



Fifth sitting

Tuesday, 11 June 2002, 11 a.m.

President: Mr. Rampak

FIRST REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE: SUBMISSION AND NOTING

The PRESIDENT (Mr. RAMPAK) — The first item on our agenda is the first report of the Credentials Committee, which is published in *Provisional Record 5B*. I invite the Conference to take note of it as the report has been adopted by the Credentials Committee.

(The Conference takes note of the report.)

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION (*cont.*)

The PRESIDENT (Mr. RAMPAK) — We shall now resume the discussion on the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General.

Original Korean: Mr. BANG (*Minister of Labour, Republic of Korea*) — On behalf of the Korean Government, I would like to convey our sincere congratulations to the President on his appointment to chair the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference.

I also want to thank the Secretary-General and other staff members of the Office for their efforts to prepare such excellent reports.

Our Government will give full support for a variety of projects conducted by the ILO to create decent work in response to globalization.

We also want to express our respect for all the efforts to expand basic labour rights and to eliminate child labour.

All the projects carried out by the ILO to ensure decent work will be highly appreciated, as they have largely contributed to solving the social and economic problems facing member countries and to showing the future directions and visions for the ILO in the twenty-first century.

As we are well aware, in the twenty-first century, our social and economic environments will experience great changes with globalization and the advent of a knowledge- and information-based society. Along with these, there will be an increasing need to guarantee workers' basic labour rights.

Given such historical changes in our civilization, I would like to suggest several areas, as follows, in which the ILO should concentrate its energy.

First of all, in order to cope properly with the changing labour environment resulting from in-

creased labour mobility among nations and the emergence of new employment modes, international labour standards should be improved.

Secondly, more efforts should be made for human resources development in order to keep pace with the development of innovative information and communications technologies, as in the IT industry. To do so, we have to make efforts to develop advanced education and training programmes and we must transfer well-developed teaching methods to the developing countries.

Thirdly, I hope to see an expansion of realistic measures and actual support for decent work, such as job creation, the establishment of infrastructures for employment security and social protection for low-income earners.

Based on such governing philosophies as democracy, the market economy and productive welfare, the Kim Dae-Jung administration, which took office during the economic crisis, has made much progress over the past four years in expanding basic labour rights and in improving people's quality of life.

In particular, not only has the Government wisely completed financial and corporate restructuring through the agreement between labour, management and government. It has also strengthened its social safety net by greatly increasing public employment services and expanding employment insurance to cover all workplaces, in a bid to counter massive unemployment.

Thanks to these efforts, the Republic of Korea has maintained an economic growth rate of 8-10 per cent since 1999. The jobless rate in the Republic of Korea, which rose to 6.8 per cent in 1998, has fallen to around 3 per cent. As proved by these figures, the Republic of Korea was able to overcome the economic crisis and regain a springboard for another leap forward earlier than expected.

Despite difficult social and economic conditions, the Republic of Korea has dramatically promoted workers' rights and welfare by permitting the existence of teachers' unions, guaranteeing political activities by unions and expanding maternity protection.

President Kim Dae-Jung, one of the Nobel Peace Prize winners, will spare no effort to expand human rights and the quality of life during his remaining term of office. Our Government will do its best to pursue legislation to guarantee public officials' basic labour rights and to improve the labour system, in line with international standards.

I would like to call upon all of you to give active support so that our Government can smoothly carry out its reform.

Original Arabic: Mr. ABBAS (*Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Iraq*) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! Mr. President of the Conference, distinguished participants, it is my pleasure, on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Iraq, to greet you and express my best wishes for the success of this Conference.

The Report of the Director-General in which he reviews the activities of the ILO for the years 2000-01 emphasizes the new trends in the activities of the ILO in the light of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in the field of labour, on one hand, and the national attitude towards problems faced by the majority of the developing countries and LDCs. In this regard I should like to express deep gratitude to Mr. Juan Somavia for his efforts aimed at developing positive relations between the ILO and numerous countries, including my country, Iraq, hoping that the ILO will continue to implement its plans in this respect in order to consolidate its credibility as a specialized agency, unaffected by the policies of influential States.

In reviewing the volume and nature of the problem, the Report confronts everyone with this challenge and calls upon all to fulfil their humane and ethical responsibilities for the sake of a world free of child labour. We fully agree with the classification which the Director-General set forth in his Report, and here I should like to mention that Iraq promulgated a number of laws at an early date, establishing the minimum age for labour and types of labour prohibited for children. It has also promulgated laws which provide children with all their requirements for growth and development, particularly concerning free and compulsory education and free health care. They also subsidize all the commodities and products needed by children, in addition to decisions providing subsidies for family income. This has been noted by all the relevant international organizations, including the ILO and UNICEF. This prohibition of child labour is based on the teachings of Islam and the ancient, deep-rooted values of Iraqi society, as well as the progressive ideology of the Socialist Arab Baath Party of Iraq, under the leadership of President Saddam Hussein.

The Report of the Director-General has dealt with the subject from various perspectives but has clearly overlooked the effects of aggression and blockade to which many countries are subjected, particularly such Arab countries as Palestine, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Sudan, on the spread of the phenomenon of child labour.

What the Palestinian people are subjected to, including incursions into their territory, murder of citizens, imprisonment of militants, displacement of peaceful inhabitants, destruction of the infrastructure, and of the land, in addition to desecration of all that is holy, will have considerable negative effects and will inevitably lead to the spread of many negative phenomena, including that of child labour. What Iraq is subjected to, and has been subjected to, for over 12 years of unjust blockades, continuous aggression, disruption of its capabilities, and plundering of its resources by the arrogant power which alone has the destinies of the world in its hands will ultimately lead, if the world continues to remain silent in the face of these crimes, to the opposite of what the ILO seeks to achieve.

Iraq is subjected to a misleading information and political campaign under the pretext that it is pro-

ducing weapons of mass destruction and that it threatens its neighbours. The forces of evil shamelessly declare their malicious intent to change the independent national regime in Iraq, and to this end they mobilize agents, finance terrorist activities and provide broad media coverage which runs counter not only to the United Nations Charter, international law and United Nations resolutions, but also to their false allegations of combating terrorism. Interference in the internal affairs of Iraq is a hostile terrorist activity and a desperate attempt to impose foreign tutelage on the free people of Iraq. I therefore call on the Conference, as dictated by its professional and ethical duty, to call for the lifting of the blockade of Iraq, the effects of which have touched all sections of Iraqi society.

I thank you all once again and wish you every success in your deliberations and wish this Conference good and truthful results.

Mr. MOGAMI (*Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, Botswana*) — I am deeply honoured to address this august assembly and I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the President and his Vice-Presidents upon their election to steer the deliberations of this session of the International Labour Conference.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Director-General and his competent staff for the well researched and comprehensive Report on *ILO Programme Implementation 2000-01* submitted to this session of the Conference. The Report contains a detailed account of the ILO's performance in terms of indicators and targets set for the biennium. This initiative is a clear reflection of commitment by the International Labour Office and the Governing Body to the pursuit of making the ILO efficient and effective.

The application of results-based management concepts and tools will no doubt facilitate the direction and measurement of the performance of the ILO, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of such performance. In view of the diminishing resources at the disposal of the ILO and the increasing demand for the services provided by the Organization, strategic budgeting remains a critical tool for ensuring that the needs of the constituents are prioritized and rationalized.

