



## FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Report of the Committee on  
Technical Cooperation**

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 16 March 2010 and was chaired by Ms B. Naliaka Kutuyi (Government, Kenya). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr L. Traore and Mr J. Gómez Esguerra, respectively.
2. The Committee began the discussion on the agenda items after a video presentation on “Training and learning with the ILO’s Turin Centre”.

**I. The role of Decent Work Country  
Programmes in the enhanced  
Technical Cooperation Strategy**

3. Before turning to the paper on this item, the Committee welcomed a panel of three United Nations Resident Coordinators, who addressed the issue of working with the ILO at the country level within the United Nations system.
4. The Resident Coordinator in Albania, Ms Türköz-Cosslett, explained that the development of the One UN programme 2007–10 in Albania coincided with the development of its Decent Work Country Programme, which helped facilitate consultative processes with workers’ and employers’ organizations and ensured that their inputs fed into the One UN programme. Decent Work Country Programme priority areas were well aligned with national priorities, and the programming cycle of the Decent Work Country Programme had recently been harmonized with that of the One UN programme. The ILO was the leader for the joint programme on youth employment. The One UN framework worked best when agencies had clear mandates and areas of technical expertise. The ILO had seen its volume of work and funding increase through the One UN pilot programme. For the future, the Government of Albania had called on the United Nations and the ILO to focus on women’s economic empowerment, labour standards, promotion of social dialogue and the informal economy.
5. The Resident Coordinator in Uruguay, Ms Susan McDade, noted that the ILO participated in four joint programmes and led the joint programme for strengthening of public institutions that work in the area of social protection. Uruguay was currently entering its second United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the fact that the ILO had a competent national officer in Uruguay to support its contribution to the One UN programme was highly appreciated. Having a presence in a country was crucial for non-resident agencies. In that respect, training Resident Coordinators on the ILO’s

mandate was a strategic investment. Enhanced coordination with the Resident Coordinator gave the ILO better access to the Ministry of Planning and Budget, and operating within the One UN framework had also resulted in additional funding for the ILO. A mid-term evaluation of the One UN pilot in Uruguay had found that almost three-quarters of UNDAF results and resources could be linked to issues in the Decent Work Agenda. While recognizing the ILO's tripartite nature, she called for the ILO to reiterate more frequently that it was part of the UN family. She added that employers' organizations already participated in the UN's consultative processes, but noted that there had been difficulties in fully engaging with trade unions, as they were fragmented in the country.

6. The Resident Coordinator in Lesotho, Ms Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie, explained that the country had a small UN presence and the Delivering as One concept was therefore essential. Because the ILO was a non-resident agency and had no National Officer in Lesotho, it could not benefit from intensive on-the-ground planning. The ILO had worked in collaboration with the United Nations Country Team to put in place a youth employment promotion programme, but there were still large areas where the ILO was not present. She and other members of the Country Team were not adequately informed about decent work, tripartism and social partners, and more training and information were needed. Lesotho desperately needed ILO knowledge and expertise, especially in the area of employment.
7. The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed his concern over what he had heard in the three presentations by the Resident Coordinators. He noted that tripartism continued to play a weak role in UNDAFs. He also noted that the presence of the ILO in the consultation mechanism was not an end in itself and that the Office should endeavour to enhance the involvement of the social partners by strengthening their capacity to participate in the establishment of strategic partnerships at the national level and under the One UN programme. He also emphasized the influential role of the ILO over the other UN agencies with regard to the better integration of the tripartite constituents. On the issue of ILO representation, even though there was not an office in every country, he recommended the appointment of at least one national coordinator. By way of example, he said that in his country, Mali, the presence of such a coordinator had facilitated input by employers to the different bodies of the UN system.
8. The Worker Vice-Chairperson called for the strengthening in practice of the Delivering as One principles and for enhanced synergies between the United Nations and the ILO, which was the only tripartite UN agency. He said that the key to preventing the dilution of efforts was the role played by workers' and employers' organizations in development policies. He added that, in the case of Uruguay, the conditions were in place for greater worker participation, taking into account the tradition and the spirit of unity of its organizations and that, if that had not happened, it was because of a failure on the part of the UN agencies. He said that there was a shortage of policies on the issue of the participation of the social partners. He concluded by expressing support for the Delivering as One initiative and noted that the real challenge lay in building a world that was different from that of today, which was characterized by social inequality, unemployment, gender inequality and social injustice.
9. Other Worker members noted that while there was ILO involvement in Albania and Uruguay, there had been no distinctive tripartite partner participation in those countries. It was felt that there should be more tripartite involvement, not just more capacity building.
10. Several Government representatives expressed their appreciation for the presentation, and noted that more needed to be done not only to raise awareness of the Decent Work Agenda in the UN system, but also to develop the capacity of the social partners at country level. A number of questions were raised concerning coordination and consultation mechanisms at

the country level, especially with non-resident agencies, and the use of project managers as ILO representatives in countries where there was no ILO office. A suggestion was made that the ILO sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations to ensure the participation of the relevant line ministries and stakeholders with a view to joint collaboration for decent work.

