



Follow-up activities by the Office under the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Freedom of association and collective bargaining; forced or compulsory labour; discrimination

1. This note has the purpose of informing delegates at the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference (Geneva, May/June 2008) of the activities carried out in pursuit of the action plans approved by the Governing Body on freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, on forced or compulsory labour, and on discrimination. The action plan approved by the Governing Body on the abolition of child labour in November 2006 provides a framework for the activities of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.
2. This note updates *Provisional Record* No. 7 of last year's session of the Conference. It does not cover the many activities, such as meetings, the preparation of publications, advisory services and projects handled by the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and other units at headquarters or in the field, which relate to freedom of association and collective bargaining, forced or compulsory labour, or discrimination, and complement the action plans. These activities are reflected in the Office's programme implementation reports which are regularly submitted to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee of the Governing Body.

A. Freedom of association and collective bargaining

3. The Global Report, *Freedom of association in practice: Lessons learned*, to be discussed at this year's session of the International Labour Conference, gives a full picture of the activities implemented since the adoption of the action plan on this topic at the March 2005 session of the Governing Body, and thus updates the information provided at last year's session of the Conference. Chapter V and Appendix VII of the Report contain information on technical cooperation projects, including examples of their impact.

B. Forced or compulsory labour

4. Regarding the abolition of forced labour, the ILO's efforts were led by the Infocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration (DECLARATION) Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL), in close collaboration with other units at headquarters and with field offices. Its work continued to be guided by the action plan

adopted by the Governing Body in November 2005, with progress registered in all areas identified in the action plan. The SAP–FL continued to be funded by extra-budgetary support from a number of key donors, for both its core programme activities and for field-based projects.

5. During the period under review, in the context of operationalizing a global alliance against forced labour, particular emphasis was placed on strengthening the active engagement of employers' and workers' organizations in the fight against forced labour and trafficking. A strategy for employers' organizations was completed and its implementation begun, in close collaboration with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). In China, as an example of the activities carried out at the country level, training seminars were held in Beijing and Zhejiang, in close cooperation with the China Enterprise Confederation, for senior managers from both public and private enterprises and recruitment agencies in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, textiles and transport. An employers' handbook on combating forced labour at the workplace has been prepared. Furthermore, in Mongolia, research was undertaken on the mining sector and on informal artisanal mining, while in Viet Nam tools and awareness-raising materials were developed for employers in cooperation with the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
6. A round table on "Engaging business: Addressing forced labour" was held in Atlanta, Georgia, in February 2008. The event was sponsored by the US Council for International Business, the US Chamber of Commerce and the IOE, together with the ILO, and aimed to raise the awareness of employers in the United States. It brought together leading representatives of US enterprises and business leaders to explore the problem of forced labour and the role of employers in addressing the issue, including the specific experiences of enterprises.
7. In the Russian Federation, in collaboration with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the ILO has worked with employers in the construction sector to raise awareness of the risks associated with the exploitation of migrant workers and to improve recruitment practices. In Jordan, training sessions with the senior managers of garment exporters served to address issues related to reports alleging forced labour practices in that sector. In Brazil, outreach activities with private enterprises included the provision of jobs in steel companies for released forced labourers, the implementation of a literacy programme in vulnerable recruiting areas, and more generally efforts to involve the private sector in the activities of a national pact against forced labour.
8. The ILO is developing guidance and training tools and awareness-raising materials for businesses and employers' organizations to help identify and prevent forced labour and trafficking in supply chains, and to take remedial action where necessary. These materials will provide practical advice to private sector actors, tailored to the needs of specific sectors, including those of construction, transport, global food chains, garments and textiles, and hospitality. A set of principles for business leaders in action against forced labour was introduced by the ILO and reproduced in the *UN Global Compact Annual Review* released at the Global Compact's 2007 Leaders Summit (Geneva, July 2007).
9. Regarding workers, the ILO has formed a partnership with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to support its efforts to build a global trade union alliance against forced labour and trafficking. To seek trade unionist input into the development of the strategy, an interregional conference was held in Malaysia in September 2007, sponsored by the ITUC together with the ILO and the Malaysian Trade Union Congress. A number of priority areas were selected, including bonded labour in South Asia and Latin America, the exploitation of domestic workers, trafficking in Europe and Asia, and the particular case of Myanmar. A strategy and action plan for a trade union alliance against forced labour and trafficking was adopted by the ITUC General Council held in Washington in December 2007, and its implementation began in 2008 with continued ILO support. Several activities

for trade unions were supported at the national level, including, for example, a seminar for the All China Federation of Trade Unions in Kunming, China (July 2007), and two workshops on forced labour for trade unionists in Viet Nam (November 2007). In Kazakhstan, an initial seminar was held in August 2007 to assess trade union capacity and the need for further training, in order to assist migrant workers exposed to the risks of forced labour exploitation. With ILO support, trade unions in the Republic of Moldova have drafted an action plan to manage labour migration and prevent trafficking and irregular migration, based on the Republic of Moldova's National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (2008–09).

