

Workers call on the ILO to provide urgent rehabilitation support to Iraq

Geneva, June 9 2003 (ACTRAV Info): Workers' delegates attending this year's International Labour Conference in Geneva have called on the UN's International Labour Organization (ILO) urgently to send a needs assessment mission to Iraq to determine what forms of technical support and assistance the ILO can properly provide in the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme. The call was adopted today (June 9) in a meeting of workers' delegates to the tripartite (Governments, employers and trade union representatives) annual assembly of the ILO. In their statement the more than 500 workers' delegates from all five continents say they believe that in the rehabilitation exercise support must be provided for all the people of Iraq, especially the poor, disabled and to vulnerable groups. "Oil and other resources of Iraq" must be used "solely by the people of Iraq and exclusively for their benefit", they say. The group calls for "the immediate resumption of work for all Iraqi workers, with due protection for their wages". It also insists that Iraq workers should enjoy full freedom of association guaranteeing their right to organise and bargain collectively. The statement further calls for a speedy end to the occupation of Iraq, "true democracy", "full civil liberties" and "the right to full self determination" for and by the Iraqi people.

The statement will be transmitted to the ILO Director General Juan Somavia and to the President of the current session of the Conference, Michael Christopher Wamalwa, Vice-President and Labour Minister of Kenya for the attention of the Conference.

The International Labour Conference is the annual assembly and main decision-making body of the UN's International Labour Organisation (ILO). It is attended by some 3.000 delegates and advisers representing governments, employers' organisations and trade unions from 176 countries.

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