- 11.** Responding to questions from the floor, the Resident Coordinators emphasized the importance of finding creative solutions to the issue of agency presence. In Albania, different agencies had developed different mechanisms to create a presence, such as regular videoconferences to form a “virtual team”. Agency representatives did not have to be international or senior personnel; rather, the important determining factor was the quality and breadth of technical expertise. Agency representatives were expected to contribute strategic inputs to the work of the Country Team, and an officer with expertise in only one specific area would therefore not be able to fulfil this task adequately.
- 12.** The speakers urged agencies to keep Resident Coordinators updated with regard to country-level initiatives so that they could better act as advocates on their behalf. The greatest challenge was often coordination between agencies, rather than between an agency and the Resident Coordinator. They further stressed that additional capacity building and information sharing were needed in order to ensure adequate understanding of tripartism and social dialogue within the UN system.
- 13.** A representative of the Director-General, Ms van Leur (Director of the Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department), introduced the Office paper<sup>1</sup> on the agenda item. She recalled that the ILO had recently embarked on a vigorous evaluation programme that would help identify lessons learned and the scope for improving the programmes. She also underscored the importance of mainstreaming the Decent Work Agenda in the UNDAFs and other development frameworks. In that regard, the participation of ILO constituents in the design and implementation of such programmes was of the utmost importance. Finally, she drew the Committee’s attention to the decision of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Executive Board in January 2010 calling for the integration of the Global Jobs Pact into UNDP strategies and programmes. The issuing of a joint ILO–UNDP statement on this subject would be discussed with the UNDP administrator.
- 14.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson recalled the concerns that had been expressed at previous sessions of the Committee with regard to Decent Work Country Programmes and noted with satisfaction that they had been taken into account in the document that had been submitted for decision. However, he stressed the need for consistency in the evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes. He hoped that lessons had been learned from the implementation of the first generation of programmes, particularly with regard to their ownership, and regretted the inadequate participation by social partners, which had been due to the lack of consultations and resources.
- 15.** He supported the efforts made to improve the evaluability of Decent Work Country Programmes and encouraged the Office to continue on that path despite the fact that it was difficult to analyse their impact. He recalled his group’s commitment to improving the integration of the programmes – which should be favoured over a costly project-based approach – and to harmonizing resources. He emphasized the added value of the Turin Centre in capacity building for constituents, and called for the better integration of its activities into the ILO’s Technical Cooperation Strategy. He welcomed the increased flexibility of programmes, citing the example of countries that had taken into account the shifts in priorities that had occurred during the period of implementation. He recalled the

<sup>1</sup> GB.307/TC/1.

key influence of the Decent Work Country Programmes on other development frameworks for mainstreaming employment and poverty reduction. With regard to the informal economy, he was in favour of providing access to financing and promoting entrepreneurship, and any measures which would facilitate the move from an informal economy towards a formal economy.

- 16.** In the future, the Employers' group would like emphasis to be placed on results-based planning, the integration of Decent Work Country Programmes, the widening of partnerships and of the donor base, including the establishment of public-private partnerships, the development of a more robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities.
- 17.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the points raised in the document and made particular reference to the aim of increasing the participation of the social partners in the Decent Work Country Programmes, which could be achieved through proper coordination between them and the ILO. He stressed the need for monitoring and evaluation frameworks and for donor contributions to be channelled towards the priorities set in the Decent Work Country Programmes and towards strengthening the capacities of the constituents, and was in favour of extending social dialogue, without marginalizing the workers, to other stakeholders concerned with labour issues, as well as reaching out to the informal economy. He noted that the recommendations based on the governance structure of the ILO should be automatically incorporated into the Decent Work Country Programmes and be part of development strategies, and he further noted that it was essential for the ILO to have better and more robust Decent Work Country Programmes and to play an active role in UNDAFs and in poverty reduction strategies.
- 18.** He set out three basic principles for the relationship between Decent Work Country Programmes and the Technical Cooperation Strategy: resources should be used to finance comprehensive Decent Work Country Programmes that would promote the integration of the four strategic objectives; the participation of workers was conditional on respect for freedom of association; and the technical and institutional capacity building of constituents was a means to ensure enhanced effectiveness.
- 19.** He concluded by supporting the point for decision (paragraph 29), emphasizing the importance of subparagraph (b) and the proposal that the social partners should have national focal points to coordinate their participation and contributions to the Decent Work Country Programmes. In addition, he noted that the mobilization of resources for ILO constituents continued to play a marginal role in technical cooperation. With reference to subparagraph 29(a), the results of the Decent Work Country Programme assessments carried out by the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee should also be borne in mind, as should the priorities identified by the Committee.
- 20.** The representative of the Government of Mozambique, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, highlighted the importance of increasing ownership by the beneficiary countries and of including the lessons learned from evaluations in the second generation of the Decent Work Country Programmes. Country programmes should be subject to a broad discussion not only between the ILO and the donors, but above all between the constituents and other relevant UN agencies. He explained that the unsatisfactory performance of some women empowerment projects was often due to the fact that they were developed in capital cities, far from the places where interventions actually took place. He also highlighted the importance of translating key ILO messages into local languages. That was particularly important in reaching out to rural, largely illiterate, areas. In that context the Africa group welcomed the local language requirements that had been introduced in the recruitment of ILO staff.