Botswana subscribes to the remedial action that has been identified to facilitate the ILO programme implementation. Most importantly, we welcome the decent work country programmes approach which will serve to formally and systematically involve the ILO constituents in planning and implementation. We also agree that much more needs to be done to establish a true performance culture and to better integrate contributions from different regions and further provide better data for purposes of management and governance.

As one of the participants at this session of the Conference, our presence here is a confirmation of our belief and commitment towards the principles and values of the International Labour Organization. At the core of the ILO's mandate is the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work.

In Botswana, our effort to promote the fundamental principles and rights at work culminated in the ratification of all of the core ILO Conventions, amongst others. Owing to the substantial amount of work involved in the process of creating an environment for the implementation of these Conventions, it

has, through necessity, taken us a long time to bring legislation into conformity with the ratified Conventions. However, the full implementation of these ILO instruments remains our committed goal.

In this regard, I am happy to state that the drafting of the appropriate legislation, particularly on Conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 173, is complete. Work is also in progress in relation to the remaining ratified Conventions. As for Conventions Nos. 29, 105, 138 and 182 our legislation is in full compliance with these Conventions.

We therefore note with appreciation, that strategies on the fundamental principles and rights at work will increasingly put emphasis on implementation. In our case, capacity building among the social partners has emerged as a priority for making the enjoyment of these rights a reality.

Last year, this forum identified and embraced common endeavours to translate decent work into realizable programmes and activities. Notwithstanding these efforts, decent work remains a dream to most workers, particularly in developing countries, on account of their poor economic performance. High unemployment and underemployment are the root causes of the deprivation of workers' rights and social protection. Sound economic growth, in our view, is an important prerequisite for the realization of workers' expectations.

Botswana is committed to pursuing a macroeconomic policy that promotes decent work through the acceleration of economic growth and employment, the creation of equal opportunity for all, the reduction of poverty and the enhancement of economic stability. To this end our economic policy has always been based on the four national principle objectives of rapid economic growth, economic independence, social justice and social development. The underlying assumption behind these objectives is that an improvement in the rate of economic growth would bring a rapid expansion of employment opportunities, which, in turn, would generate income for the majority of our people, resulting in poverty alleviation and an improvement in living standards, as well as changes in the lifestyles of the people.

Finally, I would like to commend the Director-General and his staff for keeping the debate on child labour alive. As is rightly pointed out in the third Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, *A future without child labour*, child labour represents a serious threat to sustainable economic and social development everywhere. The effective abolition of child labour therefore calls for the cooperation and action of all of the constituents of this Organization and all stakeholders. Botswana supports the devotion of a substantial amount of the ILO's resources to this cause. While child labour is not a problem for us, we are, nonetheless, determined to ensure that the appropriate legislation exists for its effective prevention and monitoring, even in family occupations.

Original German: Mr. MAGVAŠI (*Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Slovakia*) — The Government of Slovakia supports the strategic objectives of the International Labour Organization which, above all, are set forth in the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted by the Conference in 1988, as well as the philosophy of decent work.

Our Government, on the basis of its policy statement, has taken significant steps to reform labour and social relations last year and this year. The reform of labour law has been achieved, above all through the adoption of the new Labour Code, the Civil Service Act and the Public Service Act. The new Labour Code was based, inter alia, on the relevant Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization.

We welcome the efforts of the International Labour Organization to deal with the issue of recording and reporting occupational accidents and occupational diseases. Our Government supports the adoption of ILO documents on this subject with a view to improving the registration of occupational accidents and diseases.

The Government of Slovakia views cooperatives as a means for their members to achieve social and economic goals and as an important employer on the labour market. Cooperatives also do much to create jobs for young people, disadvantaged groups and the disabled. In Slovakia, the legal status of cooperatives is regulated in the Commercial Code and also in other provisions. The Government of Slovakia supports the adoption of new ILO standards on support for cooperatives.

Negative phenomena related to the spread of the informal economy throughout the world, have affected not only developing countries, but also industrialized countries, including our own. The informal economy has a negative impact on informal work and informal employment. In Slovakia we also have problems with illegal labour. In order to prevent such illegal labour we have, among other things, amended the Act on labour inspection with the aim of curbing such negative occurrences and have raised the upper limits of penalties.

The Government of Slovakia is devoting maximum attention to social dialogue at the national level as well as at the industry and company levels. One of the most essential reforms in Slovakia is that of social insurance. The Bill on social insurance has been adopted in Parliament and, at this point, we would like to extend our thanks for the assistance and technical cooperation of the multidisciplinary team of the ILO in Budapest, which enabled us to prepare material related to the reform of social insurance.

Slovakia, as a member of the Governing Body of the ILO, between 1999 and 2002, always championed the needs and interests of member States from Central and Eastern Europe at the sessions of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and we are convinced that the new members elected to represent the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for the next three years will continue this trend.

Mr. AL-NAMLAH (*Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Saudi Arabia*) — In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! It is a pleasure for me to congratulate the President of the Conference and the Vice-Presidents, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, as one of the delegation of Saudi Arabia, upon their election to preside over this session of the Conference. I should also like to convey to all the delegations and participants the greetings of His Majesty King Fahd Bin Abdel Aziz, Guardian of the Holy Places, and those of other members of the royal family.

Mr. President, may I congratulate you first of all and tell you that I am not going to follow the speech

which I had submitted to the Conference, because I have limited time. In fact, I would like to speak from the heart.

“If you seek peace, sow justice.” This is a slogan full of wisdom, a slogan which has been behind the foundation of the Organization in which we are working. It is a slogan which has been followed and picked up by those who laid the foundations of the ILO.

Their main goal was to promote social justice and that is why today it is appropriate for us to look at situations where there is conflict and war and keep this slogan in mind, a noble idea, one which has run through the International Labour Organization from its inception. We need to ask ourselves if we have applied this slogan and if the efforts which we are making and the programmes which we are implementing with the aim of promoting social justice are proceeding in the right direction.

We have been following a great tragedy these days, the tragedy of the Palestinian people as a result of the Israeli aggression. The report of the Director-General on the situation of the Arab workers in Palestine and in the occupied territories, has shed light on this tragedy which has affected women, the elderly and children in sight of the United Nations and other international organizations. This aggression is affecting 450,000 Palestinian workers who have lost their jobs and their rights; they have 65 per cent unemployment in their country. I should like to reaffirm the importance of the publication of the Director-General's Report in good time before this session, which has allowed us to discuss it in a timely manner.

According to the Constitution of the International Labour Organization, our Conference has a duty to promote social justice and peace throughout the world, using all of the means to achieve humanitarian objectives. The ILO must provide direct support to the Palestinian people and help their economy, to help them to face the economic effects of the Israeli aggression. The international community must also intervene in an effective manner to bring an end to this aggression, and we are prepared to help the Organization in its efforts.

I should like to thank the Director-General and all those who worked with him on drafting this commendable Report, which reviewed the implementation of the programmes and activities of the ILO for the years 2000-01 and which stressed the four strategic objectives adopted and goals of the worst forms of child labour. The report also noted that the promotion of basic rights has been reinforced, particularly in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. We should like to commend the transparency and clarity of the Report where it stated that technical assistance within this Organization is insufficient. I also call on the Director-General to reinforce the technical cooperation programmes and activities in all fields.

I should also like to emphasize that it is important to be able to implement activities and projects which have been designed, especially with regard to child labour, and we affirm here that Saudi Arabia prohibits the employment of children, but you know that many countries of our region suffer from strife and war and this has perhaps led to lapses in this area.

