, along with the abuse which occurs when people want to send money back to their families in their countries of origin, cannot continue in secret. All this must be eradicated.

The work of our compatriots should be considered as capital coming into our countries to finance important work. It should have the same guarantees as other capital, because this is the way in which Ecuador and other countries in the region invest in countries where there is an ageing population which cannot carry out certain jobs in the production or service sectors. This investment should have the same rights, conditions and guarantees required of us for capital investment. In other words, we demand compliance with international conventions, in this case the Conventions of the ILO.

Without wishing to sound repetitive, we invest in Europe and the United States with our labour. Ecuador has done this for a whole generation. Every family has a mother, a father, a son or a close relative working as a migrant. But the cost is enormous: children are abandoned, homes destroyed and people are discriminated against, treated as criminals, and deported at the first opportunity.

The difference between the two investments is as follows: people with money move it around electronically, demanding guarantees, imposing conditions and even deciding which civil servant should run the economy; when they feel like it, they take it out of the country, leaving gaping holes in our economies. Now, with the other type of investment, people risk their lives in boats, and families are indebted to the traffickers. People have to work as slaves and are often deported. They are not important because they come from "the third world". This discrimination and exploitation must be stopped.

As President of the Confederation of Workers of Ecuador, which is a member of the World Confederation of Labour, representing Ecuadorian workers here at this session of the ILC, I suggest that this type of labour should be condemned and those countries encouraging such exploitation should be sanctioned in the same way as drug traffickers are sanctioned. Countries which do not comply with ILO Conventions should be sanctioned. These sanctions should be coercive in nature in order to ensure that workers' rights are respected.

Therefore, as a resolution, this session of the Conference should require that all integration processes which are being negotiated or are already in place should ensure the free movement of labour. Workers are an investment made by our families and the Ecuadorian State should not build barriers, but should knock down these walls of shame.

At the present time, my country, Ecuador is facing a very acute social and political crisis and we must again call for a change of direction in the work of the Government. The Government of the former colonel, Mr. Gutierrez Borbua, has broken its election promises and betrayed the people of Ecuador.

Bad government has broken faith with workers, violating articles 16, 18, 23, 35, 55, 57, 142, 143, 245, 247 and 249 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, as enshrined in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), of the ILO. These violations have become law, as a bill entitled "Organic law on the civil service and administration and on the unification and approval of remuneration in the public sector". In reality, this will lead to the dismissal of 30,000 workers in the public sector over the next few years, in accordance with agreements reached between the Government of Ecuador and the IMF.

Workers' federations have presented a complaint to the Constitutional Court on the grounds that this law is not constitutional, and we have submitted a similar complaint to the ILO; we hope that there will be a ruling in our favour.

Long before this law came into force, the Government had violated all the constitutional and labour rights of workers, particularly working together with the management of the state-owned firm PETROECUADOR, in respect of which we have also complained to the ILO.

Attacks on the right to freedom of association, as enshrined in Convention No. 87, have become common practice in Ecuador, as evidenced by the dismissal of 400 workers at the Central Bank of Ecuador, including some members of the management. We have again complained to the ILO. The dismissal of 400 workers from the country's electricity companies has been announced. This is the real situation for workers in the public sector.

Imagine then what the situation is in the tertiary sector, where people do not have the right to organize, have no stability, and suffer from low wages despite the fact that Ecuadorian legislation provides for these workers to receive equal pay for equal work, which means they are effectively working in a state of semi-slavery.

In Ecuador there is open child labour in sectors such as flower-growing, mining and particularly banana cultivation. We would therefore ask that the bodies which the ILO has created to eradicate child labour should be given some decision-making power, and that the inspectors, observers and overseers of child labour should not be dependent either on the Ministry of Labour or on NGOs.

These are the very serious and pressing situations which the organized trade union movement in Ecuador faces, and therefore I ask this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference to call upon the Government of my country not to violate or refuse to recognize the standards which have been established and recognized through the ILO Con-

ventions, and which have been ratified by Ecuador itself. It is the duty of the participants here present to give the workers of the world a fair deal.

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Mr. PAJOBBO (*Workers' delegate, Uganda*)

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I wish to congratulate the President and the Officers of the Conference on their election to high office at this Conference.

Let me pose one question. What has been happening in the world during the first few years of the twenty-first century? Security of employment has declined, the share of wages relative to profits has fallen, inequalities between the poor and the rich, women and men, the developed and the developing countries, are widening. The international economic institutions, namely the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, dominate the developing countries.