21. Building constituents' capacity should be a prerequisite for achieving the objectives of second generation Decent Work Country Programmes. In that light, cooperation between the Office and the International Training Centre in Turin should be reinforced. The financial problems of the Centre should be regarded as an opportunity to make it more efficient and functional for the benefit of constituents. The speaker further supported moving away from investing in unaligned technical cooperation projects. All multilateral and bilateral agreements which aimed to promote the Decent Work Agenda should be part of a global evaluation undertaken by the ILO. His group supported the point for decision, but stressed the importance of ensuring the dissemination of key messages in local languages.
22. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), said she appreciated the Office's follow-up on the earlier Governing Body discussions and acknowledged the effort to provide the conclusions on Decent Work Country Programmes and strategic priorities for the future. Drawing on the evaluation results of only six Decent Work Country Programmes offered a very limited basis for a comparative study of performance and relevance in the national context. Recognizing the relatively weak level of ownership by constituents, she supported the call for intensified capacity building to increase constituents' involvement throughout the whole lifespan of the Decent Work Country Programmes and welcomed the role of the Turin Centre in the implementation of specific outputs for capacity building of constituents.
23. She welcomed the strengthened evaluation framework for the next generation of Decent Work Country Programmes, although the type of framework against which the Decent Work Country Programmes would be assessed remained unclear. She supported the use of non-earmarked Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) funds as a flexible instrument to ensure the efficient implementation of the programme and budget and the Decent Work Country Programmes, while noting that earmarked funding outside the RBSA would remain a reality which the Office should take into account in its planning. Recognizing the 2008–09 Implementation Report as an improvement in reporting, she called for greater transparency and visibility on RBSA spending. She further requested the Office to provide information on how it was linking the Decent Work Country Programmes to UNDAFs and which measures had been put in place to attract other important actors of the donor community, in particular the World Bank, the European Union, and private sector institutions.
24. The speaker strongly encouraged closer collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinators, especially in countries where the ILO was a non-resident agency, and an increased focus on the ILO's comparative advantage of expertise and international labour standards. The evaluation results should stimulate rethinking of the Office strategy regarding future Decent Work Country Programmes, with the aim of creating clarity in the relationship between Decent Work Country Programmes and poverty reduction strategies (PRSs). The Decent Work Country Programmes should be incorporated in the PRSs and its monitoring framework, with UNDAFs being the UN's system coordinated response to the PRSs, including Decent Work Country Programmes. She urged the Office to pursue long-term impact assessment of the effectiveness of Decent Work Country Programmes.
25. Finally, she proposed the following amendment to subparagraph (d) in the point for decision, paragraph 29: "... promote the development of Decent Work Country Programmes that are reflected in poverty reduction strategies, where present, that ...".
26. The representative of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), welcomed the efforts to improve the evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes. While

recognizing that, in many cases, the results could only be appreciated in the long term, he noted the need to analyse trends and to identify clearly the areas in which progress had been made. He added that it would also be useful to identify the approaches and tools that were available to ensure that any action taken in the context of more established programmes was effective.