Saudi Arabia attaches a great deal of importance to this issue, and I should like to reaffirm to everyone here that Saudi Arabia supports the efforts of the International Labour Organization in its strategic ob-

jectives in trying to implement all the noble objectives of the Organization under the shadow of social justice.

Before I conclude, I should like to address Mr. Juan Somavia, the Director-General of the Organization. I should like to extend our thanks to him for the documents we have here at the Conference and should like to thank the staff and personnel of the ILO for their untiring efforts and to thank the interpreters who have been working so hard in helping us to communicate with one another, although we do sometimes speak very quickly.

Mr. WICKS (*Parliamentary Under Secretary for Work, United Kingdom*) — May I start by saying that the issues that we are discussing in this session of the Conference about work and employment obviously need to be discussed in terms of the uniqueness of our different nation states, our different countries, and different issues across the world in our continents. But my firm belief, and the belief of our Government, is that providing work for people, providing jobs, is central to what all of us are about in terms of reducing poverty, bringing about greater opportunities for men and women in our nations, and also, of course, for conflict prevention and conflict resolution, either within our own communities or indeed conflicts that may arise across nations.

In terms of the experience of the United Kingdom, I want to spend the few minutes that we have talking about three strong themes that govern our labour market policies in Great Britain.

The first and the most important is making work possible. We have a duty as a government to ensure that people of working age, men and women regardless of their social and economic origins, have the opportunity for work. We are committed as a government to moving back towards full employment. We have had some success. At the present time, 75 per cent, three-quarters of people of working age, are in jobs, and we therefore have a firm foundation on which to build. We recognize the central importance of economic policy, a strong economy, in providing jobs for British people, so macroeconomic policies are crucial. But within that there is a strong role that micro-labour market and social policies can play. In Britain we have had some success with the development of what we call our New Deal programmes for unemployed youth and for longer term unemployed people.

We are now engaged in Great Britain in a major reorganization of our benefit service and our employment service so that we now will be amalgamating, and we have started on this task in the local benefits offices and the local job centres. So when people of working age apply for social security benefits they are engaged straightaway in a discussion about job prospects. This is a major reorganization of our welfare state in Great Britain.

A second strong theme is making work pay. We recognize that in countries like Britain, there are some people who feel that they are better off financially on benefits rather than being in a job. Sometimes their assumption is based on some ignorance about the reality. But we have now put in place policies to ensure that when people move from benefit dependency into the labour market, into that job, financially they are better off. We have done that in Britain by introducing a minimum wage and also through a new sys-

tem of tax credits so that people, particularly those with children on low incomes, have a tax credit added to their wage to ensure that work pays for them.

A third strong theme is to make work skilled. We recognize that our schools need to become more aware of jobs, the needs of businesses. Our children, even at a young age, need to understand the importance of work, and we also need to develop the notion of lifelong learning. Education is no longer just for children and young people. Education and learning and retraining is something for all of us. There are fewer and fewer jobs for life; more people in their 30s, 40s and 50s need to retrain, re-educate, re-equip. We are therefore engaged in a major reorganization of our further education system so that our colleges of further education are more aware of the needs and demands of employers, local businesses and public services.

We are trying to put meaning into the decent rhetoric of lifelong learning.

And so, there are many themes and issues we need to discuss as nations, but in Britain we feel that the three I have outlined — making work possible, making work pay and making work skilled — are the foundations on which we will build active labour market policies, active social policies and a welfare state fit for purpose in these early decades of the twenty-first century.

Original Arabic: Ms. AL-JABI (*Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, Syrian Arab Republic*) — Firstly, I would like to congratulate the President and the Vice-Presidents on their election.

The work of the International Labour Organization is based on the conviction that social justice is essential to promote a propitious climate for lasting world peace. This is why it is necessary for the same criteria to be applied to basic human rights, in accordance with international instruments and particularly those that seek to promote respect for national independence. The situation in Palestine, the Golan and southern Lebanon is unacceptable. In these regions, human rights violations are continually being perpetrated by the Israeli forces, who destroy factories and deprive citizens of their rights and their lives, if they dare to defend themselves.

Despite the difficult situation caused by the Israeli occupation, the Syrian Arab Republic has continued to improve work and working conditions in the light of the directives of President Bashar al-Assad, who seeks to improve the situation and to promote dialogue between the social partners in view of the efforts contributed by the General Federation of Workers' Trade Unions.

The period between the 89th and the 90th Sessions of the International Labour Conference has led to a series of important acts being introduced. The law on social security has been changed so that benefits are extended to employees in the public, private and joint sectors and to provide for equality between women and men. A national plan to fight unemployment has been established in 2001, aiming to create 440,000 jobs over the next five years.

We have improved the standard of compulsory education to fight child labour and, in 2002, we merged the primary and complementary levels of education in order to establish a nine-year period of compulsory free education, which will help us to check child labour activities. Two new laws have been

promulgated with a view to categorically prohibiting labour for children under the age of 15, particularly in the agricultural sector.

The Syrian Arab Republic supports the proposed recommendation on the promotion of cooperatives and the proposed recommendation on the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases.

National laws seeking to promote dialogue between the social partners have been amended, in accordance with international standards and the efforts of the Organization.

We share the views of the Director-General of the ILO, who stresses the importance of the social aspects of globalization, particularly in the developing countries, and the harmful impact that it could have on the labour world and the need to ratify the core Conventions. In this respect, the Syrian Arab Republic, in 2001, ratified the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and we are currently taking measures to ratify the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

We have read with great interest the report of the Director-General on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, in Palestine, in the Syrian Golan and in southern Lebanon due to the unacceptable practices of the occupying Israeli forces.

We note that in the Appendix to the report of the Director-General, on page 19 of the English version, the heading "The Arab population of the Golan" should rather be "Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan" and that the information provided is vague and additional detail is necessary to provide a clearer picture of the reality of the practices of the Israeli authorities.

In addition, footnote No. 2, which expresses Israel's position, is unacceptable, because it runs counter to the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and of the Security Council, and in particular to resolution 497 of 1981 which provides that the decision of Israel, which refuses international law, is null and void and without international legal effect.

The situation in this region is deteriorating constantly. It is therefore necessary to face up to this situation, which is unprecedented in the history of mankind.

With reference to paragraph 14 of the Appendix to the report of the Director-General, while I do not have time to quote it, I would invite you to read it.

The occupied Arab territories, southern Lebanon and the Golan are the target of unacceptable practices by the occupying Israeli forces. As President Bashar-al-Assad has said, despite the situation, which is dramatic, the Arabs reaffirm their commitment to peace, a just and global peace, and the need for a total withdrawal of Israeli forces up to the "line of 1967". We are committed to these principles and to international legitimacy. We continue to call for peace.

I wish you every success in the work of this session of the International Labour Conference.

Ms. CHAO (*Secretary of Labor, United States*) — I am very pleased to be here representing the United States at the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference. Let me also add my congratulations to the Ambassador of Switzerland for his election as President of this Conference.

This meeting gives me an opportunity to talk about an important element of a broader agenda to create a

competitive twenty-first century workplace and workforce. Through the US Department of Labor we are implementing a powerful new strategy to make enforcement of our labour laws more effective. This strategy is called "compliance assistance".

The goal of compliance assistance is to provide America's employers, workers, jobseekers, youth and retirees with clear, easy-to-access information about how to comply with federal employment laws. It recognizes that even with all the resources at our disposal, there simply are not enough government inspectors to visit every workplace under our jurisdiction. Moreover, like the technical assistance, follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, our initiative is promotional. It is aimed at making the best possible use of scarce resources to achieve an objective.