10. Over the past year, the work of the SAP–FL has focused on recruitment mechanisms and the role, regulation and monitoring of private employment agencies (PEAs), as these are critical issues in the prevention of trafficking for forced labour. Research was commissioned, for example, on the recruitment of migrant workers from Bangladesh and Pakistan for work in the Gulf countries, as a basis for policy dialogue between origin and destination countries. In Zambia, the ILO reviewed the practices of PEAs, as an input into the drafting of new national regulations on the topic. Similarly, studies in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have analysed the functioning and problems of the recruitment industry, identifying gaps in legislation, monitoring and enforcement. In the Republic of Moldova, PEAs have been helped to set up a business association and are currently developing a manual of standards for capacity building among members.
11. In South Asia, work continues against bonded labour in Pakistan, and a new initiative is being developed in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. A newly launched joint ILO–UNDP project in Tajikistan is targeting human trafficking at its roots, in poor rural areas where the project aims both to empower male migrant workers before they leave and to support the women who are left behind. In Latin America, important developments included the adoption and implementation of a national plan of action in Peru, and the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to eliminate forced labour in the Chaco region of Bolivia. Both countries have placed the elimination of forced labour high on their lists of development priorities. In Brazil, some states started to take action against forced labour to complement federal activities, including the State of Para.
12. Communication remained a priority during the period. Considerable investment was made in upgrading the forced labour section of the DECLARATION web site, which has seen a parallel increase in visits. Similar improvements are now being made to the rest of the web site. The ILO was represented at a wide range of regional and international awareness-raising and advocacy events on forced labour and trafficking. A prominent example was the Vienna Forum of the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, held in February 2008. The sessions sponsored by the ILO discussed forced labour as an issue of supply-chain management, the demand for forced labour, and the role of employers' and workers' organizations in combating this problem. Each session engaged representatives of employers, workers, governments and enterprises.
13. A further area of work has been the development of methods for data gathering and surveys on trafficking and forced labour. The SAP–FL has provided technical support to a number of countries (including Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Niger, Paraguay, Zambia) for the design, implementation and analysis of surveys by national statistical offices.

C. Discrimination

14. Following discussion by the International Labour Conference in June 2007 of the Global Report, *Equality at work: Tackling the challenges*, the Governing Body adopted an action plan in November 2007. This built upon the first action plan concerning discrimination

adopted in November 2003. Operations under this principle and right are carried out in close consultation with ACTRAV, ACT/EMP and those field offices which have identified this principle as a priority for their respective country or region. There is close coordination with the headquarters units responsible for issues such as gender equality and international migration, among others.

- 15.** In accordance with the action plan and within the framework of a project funded by Norway aimed at combating inequalities and discrimination in the world of work, the programme has devoted much effort to two main priority areas: combating racial discrimination and reducing the gender pay gap. Global tools and training have been provided, coupled with technical advisory services, diagnostic studies, and training at regional and national levels.
- 16.** Within the framework of a project funded by the US Department of Labor/Middle East Partnership Initiative, the issue of promoting equality at the workplace in Morocco is being addressed, and includes technical assistance to medium-sized enterprises, for the implementation of action plans to address this issue. A good practices guide in French and Arabic to promote equality at the workplace has also been developed and was launched in Morocco in March 2008.
- 17.** Two major tools that have been the subject of pilot activities will be finalized by the end of 2008, namely, a tool kit to fight racial discrimination at the workplace and a guide on the application of job evaluation methods that are free from gender bias. These products will be made available initially in the Office's three working languages.
- 18.** All products will serve as primary resource materials for the training activities to be implemented during the course of the current biennium and beyond. Following field tests with constituents, the contents have been revised in the light of feedback. Additional training activities will be implemented in collaboration with the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin with the aim of integrating these themes in regular training programmes. A training workshop on racial discrimination was undertaken with the Centre in April 2008, and the Centre's international labour standards training programme is now considering the regular inclusion of racial discrimination in its courses. To ensure the sustainability of training activities, the development of a "trainer-of-trainers" network for these specific areas is also under consideration.
- 19.** Following a pilot workshop on racial discrimination organized in collaboration with the ITUC in December 2007, work is being initiated with four national trade unions in each of the regions (Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America) to combat racial discrimination at the workplace. The employer representatives participating in the Turin workshop held in April 2008, mentioned in paragraph 18 above, were particularly active and forthcoming with ideas on how to address discrimination at the workplace; this augurs well for future activities with employers and their organizations.
- 20.** In the area of pay equity, a comprehensive programme is under way in Chile, within the context of significant national priorities. It seeks to contribute to the reduction in the pay gap between the sexes, thereby promoting gender equality and reducing social inequalities and poverty in Chile. The programme consists of several phases, including studies, awareness raising and comparison with neighbouring countries. It will culminate with a meeting in November 2008 with tripartite equality commissions in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay, with the aim of introducing job evaluation methods that are free from gender bias.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Follow-up activities by the Office under the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Freedom of association and collective bargaining; forced or compulsory labour; discrimination</i>	
A. Freedom of association and collective bargaining	1
B. Forced or compulsory labour	1
C. Discrimination	3