27. With respect to public–private partnerships to finance projects and programmes, he asked the Office to clarify how these would be carried out and to report on successful experiences in that regard. With respect to the informal economy, he said that he would like to know which instruments were available to the Office for action in that area and how they were systematically incorporated into the work of the ILO.
28. GRULAC supported the goal of channelling more funds to programmes rather than to isolated projects, but would like more information on available donors and on relations with the World Bank. On the subject of project quality, it would be useful to know what difficulties had been encountered with regard to project formulation or objectives and/or with regard to capacity building.
29. GRULAC supported the point for decision, but argued that the measures mentioned in subparagraph (a) should be consistent with what was set out in paragraphs 10 and 11, and with the issues of governance of the ILO. With regard to subparagraph (c), the speaker emphasized that international labour standards should be given priority in Decent Work Country Programmes. On subparagraph (d), he said that GRULAC would like a further discussion on the strategies concerning the sustainability of Decent Work Country Programmes funding and that the Committee’s agenda at future sessions should include ongoing follow-up of the measures taken and the progress achieved.
30. The representative of the Government of India supported the point for decision and considered that the enhanced Technical Cooperation Strategy was an important initiative. Country-level ownership could only be ensured by fully integrating technical cooperation objectives with national strategies. In the context of the recently signed Decent Work Country Programme for India, he warned against a “one-size-fits-all” model for country programmes, which needed to be responsive to local needs.
31. The representative of the Government of Kenya supported the point for decision and endorsed the statement made by the Africa group. Decent Work Country Programmes must be nationally owned and the capacity of constituents enhanced in order to achieve better outcomes. He underlined the importance of monitoring and evaluation, improved knowledge sharing at the national and international levels, resource mobilization, integrated intervention strategies, and alignment with national agendas in future Decent Work Country Programme development.
32. The representative of the Government of Brazil supported the point for decision and recalled the statement made by GRULAC. He described Brazil’s experiences in developing a fully tripartite national decent work programme, highlighting the fact that in the context of the crisis it was important to guarantee the participation of constituents in Decent Work Country Programme planning, implementation and monitoring. He urged donor governments to honour their commitment to allocating 0.7 per cent of gross national product to official development assistance.
33. The representative of the Government of Mexico supported the statement of GRULAC and added that the Decent Work Country Programmes had achieved good results. In addition, he stressed the importance of results-based management and the need to widen partnerships and encourage the frequent participation of constituents.

34. The representative of the Government of Bangladesh underscored the need for self-assessment in the ILO, and said that the evaluation exercise for the first generation of Decent Work Country Programmes was a welcome development. He underlined the link between the issue of deepening Decent Work Country Programme ownership and capacity building. Unless capacity was built and enhanced in the real sense, setting up functional and effective formal tripartite overview mechanisms would continue to be a well-intentioned effort without tangible results. Moving towards integrated country programmes might enhance synergy and more efficient deployment of resources and expertise, but an individual project approach might still be necessary to address the priorities of constituents in specific contexts at a given point in time. The need for a balanced and flexible approach in that regard was therefore underlined.
35. He further noted that many governments had to cope with deficit budgets in which key development components depended on external resource mobilization. Outreach to the private sector or public-private partnerships might address that issue only partially. Greater ownership of Decent Work Country Programmes and the Decent Work Agenda might therefore not lead to greater internal resource mobilization and aid independence for implementing Decent Work Country Programmes. Accordingly, he expressed some reservation about including “increased national ownership” in subparagraph (d) of the point for decision, and suggested replacing the words with “through integrating decent work priorities into national budgets”.
36. The representative of the Government of France endorsed the statement made by the IMEC group and supported the proposed amendments to paragraph 29. The speaker stressed the importance of strengthening the capacities of constituents, in particular those of the social partners, since they played a key role in national ownership, and the crucial need for visibility with regard to the ILO’s country-level priorities and programmes, both of which were likely to promote the incorporation of decent work in national poverty reduction strategies.
37. The representative of the Government of the United States endorsed the IMEC statement, and commended the ILO’s efforts to look for synergies across interventions, noting the support for programmes such as IPEC and Better Work. Noting that the Government of the United States recognized the real needs of the informal economy and the difficulties inherent in addressing them, she wanted to know how existing or future ILO programmes could better address those problems. She underscored the importance of subparagraph (d) in the point for decision, as it was the key to overall sustainability of Decent Work Country Programmes. It was also emphasized that the reporting requested in subparagraph (e) should be part of a broader discussion on the outcomes and impacts of Decent Work Country Programmes.
38. The representative of the Government of Egypt explained that no Decent Work Country Programme for Egypt was envisaged, even though some activities in the textile and hotel industry and the construction sector were being undertaken. Programmes on vocational training and occupational safety and health were also being implemented. She called on the ILO to define clear models for evaluation and intervention, and urged the Office to strive for quality, rather than quantity.
39. The representative of the Government of China said that under the auspices of the ILO and as a result of close collaboration between the Office and the Government of China, a tripartite Decent Work Country Programme had been prepared. As a result, retraining programmes, widespread microcredit schemes, “training of trainers” and “training for the unemployed” programmes had been introduced in China. Programmes for the unemployed to create small enterprises also deserved attention.