While poverty is worsening among the majority of people, wealth is concentrated among a few in a way never before seen in the world. Working people in most of the world are getting a bad deal.

Furthermore, there is a growing democracy deficit. At the national level, national policy options are constrained by global markets. Greater competition exists among governments than among enterprises. Democratic governance barely exists. While global governance and binding rules are beginning to emerge, they are for the purpose of protecting rights in the interest of capital, rather than the rights of labour. The phenomenon of globalization has removed decision-making from individuals and placed it in the hands of the management of global enterprises such as Microsoft, Nokia, etc., and of global institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. As a result of this, millions of subcontracted workers, who are producing brand products for these companies and institutions, who do not employ them, cannot obtain a hearing with them.

We, as workers and a growing number of governments and firms, recognize that business as usual is not good enough. We know that, although unregulated globalization is working for some people and some governments, it is not working for the majority of the people. We also know that unregulated global financial markets have enabled the spread of networks that feed terrorism. There has to be a way to regulate globalization. There has to be a framework for global governance to increase the regulation of globalization.

Markets do not clean themselves up, they do not automatically produce justice, they do not automatically require the respect of human rights. In other words, the world has been on autopilot. This is not satisfactory.

History shows that the trade union movement can help to fill the moral vacuum created by market forces. Trade unions are instruments of the will of workers and become their lever to move the world and to change the distribution of wealth and power inside countries and beyond, through their weapon of collective bargaining. Trade unions have the capacity to transform society. This is why all tyrants, public or private, fear freedom of association. Trade unions are also one of the very few actors capable of transcending the divisions that are polarizing our lives today and they are therefore the building blocks of a better world.

The National Organization of Trade Unions of Uganda reaffirms its conviction that respect for trade unions is essential for social and economic

development with social justice. Our goal is to win support for a world that is free from poverty and unemployment, free from discrimination and injustice, free from terrorism in all its forms, free from the threat of war and oppression. We want a world full of democracy and respect for human rights. We want a world where enterprises, large and small, respect the rights of their workers and of the unions and societies in which they operate.

For trade unions, the ILO Report, *Organizing for social justice*, is indeed timely. Perhaps it is worth recalling that this positive development originated in a campaign by the trade union movement aimed at focusing attention worldwide on organizing workers in the informal sector.

It is vital that the fundamental rights of workers, set out in ILO standards, be respected everywhere in the world. While the Report recognizes that the data on membership of employers' and workers' organizations are largely incomplete and outdated, we wish to assure you that the National Organization of Trade Unions of Uganda will strive to provide all data pertaining to membership as requested by the ILO.

We appreciate and welcome the work done by the ILO in Uganda, particularly the Workers' Education Project which has been implemented, the ILO Action Plan on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Project and the ILO's ongoing SLAREA Project.

The Director-General's Report, *Organizing for social justice*, offers a way of developing further the ideals of collective bargaining and social dialogue. It is our hope that our members will put to proper use the Report that has been submitted to them.

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Mr. ILOLOV (*Government delegate, Tajikistan*)

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On behalf of the Tajikistan tripartite delegation, I congratulate the President and the other Officers upon their election.

I would like to thank the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, and the ILO team for the excellent choice of the topics for the Report.

The Report of the Director-General entitled: *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO* and the Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work have inspired me to reflect on a number of issues that I should like to share with you.

Labour migration is a global phenomenon in the contemporary world. It is a consequence of economic integration, on the one hand, and non-uniformity of development, on the other. Practically, all countries of the world are affected in some degree by labour migration, either as receiving, sending or transit countries.

In the last decade in Tajikistan, the processes of the transitional period became a catalyst for external labour migration. Tajikistan was affected by powerful migration flows which changed the shape of the country, and had a significant impact on its social, economic and political situation. The crucial factor that caused the mass migration flows was a civil war that started in 1992-93 and continued until 1997, during which time there was a period of political instability. Labour migration abroad had a decisive influence on the system of life-support for the overwhelming majority of families in Tajikistan. Both the negative and the positive consequences of such migration are becoming clear. Researchers observe that more than 7 per cent of the economically active population leave the country every year.

More than 90 per cent of them go to the Russian Federation.

Life is difficult for the Tajik people living in foreign countries. These migrants agree to carry out any kind of work, simply to avoid deportation. Only 15 per cent work legally. The majority of migrants who are in an illegal situation are employed in private sector enterprises or carry out some form of domestic labour. Private employers are not interested in registering migrant workers. Therefore, migrant workers are excluded from social insurance and medical services and receive the lowest possible wages. In some cases, employers refuse to pay illegal migrants at all, so that they become victims of various structures, including criminal structures created by their compatriots.