The initiative is also tripartite. Employers and workers helped the Government to design and implement the programme. It places equal emphasis on educating workers and employers. It utilizes additional information tools as well as interactive web-based technologies. We believe that compliance assistance is a powerful enforcement strategy that should be part of ILO-promoted best practices.

Take for example the cooperative programmes developed by our Occupational Safety and Health Administration. These programmes recognize that enforcement alone cannot prevent all workplace injuries and illnesses or ensure that employers maintain high standards in safety and health. Our Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) at the state and federal level recognize and promote effective health and safety management as a cooperative effort. We involve workers, employers and Government across a broad array of businesses of all sizes and the results have been striking. On average, lost workdays for VPP sites are 52 per cent below the industry average. We anticipate a 12 per cent growth in VPP sites in the coming year.

Our most recent example of compliance assistance is the *Youth Rules!* web site and campaign, a major new initiative launched several weeks ago. It is an aggressive outreach to employers, youth and their parents to educate them about the hours and types of work teenagers may engage in legally. We believe that it can also serve as a model for others who wish to promote both understanding and implementation of their labour laws.

Tomorrow this body will focus on the ILO's first Global Report *A Future Without Child Labour* issued the follow-up to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. This report makes it clear that much remains to be done to eliminate the worst forms of child labour throughout the world. The instances of children forced into combat and children forced into slavery are particularly poignant and require intervention. We must all recommit ourselves to the fight against exploitative child labour. At the same time we must seek to ensure that all children, particularly young girls, are given equal access to education and training. In too many regions of the world, as our First Lady Laura Bush has so eloquently stated, girls are still deprived of education and other opportunities that would allow them to become productive, successful members of the workforce.

Another important issue I would like to touch upon today is the work of the ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. The United

States considers the Commission's work both important and timely. We seek to come to grips with the paradox of the global economy. On the one hand, many benefit from its enormous opportunities, on the other hand, these are those who fail to gain access to the full benefits of expanded trade because fundamental freedoms and individual human rights have not been fully implemented.

Finally I would like to address an urgent matter on the minds of many here today. I want to thank the Director-General and his staff for their Report on the extremely difficult situation faced by workers and employers in the West Bank and Gaza. My Government supports the Director-General's proposal for enhanced technical cooperation in that region. We welcome his offer to report to the Governing Body in November on actions the ILO has taken on this issue. We believe that some of the surplus remaining for the last biennium would be well spent on this critical need. The ILO has a valuable role to play in responding to what the Director-General so eloquently described as the aspiration of all families in the region: "parents at work, children at school, security in the streets and peace in the community."

So in closing, let me urge all of us to renew our efforts to improve the lives of the world's workers and future workers. That is both our goal and our challenge. With determination and good will, I am confident that we can continue to extend the boundaries of opportunity and freedom worldwide.

Mr. NGUTU (*Minister for Labour, Kenya*) — Please allow me on behalf of the Kenyan tripartite delegation to congratulate the President and the other Officers on their well-deserved election to guide the deliberations of this Conference.

We note that the main theme for our discussions during this year's session of the Conference is on *ILO Programme Implementation 2000-01*. This is the first biennial report on programme implementation using strategic and results-based budgeting and accountability concepts.

We are pleased to note that the programme implementation during the biennium had been satisfactory for all four strategic objectives, with 70 per cent of the targets being achieved. These objectives are: the promotion of rights at work; the creation of greater opportunity for employment; enhancement of social protection for all; and strengthening tripartism and social dialogue.

We therefore commend the ILO for making every effort in achieving its primary goals of securing decent work for people everywhere through the systematic implementation of these objectives. It is in this spirit that we call upon the ILO to continue supporting member States through technical cooperation, capacity building and financial support.

In the area of technical cooperation, the programme implementation report clearly acknowledges that the delivery rate during 2000-01 biennium was insufficient. This is unfortunate, given that technical cooperation is the primary means of action for the attainment of ILO objectives. In this respect, my delegation is of the view that future ILO technical cooperation strategies will need to reflect not only regional concerns, but will also have to be carried out in accordance with the development needs and priorities of developing countries and the objectives of the ILO.

As far as the African continent is concerned we note with satisfaction that during the biennium 2000-01, the ILO became a major partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, as well as in the campaign to eradicate poverty and unemployment through the Jobs for Africa Programme.

We would like to encourage the ILO to continue playing a leading role in the implementation of the New African Initiative on the Development of Africa, whose focus is on the urgent need to eradicate poverty in our continent.

Let me now make some brief remarks regarding the various agenda items scheduled for discussion during this year's session of the Conference.

On promotion of cooperatives, we note that this subject is scheduled for a second and final discussion with a view to adopting a Recommendation. Even though cooperatives are perceived as a means for their members to achieve economic and social goals in all countries, the ILO does not have any comprehensive international labour standards in this area.

In Kenya today there are 10,000 registered cooperatives with 4.9 million members and an output of US\$750 million. They thus contribute 45 per cent of the national gross domestic product. It is therefore desirable that a favourable environment should be created in our respective countries for our cooperatives to grow.

Kenya also welcomes the opportunity to hold a single discussion on the agenda item on the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, since the adoption of that instrument would provide for the harmonized collection of consistent and comparable data.

On the general discussion concerning decent work and the informal sector, we note that this sector is a major source of employment for many would-be jobseekers. However, most of the jobs created in this sector seriously lack the qualities of decent work. Kenya attaches great importance to the development of the informal sector because of the ability of that sector to absorb a large number of our people who are unemployed. Currently the sector employs about 4.2 million people, thereby contributing approximately 70 per cent of total employment opportunities.

I would like to stress the Kenyan Government's appreciation to the ILO for the technical assistance granted in the ongoing review of our labour laws, with the aim of ensuring harmony between our domestic legislation and the various international labour Conventions which we have ratified.

Allow me also to mention that the Kenyan Government is committed to the provision of decent work for all workers in Kenya through the promotion of the ILO's labour standards. To date, Kenya has ratified and continues to implement 49 ILO Conventions, which include seven out of the eight core labour standards. In terms of practical implementation and application of the fundamental principles and rights at work, I am pleased to mention that the Kenyan Government has allowed the establishment of a union for civil servants, which was registered in December. This is a clear demonstration of the Government's declared policy of encouraging the formation of strong, independent, and financially viable employers' and workers' organizations.

Finally, Kenya welcomes without reservations the recent establishment of a World Commission on the

Social Dimension of Globalization, led by President Halonen of Finland and President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania. We note with appreciation that the ultimate goal here is to use this process of globalization as a resource to reduce poverty and unemployment, to foster growth and sustainable development for the benefit of all.

Mr. VIDOVIC (*Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Croatia*) — This year's discussion of the Director-General's Report follows from last year's general discussion of the decent work policies. This time the focus is on concrete results from the implementation of those policies, using strategic budgeting and on the basis of the adjustments made by ILO, within the context of the four strategic policy objectives.

The Report shows that since the four objectives are interrelated, the Organization's implementing programmes and activities under those objectives are interconnected too.