40. A Worker member stressed that technical cooperation should serve to promote ILO values and that its link to ILO standards should be further examined. He suggested that there should be greater recognition of the informal sector in the Decent Work Country Programmes and increased focus on capacity building for the social partners.
41. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported paragraph 29 and the amendment proposed by the IMEC group. He drew the Office's attention to subparagraph (b) to ensure that all technical cooperation programmes included a capacity-building component for the social partners, which would be implemented by the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV).
42. The Worker Vice-Chairperson supported the IMEC proposal and added that the suggestions made concerning the development of Decent Work Country Programmes could give the document added value in relation to poverty reduction strategies. He suggested that those issues should be studied in depth at the coordination meetings to be held for the November 2010 session.
43. The representative of the Director-General noted that work remained to be done on the full integration of Decent Work Country Programmes into UNDAFs and PRSs at the national level. Responding to individual questions, she recognized the impact of the crisis on donor countries, which had resulted in a decline in approvals in 2009. Highlighting the increased demand for ILO services and the relevance of the Decent Work Agenda in the context of the crisis, she expressed the hope that approvals would increase in 2010. In that respect, she outlined the Office's strategy to expand its donor base through closer links with the World Bank, increased local resource mobilization through collaboration with other UN agencies, better collaboration with the European Commission, and implementation of the public-private partnership strategy. She explained the new framework for integrated resource planning contained in the 2010-11 programme and budget, and indicated how the process of outcome-based workplans would guide resource allocation and inform resource mobilization for clearly identified resource gaps.
44. She highlighted how the Global Jobs Pact was being implemented through existing Decent Work Country Programme and resource allocation mechanisms, as a widening and deepening of ongoing activities concerning social protection and employment. She explained the appraisal mechanism that was in place to ensure the ILO's common principles of action – standards, gender mainstreaming and tripartism – were included in technical cooperation. With regard to engaging social partners in the context of UN reform, she underlined the need for institutional capacity building to enable constituents to be important and relevant development actors. Finally, she drew attention to the ways in which tripartite solidarity and the importance of social dialogue had led to the ILO having an acknowledged lead role in responding to the global financial and economic crisis.
45. The Chairperson proposed the adoption of the point for decision with the amendment submitted by the IMEC group.
46. The representative of the Government of Bangladesh reiterated his proposal for an amendment, which was not accepted by the Employers' and Workers' groups.
47. The representative of the Director-General proposed the insertion of "inter alia" before "increased national ownership" in paragraph 29(d), to reflect the concerns raised by the Government of Bangladesh. The proposal was accepted.

48. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body request the Director-General to:*

- (a) *instruct the Office to take concrete steps to ensure that the challenges and opportunities identified in the evaluations of Decent Work Country Programmes are adequately addressed in forthcoming country programmes;*
- (b) *promote the programming of specific Decent Work Country Programme outputs to ensure institutional capacity building for constituents to strengthen their participation in the Decent Work Country Programme process and in development planning as a whole and, where necessary, to strengthen the coordination of inputs of employers' and workers' organizations;*
- (c) *promote the programming of specific outputs to support country-level action on priorities emerging from the ILO's governance structures, including on international labour standards;*
- (d) *promote the development of Decent Work Country Programmes that are reflected in PRSs, where present, and that actively involve constituents, are fully results-based, and aim at sustainable resource mobilization strategies, including through donor funding and, where possible, strive for eventual aid independence through, inter alia, increased national ownership; and*
- (e) *report on action taken and results achieved on the above in future reporting on the implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes.*

## **II. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)**

49. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Tapiola (Executive Director, Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector), reported on the 19th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee held on 15 March 2010, and introduced the IPEC implementation report, *Action against child labour 2008–09: IPEC progress and future priorities*. The 2008–09 biennium had been eventful, with a global food crisis and the unprecedented worldwide economic and jobs crisis, as well as natural disasters and armed conflict. Nevertheless, child labour had remained high on the international agenda, a fact illustrated by, among other things, the 2009 report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the rights of child, which was fully dedicated to child labour, the Third World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, held in November 2008 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the adoption of new child labour statistical standards by the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