Many unsolved problems still exist with regard to the state policy on the regulation of the migration processes. First of all, the infrastructure of the migrants service is weak in terms of informative and legislative support. We have not yet developed a system to provide support prior to migration or to provide professional education and micro-credit to migrants.

In general, activities to create an effective system to regulate migration policy can be implemented successfully only through the formation of structured and balanced systems of government regulation. Those systems must take into account international experience. In this respect, the Government of Tajikistan is interested in the ratification of ILO Conventions Nos. 97 and 143 on migrant workers.

We believe that the globalization process, particularly with regard to labour migration, must be based on universal values and include a social dimension in all countries of the world.

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Mr. DAVE (*Workers' delegate, India*)

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In the 85th year of the ILO, I find the comprehensive Report of the Director-General to be an introspective internal review of its effectiveness during the last two years. The Report, *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*, spells out, in detail, the implications of the recommendations made by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, which, in offering its comments on making decent work a global goal, has rightly recognized the basic fact that a worker in a particular industry is a consumer of all other industries, including the industry in which she or he works. However, it is elaborately diagnostic.

There is a group which vehemently advocates globalization as a remedy to all problems of growth, employment, equity and industrial peace. But an equally strong opinion is gathering momentum that reform, as a key to salvation, is not the right approach. Any attempt to advocate a particular course of action inevitably involves value judgements that can easily conflict with the ethics of scholarly objectivity and political neutrality, requiring a more than usual dose of intellectual discipline. Experience alone is the final arbitrator.

Globalization, which should be treated as a means for building a better society based on democracy, growth and equity, is being set in motion as an end in itself. Differences among nations, with respect to the level of development, are undoubtedly one of the world's paramount problems. The "development gap" between rich and poor countries is increasing despite the assured intention of most rich nations and international agencies to assist in the creation of

a more equal world. For the poor, the question of catching up with the rich does not arise, as their rates of progress (in the narrow economic sense of per capita GNP/GDP growth) are less than those of developed countries. While for others, the time required to close the gap is measured in centuries rather than decades.

Today, the needs of the masses are eclipsed by the greed of an affluent minority. This necessitates a re-examination of the entire gamut of the reform process. The close interrelationship between economic and social elements precludes any purely economic or purely social development. Therefore, a broad multidisciplinary perspective is essential for monitoring social progress.

To respond adequately to the problems of the modern world, the focus must be firmly rooted in human life. The limitations of any academic approach must be recognized, however relevant it may appear to the questions of human welfare. The so-called quantitative approach of review has tended to produce a mechanistic geography somewhat removed from reality.

International labour standards as a straightjacket method cannot be imagined by many developing countries, including my country, India, which, in spite of being the largest technical manpower supplier to several sophisticated systems across the globe, continues to have agriculture as the source of livelihood for nearly 450 million people.

Collective bargaining, at all levels, if pursued to promote self-interest by losing focus on larger social commitments, either by workers or employers, is but a naked trial of strength where ultimately the strong though wrong could have their victory over the weak but right. According to Harold Laski, should the employers and workers of any industry so conspire, they can harm the larger interests of people.

My Indian habit of thought refuses to acknowledge that we are in a world of limited resources. Mother Nature has resources in plenty for all of us, for all years to come, provided we shun the attitude of exploiting her and master the art of milking her. We should look again and begin our course for a fair globalization, starting with nature.

Indians, for several thousand years now, have recognized the right to happiness for all, which is judiciously institutionalized through a duty-based framework (instead of a rights-based approach) called Dharma, where joint family systems were established to inculcate the concept of globalization through a "winner shares with all" instead of a "winner takes all" approach. Even the United Nations Charter glaringly misses out the right to happiness.

Whichever way we look at the present form of globalization, the diagnosis is clear: the problem lies in the prescription. Who, when, why and how is the subtle point of debate. I urge all of you to remember that the right question is more important than the right answer to the wrong questions.

This is indeed a weighty, yet welcome, leadership challenge of vision to identify the circumstances and the courage to take decisions. We have had a very late start though, losing two decades in the bargain. Nevertheless, the Director-General has read the conclusion clear and loud. The current path of globalization must change, as the rules are unfair, the results unbalanced, and the course unsustainable. Yet the potential is there; change is possible.