In undertaking these activities the ILO invests substantially in cooperating with other international organizations and institutions working in the same field. Such cooperation is, in our opinion, of great importance, especially when the international financial institutions are involved. With such an approach, the ILO incorporates the Organization's fundamental values into the implementation of other organizations' programmes and projects. This also prevents any duplication of activities geared towards achieving the same targets at the level of the whole international community, and makes for a diversity of approach in solving joint problems. It also allows the Office to mobilize its experts in the development of projects that are covered by the International Labour Organization's specific mandate.

The Republic of Croatia, as a member of the Governing Body, has endorsed the Director-General's new concept, comprising the framework concept contained in the Organization's decent work policy and the implementation of that policy through the strategic objectives. Consequently, Croatia has supported the adjustment of the budget to the set targets.

The Report we are discussing is the first to cover programme implementation using the strategic budgeting concept. As the Director-General has emphasized, full implementation and results may neither be expected nor achieved in a two-year period. However, this Report must be conducive to further development of the concept and to the definition of new activities.

Therefore, we must elaborate both qualitative and quantitative indicators in order to measure the success of activities already undertaken within each of the strategic objectives. Only by measuring the outcomes may we determine which activities should be reinforced and in what manner.

In that context, I must reiterate the Republic of Croatia's standpoint, expressed at the March session of the Governing Body, that the Report would be much more useful if it concentrated on the sections on strategies, results and lessons learned. In particular, more information should be made available on the gaps in numbers between targets and outcomes, especially when outcomes fell short of targets.

Furthermore, according to the data given in the Report, the programmes in particular areas — especially major ones such as social security — have so far been implemented only in a small number of member

States. When defining the direction of future policy, it should be taken into account that the results of such programmes should not only be of benefit to these States, within their national frameworks, but should also be applicable to other states in similar circumstances and having similar needs.

However, when speaking about the Organization's fundamental task, the promotion of international standards, it can be seen that the implementation of the programmes geared to achieving this were highly successful. Considering that the promotion of standards is crucial for the implementation of all other projects defined under the strategic objectives, this is the most positive development of all. It is necessary to encourage the proper application of these standards in order to accomplish the objectives of global decent work policies.

I believe that most of these thoughts were expressed in the discussions at the Governing Body's session in March. I hope that discussions at this session of the Conference will further help the Office to overcome the initial difficulties and develop a comprehensive approach to the implementation of global policy through strategic budgeting. This task must be accomplished if the Office is to respond both to the requirements of globalization and the particular circumstances of its constituents.

Original French: Mr. BILTGEN (Minister of Labour and Employment, Secretary for Communications, Minister of Churches, Minister for Relations with the National Parliament, Luxembourg) — May I start by offering my congratulations, and those of my Government, to Mr. Elmiger upon his election as President of this session of the International Labour Conference. This session is taking place at a time when economic euphoria has given place to deep scepticism. As anyone could have predicted, the speculative stock market bubble has finally burst. The illusion that globalization, combined with deregulation and privatization, would automatically and definitively lead to uninterrupted growth and a steady increase in jobs has come to an end.

Simplistic solutions, like the idea that deregulation alone brings prosperity and that prosperity needs deregulation as its only precondition, have never been the right ones.

The world economy will continue to be drawn towards globalization. It is only natural that such globalization may bring opportunities for everyone, but only if economic globalization goes hand in hand with social globalization. Moreover, the Luxembourg Government believes that globalization must strengthen the resolve of rich States to share.

At present, Luxembourg gives 0.7 per cent of its GDP to promote development, and is pursuing its objective of 1 per cent of GDP. We need the ILO now more than ever, and we need to be aware that throwing everything into the economy is not the right answer, and the tyranny of forcing everything into an economic mould is not right either.

Let us recall the main principles which have guided our Organization since it was founded in 1919, and since the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944:

First, the defence of human rights. Even before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the Declaration of Philadelphia said that "all human beings ... have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in condi-

tions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity".

Second, the search for world peace. The first sentence of the preamble to the ILO Constitution says "Whereas universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice". Today, which is still marked by the events of 11 September and the necessary fight against terrorism, this conviction is still a current issue. Social injustice may not be the root of terrorism, but it helps terrorism to grow and enables it to ripen its poisoned fruits.

This leads us to the third of our main principles, being that of promoting peace through social justice. Social justice is an evolutionary value, which should manifest itself in different ways in the different countries of the world. However, in all parts of the world it is based on the single political conviction which is also established in the Declaration of Philadelphia, which stated that "labour is not a commodity". The fourth fundamental principle of our action affirms that the human being is more important than the economy. We must not forget that when we use terms such as "human resources", "head hunting" or "brain drain", we must understand the true meaning of these words. These terms are the complete opposite of the paradigm "labour is not a commodity". People are not a resource just like any other; they are at the centre of the economic system. People created the economy and it is towards them that the economy must reach out.

Globalization at the end of the twentieth century has added to the competition between companies that existed before. We now have competition between countries and the competition of extreme deregulation. Although deregulation is economically necessary, we must make sure that it does not become an end in itself. We need economic structural reform. Although the right to work should not be written in stone, it should exist, and exist everywhere. Deregulation should not tend towards zero, it must find its limits and its lower limit must be human dignity.

The ILO became the seed of such a minimum basic element when on 18 June 1998 it adopted its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. I would like to consider two of these rights.

First, the abolition of child labour which was the subject of a remarkable third Global Report "*A future without child labour*". The ILO enjoyed a certain success with the unanimous adoption of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which 115 States including mine, have since ratified. We have reason to be hopeful about the future.

May I now say a few words about freedom of association and the effective recognition of collective bargaining. We can only implement legislation on this subject if workers come together in trade union organizations, which are both independent and strong. This can only be implemented if enterprises also form representative organizations which offer social partners that are recognized by the trade unions and the State. Social partnerships never exist merely on paper and have to actually exist.

It is true that the ILO has the role of being the "social conscience of humanity". Nonetheless, I would like to take this opportunity to give a new warning. In spite of all the efforts which Mr. Somavia, our Director-General, has made, in spite of initiating an assessment procedure, the ILO still lacks the actual means for implementing standards, especially the fundamen-

tal ones. An open coordinated method, provided with a certain restricting capacity, following the example of recent developments within the European Union, and, on another level, at the OECD, would certainly provide invaluable assistance. All of the international organizations must apply themselves in order to implement the famous virtuous triangle, namely structural economic reform and development, decent work and social cohesion. This is what the European Union is now.

WTO and the OECD, which, for example, has a committee on employment and social affairs policies, cannot deny the social aspect of their work. Leaving everything for the ILO to do is an easy and wrong solution. If we do not assume responsibility collectively, then an international regulatory organization must be established under the ILO's leadership.

No one wants to impose a single model, be it an economic or social one. Protectionism disguised as social conviction is sometimes established by certain people. But if we are convinced that the work of individuals is a fundamental value and something that must give people human dignity and the means to build their lives and those of their families, we must work towards the universal recognition and existence of minimum social rights — and I would like to stress “minimum” or should I say “decent”. Nothing more, nothing less.

Original Spanish: Ms. RIAL (Government delegate, Argentina) — I would first like to congratulate the President upon his election to preside over this 90th Session of the International Labour Conference and wish him every success in his task.

I would also like to congratulate the Director-General for the Report that he submitted to the Conference, where he endorses the objectives of the Organization, especially the elimination of child labour and the continued efforts to facilitate the creation of decent jobs. May I also extend congratulations to the Chairperson of the Governing Body for his important contributions.