50. IPEC had increasingly aimed at mainstreaming action against child labour into national development frameworks, while direct project interventions with children remained a cornerstone of its work. Donor support remained strong but somewhat uneven: after a decline in 2007 to US\$21 million, support in 2008 again returned to a level more consistent with recent years – \$66 million – but in 2009 dropped again to \$53.7 million. Total expenditures in the biennium had reached \$107 million (\$60.8 million in 2008 and \$46.2 million in 2009). The annual delivery rate had remained stable at 68 per cent for 2008 and 67.2 per cent for 2009. Further progress had been made towards universal

ratification: Convention No. 138 reached 155 ratifications and Convention No. 182, 171 ratifications. The World Day against Child Labour in 2008 had as its theme “Education: the Right Response to Child Labour” and in 2009 focused on “Girls and Child Labour”. Activities to mark the world days had been held in more than 50 countries, involved many stakeholders and featured prominently in the media. IPEC had largely achieved its objectives under the programme and budget, but it was recognized in particular that further targeted efforts to assist African countries were needed. In the field of tripartite cooperation and social dialogue, IPEC had worked hard to enhance the quality of its cooperation with employers’ and workers’ organizations. Examples were provided in the report to illustrate the focus on capacity building and reflect the recognition of the role of employers’ and workers’ organizations in fighting child labour. It was, however, necessary to strengthen cooperation further, not least at the field level.

- 51.** Without increased commitment and accelerated action, the 2016 target of eliminating all worst forms of child labour, which was part of the Global Action Plan against Child Labour endorsed by the Governing Body in 2006, was at risk of not being met. The forthcoming Global Report on the theme of child labour would give new global estimates confirming that progress was too slow. In-depth detail had been provided to the Steering Committee on the allocations of funding to implementing agencies under IPEC projects and the type of activity in which they engaged. It was clear that IPEC had to do more to ensure that employers’ and workers’ organizations were more involved in the implementation of activities under IPEC projects, but it also had to be acknowledged that the figures did not reflect the full involvement of the social partners. The breakdown reflected the action programmes, not the participation of the social partners in other activities, such as policy-level work, advocacy, and training.
- 52.** The general discussion in the Steering Committee had been rich, with 19 speakers from both donor and beneficiary countries and the Employers’ and Workers’ groups. There was overall satisfaction with IPEC’s work and the implementation report. The Workers had stressed the need for implementation as well as ratification if the 2016 target was to be met, as well as the key role that trade unions could play. IPEC had been thanked for its work on social dialogue but more needed to be done in the field, and greater recognition was needed for the role of the social partners and of governments in providing services. Rehabilitation of child labourers would be sustainable only if it were linked to decent work for adults and social protection, and trade unions could reach children through their parents. The Workers had requested that the policy of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which linked work on law and public policy – including universal education and social protection – as well as collective bargaining and organizing, should guide IPEC’s work with trade unions. They had also drawn attention to the high level of contract insecurity within IPEC. The Employers had welcomed the informative approach taken in the implementation report, and in particular the attention paid to education, which required an integrated approach. It was necessary to examine the reasons for the different rates of ratification of Conventions Nos 182 and 138 and to support member States in overcoming obstacles to ratification. The Employers had highlighted the importance of the Guides for employers on eliminating child labour developed by the International Organisation of Employers and ACT/EMP. They also believed that they received a level of funds from IPEC budgets that was not commensurate with their comparative advantage and that projects should be developed to reflect the needs of employers as well. Within IPEC there should be increased recruitment of officials with real experience of business and employers’ organizations. They also wanted greater consultation on the growing collaboration of IPEC and large enterprises. Both the Workers and Employers thanked the Governments of Norway and Ireland for their support for social dialogue projects with ACTRAV, ACT/EMP and IPEC.