There is some kind of solution to the broader problem of people learning to live together in a cooperative spirit of mutual assistance, instead of in aggressive competition. The key issue, therefore, is not globalization itself, but the rules and governance system under which it operates.

The Commission, by reminding us of the constitutional mandate of the ILO in detail and seeking its greater presence in the multilateral system, is in fact emphasizing the need for a global round table of all interests involved in, and implicated by, global governance mechanisms.

Until, and unless, there is a true commitment by the rich countries to help the mass of people in the underdeveloped world, instead of pursuing their narrow economic self-interest, the existing inequalities may get worse. Such a commitment itself requires a true change in the conduct of world affairs.

This is definitely a defining moment, provided we decide to act.

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Mr. GUISEPPI (*Workers' delegate, Trinidad and Tobago*)

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My special congratulations to the President on his appointment. We in the Caribbean are delighted by his elevation to such an honourable position.

On behalf of the National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago (NATUC) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) with its 17 affiliates, consisting of nations of the Caribbean, South and Central America, I bring comradely greetings to the President, our Director-General, the Vice-Presidents and secretaries and those who sit on this supreme forum of the 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference in 2004.

The working people of the Caribbean send warmest blessings to all our brothers and sisters who are here representing 179 countries on this globe.

The Director-General's Report continues to demonstrate the vision, understanding and total commitment that he, his colleagues and staff possess, as we continue our quest towards equity, fairness, social justice and happiness in this uncertain era of globalization.

The workers of the Caribbean do accept and will support the ILO's programmes and policies, because we believe that they will help in achieving peace and equality.

The record of the ILO over 85 years has given that assurance and its success and accomplishments have been recorded. But that does not mask the reality that there exist rogue elements that seek to undermine our goals of making the world a fair one within which globalization will present a human face.

These negative forces are even more determined than ever before on building empires of exorbitant materialistic wealth and capital through the sacrifices and sufferings of millions of workers and children. That is why the labour movement in the Caribbean insists that all governments must ratify and implement the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

The Director-General's Report has not lost sight of this as it reinforces its promotion of decent work and the four strategic objectives. We are convinced that this is done in order to neutralize the capacity of those who still believe that the exploitation and domination of the many by the few is part of nature's plan. The brutal relics of the past still survive and fashion the behaviour of this class, wherever they exist – be it in government or elsewhere.

Working people still have their fears and suspicions, not entirely with the global system, but with those who have manipulated it in order to retain complete control. Their overpowering and uncontrolled desires for amassing wealth at all costs have led some on senseless searches for weapons of mass destruction, or may we say a distraction and/or deception.

It is the same mindset that led those to state for over 500 years that the indigenous people of the New World and African slaves were less than human – the working people of the Caribbean, our history carved and scarred by much misbeliefs and malpractices, have survived.

Today, survival is no longer a major objective but our efforts are now directed at bringing wealth and prosperity for the vast majority who have been denied such for hundreds of years, being victims of mass genocide, discrimination and racial hatred.

Its effect is still present in our societies today, where poverty, unemployment, crime and inequality persist through the grossly unfair distribution of wealth and growth.

These social ills will be eliminated if our governments adopt and institutionalize the ILO agenda, which has to play a major role in defining our governments' – both national and regional – political, economic and social policies and programmes. The labour movement will insist on that course to be taken by our governments.

The removal of poverty, unemployment and the elevation of the dignity of workers are the principles we must adopt if we are to realize and achieve peace, order and real democracy in this era of so-called globalization.

Labour is the only living, human factor that makes any product possible. In today's world, our essentiality can no longer be hidden from us.

I quote Dr. Madsen Pirie, President of the Adam Smith Institute: "Wealth is no longer created on the basis of fixed capital, but increasingly on the talents and abilities of individuals. Talent and skills are the new precious metals, which denote wealth in the modern world. They have to be encouraged, developed, attracted and retrained. Companies and countries which do this successfully can survive and prosper; the others cannot."

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*Original French: Mr. DJIBRINE (Workers' delegate, Chad)*

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Allow me first of all to congratulate the President and the Officers of the Conference on their election to guide us in our work, and to wish the Conference every success.

After the bitter experience of structural adjustment programmes which were imposed upon our nations by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the ILO Director-General's Report entitled *A fair globalization: The role of the ILO*, which is in fact a constructive and objective analysis the Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, in my humble opinion opens up avenues for reflection on more favourable prospects for economic and social development and, most importantly, describes the possibilities for a more just and equitable distribution of the resources generated by such development. Indeed, the Report emphasizes the hopes and aspirations of ordinary people who, after all, make up the overwhelming majority of the population of our planet.