In taking the floor before this august assembly, I would like to express Argentina's sincere thanks to all those who have expressed solidarity and compassion with us in the face of the difficult economic situation in the country. Argentina is going through one of the most acute crises in its history, which can be seen in an increase in social instability, high rates of unemployment that have risen above double-digit figures, a growth in informal employment which goes beyond 40 per cent of the working population, leaving these workers without protection, and leading to conflictual situations.

This situation has been a direct consequence of the implementation of economic programmes dictated by international financial institutions, which have focused on deregulation of markets, privatization, indiscriminate economic opening-up and so-called monetary stability. All these measures have provoked a deep economic depression, rendering it impossible for us to meet the commitments of foreign debt that we have undertaken and fraying our social fabric.

The indiscriminate opening-up of our economy has led to a substantial reduction in employment and production in many industries, while our traditional exports have to compete with customs duties that prevent their import to industrialized countries.

We would like to stress, therefore, that it is essential for the international community gathered here to facilitate access of agricultural products of developing countries, thus re-establishing a fairer market for agricultural trade. These measures will contribute directly to the recovery of the economies of our countries.

In these conditions, we would do well to remember, as indicated by our Director-General that we must adopt policies for expansion that give priority to protection and job creation. Up until now, policies have focused on monetary issues, taking our countries to the limits of social adjustments.

It is unacceptable to demand the type of repressive adjustments such as those that our people are undergoing while, faced with the same panorama, developed countries are carrying out expansionist policies.

In this context, and assuming our responsibility in these events, we are making great efforts to resolve the crisis.

First, we have committed to an economically sustainable programme which can resolve positively the dual considerations of our own national and strategic interests and our participation in the global economy. Nothing is more important for us than that it be understood in this forum that combining both questions is not a simple task and that this requires time and cultural and political change. That is how the Argentinian Government has understood it and it is addressing these questions by concentrating its efforts in giving an immediate response to this social problem that is affecting us and that is having a deep impact on society.

It is a challenge to ratify our commitment made at the ILO to preserve social rights. We have privileged social dialogue through the Commission on Social Dialogue in Argentina. We have looked for implementation of sectoral agreements in order to give new thrust to occupational programmes. We have granted special tariffs to small and medium-sized enterprises to facilitate their access to international markets.

In the field of employment, we have mechanisms to contain unemployment and to find, through agreements between employers and trade unions, valid alternatives to save jobs.

Along these same lines, our programme for heads of households provides a universal subsidy for those who do not have a fixed income and implements the incorporation of these beneficiaries into businesses, giving productive work through agreements made between the national Government and employers.

In social security, we are implementing policies to strengthen this system and to allow groups excluded from social protection to have access to subsidies.

In this context, we recognize the extremely important contribution made by the ILO through its technical cooperation programmes to alleviate the social repercussions of crisis and emergency situations.

Today, we can tell you that Argentina has embarked on a new path in order to overcome the serious social and economic situation affecting us. We are convinced that it is the right path and that it will provide guarantees for deepening democracy and restoring social justice in Argentina.

Original Portuguese: Mr. SEVENE (Minister of Labour, Mozambique) — On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique, my delegation

and on my own behalf, I am pleased to convey to the President my sincere congratulations on his election to lead the work of this important session.

The Director-General's Report to the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference clearly underlines the challenges many countries are facing in promoting employment, eradicating poverty and fighting HIV/AIDS.

On the agenda of this Conference we have the promotion of cooperatives, the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases, as well as the promotion of the informal sector of the economy, issues which are of paramount importance, mainly for developing countries. Therefore, we thank the ILO for including these items on the agenda.

Mozambique is grappling with a high unemployment rate, which is over 50 per cent of the working population. Considering that there are more than 250,000 first-time jobseekers each year, coupled with a formal sector that does not have the capacity to absorb such high numbers of people, we find ourselves dealing with a scenario which is worsening the poverty level of the population.

With a view to reducing the unemployment rate, the Government of Mozambique determined as a priority the promotion of national and foreign investment in all spheres of the economy, vocational training and providing assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal economy.

On the need to create more jobs and the employability of our nationals, we have completed the drafting of the employment and training strategy for the next four years. This strategy addresses in a holistic manner the employment and training components with a view to meeting developmental needs in the labour market. Furthermore, this strategy gives priority to the training of young people, the long-term unemployed, women, the disabled, and pays special attention to rural areas.

The informal economy plays a vital role in the labour market of Mozambique, and it is an alternative means of subsistence for many families. Thousands of people, particularly in the cities and towns, survive by being engaged in small-scale activities, especially in trade, to provide food and education for their children, and also housing.

In the recent railway accident that occurred between Maputo and South Africa, in which more than 200 people lost their lives and another 150 were seriously injured, about 80 per cent of them were small traders carrying out their activities in the informal economy who were returning from South Africa. The inclusion of the informal economy on the agenda of this 90th Session is an opportunity to exchange views and experiences on this issue.

In my country, a sizeable percentage of the working population, children and young people, approximately 12 per cent, live with HIV/AIDS. A range of actions has been undertaken to fight this disease and it is important to refer specifically to the setting up of the National Council to Combat HIV/AIDS, a coordinating body for measures to prevent and fight HIV/AIDS in the country, as well as to the enacting of the Law to protect workers living with HIV/AIDS. This is an important instrument for the defence of the rights of affected workers and their families.

The creation of a tripartite commission, which includes employers and workers, as well as the Government, is also clear evidence of the efforts being car-

ried out by the social partners to prevent and fight this universal evil.

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a high illiteracy rate, low exploitation of natural resources and weak economic and social infrastructures. The Government has been developing efforts towards changing this situation and for that it has approved PARPA (Action Plan for Absolute Poverty Reduction), which gives priority to the education, health and infrastructure sectors.

Despite the floods that hit the country in 2000-01, we managed a record GDP growth of 13.9 per cent in 2001. In addition to our internal efforts, Mozambique is involved in efforts being made in the region, in the framework of the SADC and on the continent through the OAU and NEPAD.

In my country, an assessment of child labour has been carried out in eight of the 11 provinces. As a result of this work a strategy has been defined to fight the worst forms of child labour, as well as a plan of action, with a view to educating the population about the need to fight against child labour, particularly in its worst forms.

In conclusion, once more I would like to express my appreciation for the role of the ILO in promoting decent work and in supporting the developing countries throughout the world, particularly Africa and especially my country. We acknowledge the efforts of the ILO and its commitment to the world of work, and we acknowledge the introduction of the "Jobs for Africa" programme, programmes and projects on HIV/AIDS in the workplace, the campaign to eradicate the worst forms of child labour and also the prompt support given in response to natural disasters and other crises which cause sudden and deep economic decline in our countries.

Mozambique continues to count on ILO support in its programmes for employment promotion, poverty alleviation, and in particular vocational training and preventing and combating HIV/AIDS.

Mr. CHETWIN (*Government delegate, New Zealand*) — I bring greetings from the New Zealand Minister of Labour, the Honourable Margaret Wilson, to the President and to yourself and to this Conference. The Minister very much regrets that she was not able to be here this year in person.

My delegation congratulates the Director-General on the progress made by the International Labour Organization in the last two years in the development and implementation of the Decent Work Agenda with its focus on the four strategic objectives, the application of strategic budgeting and an integrated approach to standard setting.

As a deputy member of the Governing Body since the Director-General's appointment, the New Zealand Government has been committed to providing support and guidance to him in his efforts to reform and revitalize the ILO. We are delighted to be able to continue this support, having been re-elected as a deputy member of the Governing Body for the next three years.