- 53.** Many Government members had provided details on the problems of child labour and on ongoing programmes, and some had requested additional technical cooperation in that area. There was broad endorsement of IPEC's support to South–South cooperation and of the increased attention to integrating child labour into national development frameworks. The importance of IPEC monitoring and evaluations was also highlighted. The Steering Committee had welcomed the initiative of the Government of the Netherlands to host an international conference on child labour on 10–11 May 2010. IPEC had also made it clear that: (a) it continued to give input to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Summit taking place later in the year to ensure that child labour concerns were adequately reflected; (b) it was preparing to provide support in the reconstruction effort in Haiti; (c) the relationship between child labour and international migration was a priority topic for further study; and (d) the continued mainstreaming of gender was essential in programming and delivery of IPEC activities and in policy-level work.
- 54.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the report and reaffirmed the remarks made by the Employers during the Steering Committee discussions. He suggested that the current arrangement for reporting by IPEC to the Governing Body might be reconsidered. He also encouraged greater involvement of employers' organizations in IPEC's activities. As the Employers had indicated in 2009, they were disappointed about the level of funding allocated to them under IPEC's field activities. Employers needed increased financial support from IPEC to enable them to contribute effectively to the fight against child labour. He again expressed the Employers' appreciation for the Norwegian and Irish Governments' support in funding initiatives against child labour through social dialogue. That was illustrated by activities conducted by employers in partnership with ACT/EMP and the IOE.
- 55.** A Worker member, speaking on behalf of the Worker Vice-Chairperson, welcomed the useful discussion in the Steering Committee and supported the statement made there by the Workers' group. He reiterated the main conclusions. There was a continued need for further data and information from IPEC on the implications of the global economic and jobs crisis on child labour. Noting the lower levels of support for activities with employers' and workers' organizations, more needed to be done to make social partnership a true axis of IPEC's work, and the Workers, together with the Employers, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP were ready to sit down with IPEC's management to enhance social dialogue within its activities. Donors had a key role to play in enabling IPEC to move towards more policy-based work, based on tripartism and social dialogue. The elimination of child labour required the application of laws, good government and public policy, including education, strong trade union organization at the workplace level, and employers meeting their responsibilities. There were many examples of good business practice, but child labour was still used in both the formal and the informal economies. He welcomed the support given by Norway and Ireland for social dialogue projects, and Brazil's support for South–South cooperation. As regards the balance of funding, it was also required to support activities at the grass-roots level. He called on IPEC and its partners to continue the thrust towards ratification of the child labour Conventions and their meaningful implementation, including through the realization of free, compulsory and universal education of high quality.
- 56.** The representative of the Government of Brazil thanked IPEC for the implementation report and for its efforts in the elimination of child labour worldwide. Brazil included the elimination of child labour as a priority in the National Decent Work Agenda launched in 2006, as well as in the Decent Work Country Programme to be launched during 2010. She mentioned that among the programmes implemented in the area, it was important to note the Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour of the Ministry of Social Development, which provided social and financial support to families as a way to avoid child labour and offered a variety of social services to children who had been withdrawn from child labour.

The results of those efforts were manifest. Since 1992 child labour had been reduced by approximately one third in the 5–14 age group, and by one quarter among children aged 5–9 years. With the speed of reduction achieved in the last decade and a half, the country would reduce child labour to less than one fifth of its current prevalence within 25 years. Progress was not only due to programmes such as the Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour, but also to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of families and to the significant results achieved in poverty reduction. Through the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2007, and the 2009 Cooperation Agreement within the framework of the Decent Work Agenda for the hemisphere, Brazil maintained its partnership with the ILO for the implementation of technical cooperation projects in third-party countries. Through that partnership, a number of projects had been implemented in different countries in Latin America, Portuguese-speaking Africa, as well as in Haiti and Timor-Leste. The Brazilian Government encouraged the expansion of South–South cooperation, including donations from developed countries to trilateral cooperation projects. The objective of eliminating all worst forms of child labour by 2016 needed to be pursued by IPEC and member States, as did the eradication of all forms of child labour. She called for results-based projects adapted to local contexts and national objectives, and concluded by reaffirming the political will of her Government to act as a donor for countries with limited fiscal space.

- 57.** The representative of the Government of India said that child labour remained a challenge in his country. Child labour had to be tackled in a sequential manner, through social engineering combined with economic growth, with an emphasis on poverty reduction and education. The elimination of child labour was a national obligation, anchored in the Constitution, legislation and political commitment. A number of child labour projects were ongoing, covering some 250 districts, aiming at rehabilitation and the provision of education. The list of hazardous activities forbidden to children was gradually being expanded. India pursued an inclusive planning process, based on, among other things, the rural employment guarantee scheme, guaranteed provision of education for all, and the newly adopted guarantee scheme of food security for all. The IPEC convergence project, supported by the United States Department of Labor, aimed to focus the various poverty reduction schemes on families with children who were child labourers. The National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights was a truly activist body, with strong participation by civic society and dedicated budget allocations. As to ratification, it was necessary to be prudent and let the social engineering process run its course first.
- 58.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson emphasized that the child labour problem went far beyond mere statements and declarations, and that the fundamental and most effective policy for the eradication of child labour had to be one that focused on the generation of decent employment for adults. He recognized that, while there had been significant achievements in the fight against child labour in recent years, only the generation of decent employment for adults would guarantee that the root causes of child labour were addressed in a sustainable way.
- 59.** In reply to the questions raised during the discussion, Mr Tapiola noted that the statements made by the representatives of the Governments of Brazil and India had shown that there was much experience to share. He acknowledged that the current format for reporting to the Governing Body was not ideal. It had grown over time, and the most appropriate arrangement was still under discussion. Recognizing the relatively low number of activities with employers and workers, he stressed the need to think further about the kind of projects that would maximize benefit from the comparative advantages of the social partners. In particular, he mentioned the importance of partnerships against child labour in the mining, agriculture and garment sectors, which demonstrated that well-organized employers could use their influence in a common endeavour to eliminate child labour. More could be learned from those models. It would also be necessary to analyse the

priorities set by donors and the needs of constituents in order to identify possible ways of developing and replicating such activities. It was necessary to analyse the reasons for whatever shortcomings there were and discuss together what should be done. The engagement of all constituents and adequate funding were necessary for the pursuit of fundamental principles and rights at work, including in the informal economy.