While I share the pertinent conclusions drawn in the Report of the Director-General and in the report of the World Commission, I would also point out some important aspects which are specific to Africa: the role of the social partners, social dialogue and strategic alliances with civil society organizations.

Beginning with the social partners, and on the understanding that there can be no economic development without an extensive job creation programme, just as you cannot reduce poverty without giving decent work to all those who have no work, I believe that it is crucial that social partners be involved in the framing, implementation and evaluation of all economic and social development programmes at all levels, that is, national, subregional, continental and global. The involvement of the social partners can only be effective if the latter are well-organized, representative and capable of doing more than just making speeches and putting motions, i.e. exerting leverage through their actions on the ground.

Here, I would say that the collective agreements and protocols of agreement negotiated and concluded in recent years in many countries are an encouraging sign, provided the parties abide by their commitments.

Beyond the national level, we have, as you probably know, subregional and regional organizations as well: the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CAEMC), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), and of course the African Union.

While we appreciate the work done by the regional trade union organizations such as the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), the ICFTU African Regional Organization (AFRO), the Democratic Organization of African Workers' Trade Unions (DOAWTU) and in terms of awareness-raising and lobbying vis-à-vis the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), I think it is important to revitalize the subregional trade union organizations under the CAEMC, the CEN-SAD and the WAEMU. Given that the subregional economic and monetary communities state that their main goal is the development of human and natural resources for the common good of their peoples, it is entirely appropriate for the social partners to be involved.

As far as my part of the world is concerned, I would like to mention the establishment of the Central African Employers' Union (UNIPACE) in 2001 and that of the Central African Workers' Trade Union Organization (OSTAC) in October 2003. I would also like to welcome and pay tribute to the decision taken by Heads of State and Government to set up a tripartite structure within CAEMC. It would be remiss of me not to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the ILO, which played a key role in this positive development, both through its Regional Programme for the Promotion of Social Dialogue in French-speaking Africa (PRODIAF) and through the work of its subregional office. This work by the ILO has made a substantial contribution to revitalizing and consolidating social dialogue both at national level and within the CAEMC.

Moving on to CEN-SAD now, on 3 September 1998, the workers' organizations in the member States set up the Sahelo-Saharan Nations Trade Union Association of African Workers (USTAESS).

Since then, the number of members has doubled and it will certainly increase further, since the number of member States has now reached 22, so that about 45 per cent of the African population is now represented within this trade union organization.

I am certain that this organization's role in economic and social development will increase in the years to come because of the pragmatic policy of integration promoted by the member States, in particular by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, already manifested in the fact that in several member States, financial, trade and industrial companies have already been set up, thus offering ample employment to their workers.

At its last ordinary congress held in April 2004 in Tunis, the USTAESS adopted important recommendations and resolutions calling for involvement of the trade unions of member countries in all the programmes and activities of CEN-SAD.

We are of course eager to request the assistance of the ILO and all other sources of goodwill to support the activities of these subregional and regional organizations.

Before I conclude, allow me to mention my last point, namely strategic alliances with civil society organizations. Whilst agreeing with them in principle, especially since in my country we have already successfully initiated a number of joint actions with human rights associations and the liaison committee for women's associations, I urge you to be very vigilant when it comes to these strategic alliances, because in many African countries there are so-called civil society associations which are set up simply as a front and which have no credibility and are not representative. Consequently, if one is not careful one might find oneself in the midst of a hornets' nest and this would undermine one of the fundamental principles of the ILO, namely tripartism.

In conclusion, I would say that Africa has tremendous and varied potential. But unfortunately, today this has benefited only multinational companies and a tiny minority of local rulers. The absence of political will, the eagerness to defend personal interests, and poor governance combined with mismanagement, corruption and debt, not to mention HIV/AIDS, as well as every form of conflict, often created and perpetuated to serve political ends are the main factors that have led to underdevelopment and the inequitable distribution of wealth. This is a measure of the huge challenges that face us and force the world to examine its conscience.

However, if, with the aid of the ILO and that of the international labour movement we can manage to strengthen the capabilities of the social partners in general and of workers' and employers' organizations in particular, I am certain that Africa will be able to take advantage of all the benefits of globalization – benefits which its peoples have a right to expect.

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*Original French: Mr. NUMAS (Workers' delegate, Haiti)*

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On behalf of the workers of Haiti, allow me, first of all, to join in congratulations already expressed, congratulating the President on his election to the presidency of this 92nd Session of the International Labour Conference. His election was an important event for Latin America and the Caribbean and, in particular, it was an important event in the context of our need for development and the well-being of the citizens of our island.