The Report we are here to discuss, *ILO Programme Implementation 2000-01*, provides a comprehensive and, I believe, honest picture of the progress that has been made. This progress has been charted against the ILO's four strategic objectives and the targets set under each of them. The report is refreshingly frank about the conservatism of some of

these targets. The indicators presented, if interpreted simplistically, appear to show a pass rate of 77 per cent — in terms of a school report, perhaps a B+ — and this brings me to my first point: that the very existence of this report is itself an achievement of some magnitude, unimaginable three years ago. The Director-General and his staff are to be congratulated.

Success, however, should not breed complacency. Now is the time for the ILO to be planning how to maintain both the momentum of its own reform and the focus of the Decent Work Agenda. I shall look briefly at three aspects which my Government sees as crucial to maintaining this momentum.

First, an integrated approach to standard setting. With rapid technology change and increased international competition for skilled labour, the world of work is becoming more diverse and fluid. In this environment, a prescriptive approach to standard setting cannot offer protections for workers that are adequate or will last in rapidly changing and diverse global and national labour markets.

The New Zealand Government strongly supports the development of an integrated approach to ILO standard setting. However, we believe that a clear process for review needs to be put in place: in other words, that there is a common understanding of and agreement on what an integrated approach means, and therefore on the objectives of the review.

We have some experience of integrated approaches to standard setting in New Zealand. This was the approach taken in the integration of New Zealand's health and safety legislation, from numerous detailed pieces of legislation into a single Act which focuses on the outcome sought — safe workplaces — and it does this through systematic activity rather than the detail of how it is to be achieved.

With ten years of experience behind us in the use of an integrated health and safety standards model, we have learned some lessons that we believe will be very relevant to the ILO as it works on the development of an integrated approach to international health and safety standards.

The first of these lessons is that the desired outcomes need to be clearly stated. The second is that the roles and responsibilities of the tripartite partners should be clearly identified. In particular, workers have much constructive input to offer from their practical perspective and knowledge. As a result, the New Zealand Government is currently promoting an amendment to the legislation to require employee involvement in health and safety issues.

Another lesson from those ten years, but not only in the health and safety area, has been that governments cannot afford to stand back and let the labour market develop in its own way. A leadership role is required to ensure that the intent of legislation is realized in practice.

The second area is strategic budgeting. The New Zealand Government commends the Director-General and the Office for the progress they have made in establishing strategic budgeting. We fully support the work under way to deepen the application of strategic budgeting in practice at unit level. We have found the representation of this information in the Report of the Director-General to be clear and precise.

The Director-General and the Office are also to be congratulated for their conservative budgeting over the past two years. The ongoing issue of the management of surpluses resulting from arrears payments is,

however, of deep concern to my Government. We would strongly urge the Director-General and the Office to provide member States with certainty on the process for dealing with the issue of surpluses arising from arrears. Ad hoc adjustments to the budget threaten the integrity of the strategic disciplined approach that has been put in place.

The third area, very briefly, is headquarters and regions. It has been very positive for us to see how the ILO and Asia-Pacific Members have responded to the call by delegates at the Thirteenth ILO Asian Regional Meeting for national plans of action to be developed by Asia-Pacific Members. My Government, in consultation with its tripartite partners, intends to work on a national plan of action for New Zealand in the second half of this year.

In conclusion, the New Zealand Government supports the Director-General in his efforts to reform and revitalize the ILO. This Organization will only reach its potential through continuing determination to maintain the pace and focus of reform. Change is never completed: It is a way of life.

Mr. SAKTOR (*Workers' delegate, Slovakia*) — I am deeply honoured to speak before you at the International Labour Conference on behalf of the Slovak trade union members. First of all, I wish to congratulate the President on his election to chair this prominent forum.

The implementation of the ILO programme is providing concrete results within the programme budget for 2000-01. As an ILO Member, not only has Slovakia adopted the fundamental ILO Conventions, but is also one of the member States which has ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). Similarly, we have ratified the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184). As ILO constituents, we have benefited from extensive ILO technical assistance, both when amending legislation on collective bargaining and during discussions concerning the new Labour Code.

From a trade union point of view, employment of men and women in Slovakia is one of the most sensitive and underdeveloped issues. To develop this area generally and particularly with regard to equal opportunity issues requires a more dynamic economic environment and a comprehensive government employment policy. We need and welcome any ILO platforms to challenge this issue both regionally and nationally.

I much appreciate our fruitful cooperation with the ILO team in Budapest, enabling us to focus on priority issues and organize seminars on themes such as pension reforms and collective bargaining in the public sector.

This year, trade unions are focusing on the Conference's informal economy agenda. Even without the criminal aspects of informal economic activity, informal employment is widespread in Slovakia, especially in the construction, textile and service sectors. If the goal of the ILO is to achieve decent work in every part of the world, then the technical assistance given to our country and our unions by its team in Budapest, is a strong indicator of ILO efforts which I would like to officially acknowledge here.

Original French: Mr. FILLON (Minister of Social Affairs, Labour and Solidarity, France) — I would

like, on behalf of the French Government, to thank the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, for the quality of the work done by the ILO to promote decent work, as illustrated in the Report submitted to the Conference. This work is more necessary than ever.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, we must give a new meaning to the human condition. It must not solely be shaped by economic forces, but rather by the occupational and social factors required for the full-fledged development of the individual. More than ever, we have the duty to pave the way for a form of progress which is better shared and better regulated. The political challenge is immense. All the more so because in the wake of the tragic attacks of 11 September we must overcome doubts about our ability to make use of our differences to enrich them and about the ability of our States to progress along the path of international regulation.

Forms of employment and working conditions that ensure genuine social integration are part of the quest for a more harmonious and sustainable form of development. France therefore welcomes the smooth implementation of the 2000-01 biennial programme.

I am delighted to see in this Report a greater commitment to the fundamental principles and rights at work. In particular, this is reflected in the ratification by more countries of the Conventions on the worst forms of child labour and on involvement of the social partners. However, we still have a long way to go.

For France, the Declaration which was adopted in 1998 is an important pillar of the ILO's activities. It is essential that its promotion and follow-up should be very closely linked with all the standard-setting and technical cooperation activities of the ILO aimed at achieving decent work.

Apart from the core Conventions, I would also like to stress the importance of all the technical standards drawn up by the Organization, and to remind you of the support lent by my country in continuing the work of the Working Party on Policy regarding the Revision of Standards.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Organization needs resources. In addition to its mandatory contribution, France is doing its share by doubling its voluntary contribution as of 2002. In particular, we intend to support the new integrated approach in order to arrive as quickly as possible at modernized instruments which can be ratified by the largest possible number of member States.

The right to work is nothing without employment. The Global Agenda for Employment proposed by the Office has provided a number of key elements on which each country will be able to rely in order to develop its employment opportunities.

Nevertheless, the toughest part of the job remains to be done. We must prevail upon the international institutions concerned to progress towards better governance in favour of employment. France will do its utmost to ensure that this Global Agenda for Employment serves as a reference document for the international community.

At the 2001 Conference we spelled out our priorities in the field of social security. My country participated actively in the debate and financed several studies in Central and Eastern Europe in order to ensure that transition and membership in the European Union are not synonymous with social exclusion and regression in those countries.

There is a broad tripartite consensus on our work. I hope that we will be able to use it as a springboard towards a more consistent, more relevant and more universal approach.