60. The Committee took note of the information provided in the IPEC implementation report and on the meeting of the Steering Committee.

### **III. Implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia**

61. The Committee had before it a paper.<sup>2</sup>
62. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the efforts made to implement the Tripartite Agreement, in particular those made by the Colombian Government, which had granted the necessary funds for the projects designed to promote the fundamental standards, social dialogue, labour inspection, employment of young people and women, and the development of local economies. He noted with interest the renewed support for initiatives which had proved successful. He thanked the United States and Canadian donors and noted that the Colombian Government had undertaken to protect all people including trade unionists.
63. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the presentation of the activities carried out under the Tripartite Agreement and thanked the ILO for the support it had given the Colombian Government and the social partners. He acknowledged the efforts made by the Attorney-General's Office but pointed out that the situation was still serious in terms of impunity and violence against the trade union movement.
64. He added that the debate should not focus exclusively on respect for the human rights of trade unionists and that the serious issue of the disappearance of trade unionists in recent years should also be examined.
65. He acknowledged the progress made in implementing the conclusions of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards made in 2008 concerning the application of Convention No. 87, but pointed out that in Colombia, respect for international labour standards, in particular Conventions Nos 87 and 98, continued to be limited. He stressed in particular the factors which constituted obstacles to freedom of association, such as anti-union practices, the institutionalization of contracts for the provision of services and other types of contract which created precarious employment and prevented the exercise of the right of association and the right to collective bargaining. However, he noted the progress made with regard to social dialogue.
66. With regard to social dialogue, the speaker stressed the need for greater progress to be made in firmly promoting the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement by: (a) appointing a Director of the Colombia office responsible for ensuring proper follow-up of these issues; (b) ensuring continued technical cooperation for new projects designed to promote social dialogue, freedom of association and collective bargaining; (c) ensuring that the Government take into account the comments of the ILO's supervisory bodies; (d) strengthening coordination and communication with trade union organizations and

<sup>2</sup> GB.307/TC/3.

ensuring better follow-up from Geneva; (e) amending labour legislation to bring it into conformity with the provisions of ILO standards; and (f) issuing the Labour Statutes in accordance with the Political Constitution of Colombia and the 1991 constitutional reform.

67. With regard to the Tripartite Agreement on Colombia, he said that recognition of the progress made in Colombia was an aspect of the policy of confidence in the ILO, and highlighted the importance of that organization with respect to solidarity and providing support for the workers and the country.
68. The representative of the Government of Colombia thanked the Director of the ILO Regional Office in Lima for presenting the report on the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy. He pointed out that the Agreement, concluded in 2006, had been the basis for the State's actions to combat impunity, protect trade unionists and promote social dialogue and legislative progress within the framework of the ILO Conventions ratified by Colombia.
69. With regard to the efforts to combat impunity and violence, he highlighted the initiatives which had accelerated the action of the courts and already delivered results in 2009 in terms of rulings (232), convictions (334) and sentences of imprisonment (190). As an example of progress he cited Act No. 1309 (2009) which imposed heavier penalties for attacks on trade unionists. In terms of prevention, he mentioned the joint programmes being implemented by the Government with workers to define protection measures, as well as the increase in resources and in the number of beneficiaries (1,550 trade unionists in 2009).
70. With regard to social dialogue he highlighted the work of the Permanent Committee for Consultation on Wage and Labour Policies and the Special Committee for the Handling of Conflicts referred to the ILO, and reiterated the Government's commitment to continue strengthening these bodies.
71. He expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by the Governments of Canada and the United States, the support given by the international community represented by the ILO, and the ILO itself for its ongoing technical assistance in both Geneva and Lima.
72. The Regional Director for the Americas noted that the statements made had highlighted the scope of the programme and the achievements made to date. He thanked the Governments of Canada, the United States and Colombia for their support and confirmed that the Regional and Subregional Office in Lima would continue working with the country and with constituents to provide sustained and ongoing support for the numerous activities being carried out in the country.

Geneva, 19 March 2010.

*Point for decision:* Paragraph 48.