The agenda for this session, focusing as it does on the social dimension of globalization, and the introductory statement made by Mr. Juan Somavia, the Director-General of the ILO, show more clearly than ever that the Organization remains true to its tripartite vocation, and that it is able to adapt to changing circumstances. I would like to thank the Director-General for the excellent Report submitted to us, containing a wealth of information, and also for the many themes offered for exploration.

The Organization has grown tremendously in recent years, but must rise to a number of challenges. It is said that globalization has the potential to deliver progress, but, up to this point, governments have failed to make the individual the focus of the process, for globalization has adverse effects, which we must now correct. This is the precondition which is required if we are to build a just society which is not just an economic model, but which is also a social model, at the service of everyone.

To take up these huge challenges, the ILO needs to reinforce its structures by establishing an ongoing social dialogue which is absolutely frank. Freedom of association and the right to organize must be seen as the fundamental right of all human beings, and let there be no doubt about it – it is a fundamental right that workers ought to be able to take for granted; everyone must be entitled to exercise this right regardless of the size or wealth of their country.

Many of us attend this Conference regularly, and those of us who do so will have heard many countries present excuses for not being able to ensure freedom of association or the right to collective bargaining because they are poor, or because they do not have the necessary expertise to comply with these standards. I affirm what the Director-General himself said – this is a fundamental right, just as fundamental as the right to life.

Let me take this opportunity to launch an urgent appeal to governments who use this pretext, to make quantum leaps forward and to live up to these requirements. My native country, Haiti, also has to wake up and get into gear. Of course, we appreciate that the nation has just lived through an experience that has ravaged its infrastructure, but now we have to move forward. The democratic transition government – and we welcome its involvement in the affairs of Haiti – must live up to the requirements of the ILO the largest tripartite family in the world.

Past abuses have inflicted damage on our country; we now ask the ILO to provide technical assistance to the new Government of Haiti, to revive the social battle within the context of the tripartite dialogue. Job creation requires respect for the law; strengthening of state institution and political stability. Creating decent jobs is an urgent necessity in Haiti for the country to be able to combat unemployment and poverty. We welcome and encourage any initiative which will help to create large numbers of jobs; initiatives from the private sector in Haiti, and also from business people in Haiti, to promote the well-

being of citizens whilst respecting the principles and rights of workers.

Despite everything, the trade union organizations in Haiti have grown. They appreciate the importance of social dialogue and the current need to protect the social provisions that have been achieved thus far.

We therefore ask the ILO's Bureau for Workers' Activities, the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), the Haitian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (CSL), and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to support all the Haitian trade union confederations in the struggle going on in Haiti to promote genuine and effective tripartism. The Haitian trade union world, through the Haitian Trade Union Sector (SSH), the Haitian Trade Union Coordination (CSH), and the Haitian Trade Union Movement (MSH), thank the ICFTU and ORIT for their fact-finding mission to Haiti in February, which aimed to help free fellow free trade unionists who had been imprisoned under the regime of ousted President Lavalas. Thank you, thank you for your efforts. We take note of your advice, and your work with the Haitian trade union movement will not have been in vain.

We continue to pursue tripartite activities within the framework of the ILO project HAI99MO1USA to improve working conditions in the Haitian assembly sector, even though that project has been closed. Despite everything, the evaluation task force described the beginnings of social dialogue between the Haitian State, the Haitian Industries Association (ADIH) and the SSH, as an unexpected positive spin-off of the ILO project, whilst recognizing the status of advisory committee of the project (CCP) as the only working instrument for social dialogue in the country dealing with labour issues. The evaluation task force recommended among other things that this project be extended with the aim of making this committee permanent, giving it autonomy and independence and the resources to strengthen and expand tripartite social dialogue in the country. We are still waiting for the ILO to add to and strengthen these abilities with a view to other activities in the future.

In conclusion, two years after the Independence, the first black republic in the world must be guided by certain principles and must reject the old traditional practices which generate only division and despair. In the international context in which we live, we have to put an end to these struggles once and for all. We need a globalization with a human face that will allow each individual to enjoy decent living and working conditions. This is the responsibility of everyone – of international organizations, governments, employers and workers. These rights are thus the embodiment and the guarantee of freedom and are crucial for the realization of other fundamental rights to allow humankind to live with dignity.

*(The Conference adjourned at 6 p.m.)*



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