Europe is a political project. This project cannot be reduced simply to the single currency. Our ambition is a broader one. One day it will inspire, at least we hope it will, the course of a globalization which today is not sufficiently balanced and structured. Seen from this perspective of a realistic approach to the world of today, the role of citizens is crucial. The task of the social partners is of capital importance. The more globalization of issues and challenges progresses, the more participation of the workers and their representatives will be crucial, for economic forces cannot be based on social fragmentation. Prosperity forms a whole.

On this problem, we need the tripartite guidance of the ILO and the spirit of reform which has always imbued it in order to promote social dialogue as an essential instrument of democracy and shared progress.

We are only at the beginning of our reflection on the social consequences of globalization. The work embarked upon between France and the Office in the context of the Annecy and Lyon discussions is contributing to some aspects of this process. In this area, I commend the initiative of Mr. Somavia to put into place the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization.

I am also pleased to see that the ILO is addressing the new social problems affecting our countries, in particular sustainable development and the social responsibility of companies. All these forms of work form part of the new progress that should leave its imprint on the course of human endeavour.

Mr. POTTER (*Employers' delegate, United States*) — Three years ago the Director-General presented to the Conference his decent work vision. Since then the Decent Work Agenda has been integrated into the work of the Office, including reorganization of its internal structure and adoption of strategic budgeting based on measurable performance objectives. With this new vision and organization, the International Labour Organization has pursued several ambitious new initiatives that are outlined in this year's Report of the Director-General. Progress has been made but there is much work to be done.

In the past two years covered by the Report, the Office has launched the follow-up to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The US business community believes that comprehensive and effective implementation of the Declaration is critical to the ILO preserving its role as the lead multilateral institution in promoting respect and observance of fundamental workers' rights in the global economy. We think that the performance targets under the Declaration need to be raised to include goals and strategies beyond ratification numbers and studies that encourage ILO Members to take advantage of the ILO's promotional follow-up to assist them in realizing the principles and rights under the Declaration. Improvement of workers' rights and working conditions around the world depends on it.

In this connection, we believe the ILO must continue to be committed to reforming standard setting in a meaningful way to ensure that the International Labour Conference adopts high-impact standards on which there is a broad consensus for ratification. This will provide greater assurance that international

labour standards will be ratified, implemented and effective, thereby benefiting the greatest number of workers. At the same time, the ILO should ensure that its supervisory mechanisms are seen to be and are, in fact, effective. The ILO's relevance in the global economy depends on it.

The process is under way, but it requires a serious commitment of all tripartite constituents to make it a reality. The startling contrast between the number of ratifications of [Convention No. 182](#), on the one hand, and [Conventions Nos. 183](#) and [184](#) on the other, graphically illustrates this issue.

We are heartened to see the continued strong financial support for initiatives to create greater opportunities for women and men to secure employment and income. As the Report states, there are 160 million unemployed people and 530 million working poor. Without jobs there cannot be economic development and a rising standard of living. Unemployment is a significant problem that limits both social and economic development. The ILO, and specifically the Global Employment Agenda, can be important parts of the solution. The Global Employment Agenda seeks to provide guidance to member States for the creation of employment to help lift out of poverty the 1.2 billion people who live on less than one dollar a day.

Yet, to be effective, the Global Employment Agenda should be seen as a practical guide directed at member States on the policies and programmes necessary for the creation and promotion of employment opportunities, rather than a political statement on the state of employment in a globalizing world. Promotion of micro-enterprise, microfinance, the "Jobs for Africa" Programme and the Programme for "More and Better Jobs for Women" are important ILO initiatives to complement the Agenda's message.

Lastly, the US business community welcomes the establishment of the ILO World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and looks forward to its conclusions on how the process of globalization can reduce poverty and unemployment by fostering growth and sustainable development. It is important for the image and reputation of the ILO that the World Commission can produce a balanced, credible report that seriously contributes to the debates and initiatives around how to increase and distribute the benefits of globalization.

We encourage the World Commission to reach out to both large and small employers around the world to

hear their views and experience. Although the establishment of the World Commission reinforces the view that the ILO is the appropriate institution to address workers' rights in the global economy, it should be remembered that it is a time-limited initiative to support the work of the Governing Body and should not eclipse the Governing Body or exceed its mandate.

As I said at the outset, progress has been made, but it is only a start and there is much work to be done. It is disappointing that only in a few places in the Report of the Director-General does it acknowledge that there is still work to be done. The Report states that in most cases, the Office has exceeded its targets and met all the operational objectives. The Report would lead one to believe that the ILO for the most part has achieved its mission and should close up shop.

The reality is that unemployment is still a very serious, indeed, growing problem. Workers' rights are not being universally respected. Most workers do not enjoy the benefits of social security and social dialogue is underutilized. One of the advantages of strategic budgeting should be to create the opportunity to assess strengths and shortcomings and set ambitious goals.

We call on the Office to take advantage of this opportunity to use strategic budgeting for meaningful self-evaluation, not self-promotion. The ILO should set aggressive goals and work towards a world where vital strategic objectives are truly achieved.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

Original French: The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE — The State of Kiribati has confirmed that it continues to be bound by the obligations of the following Conventions: Forced Labour Convention, 1930 ([No. 29](#)); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 ([No. 105](#)); 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](#)), which were declared to be applicable to the territory of that member State before it gained independence. This confirmation will be registered as of February 2000 — the date when Kiribati became a Member of the Organization.

(The Conference adjourned at 12.50 p.m.)

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|------|
| <i>Fifth sitting:</i> | |
| First report of the Credentials Committee: Submission and noting..... | 1 |
| Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General: Discus- sion (<i>cont.</i>) | 1 |
| <i>Speakers:</i> Mr. Bang, Mr. Abbas, Mr. Mogami, Mr. Magvaši, Mr. Al-Namlah, Mr. Wicks, Mrs. Al- Jabi, Ms. Chao, Mr. Ngutu, Mr. Vidovic, Mr. Biltgen, Mrs. Rial, Mr. Sevene, Mr. Chetwin, Mr. Saktor, Mr. Fillon, Mr. Potter | |
| Communication from the Clerk of the Con- ference | 13 |
| <i>Sixth sitting:</i> | |
| Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General: Discus- sion (<i>cont.</i>) | 14 |
| <i>Speakers:</i> Mr. Vaknin, Mr. Riester, Mr. Dimovski, Mr. Okuyan, Mr. Al Sho'ala, Ms. Filatov, Ms. Wik- lund, Mr. Nordmann, Mr. Alonso Tellechea, Ms. Kanou, Mr. Hjort Frederiksen, Mr. Trogrlic, Mr. Lublin, Mr. Hosseini, Mr. Solari Saavedra, Mr. Jestin, Mr. Kansa, Mr. Sadeq, Mr. Ylieff, Mr. Okuda, Mr. Cortebeek, Mr. Tziolas, Ms. Blinkeviciute, Mr. De La Haye, Mrs. Sasso Maz- zufferi, Mr. Alzawam, Mr. Kapuya, Mr. Al-Thani, Mr. Cirica, Mr. Dahlan, Mr. Martinez Molina, Mr. Abdul-Ghafour, Mr. Cho, Mr. Pirlar, Mr. Bis- nauth, Mr. Kamara, Mr. Ngon-Baba, Mr. Jung, Mr. Kearney, Mr. Al-Jabouri, Ms. Musaeva, Mr. Doz, Mr. Lima Godoy, Mr. Prieto, Mr. Ghosn, Mr. Sen | |