

**Third sitting**

Thursday, 10 June 2010, 10.10 a.m.

*Presidents: Mr de Robien and Mr Nakajima***PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON
OF THE GOVERNING BODY***Original French: The PRESIDENT (Mr DE ROBIEN)*

We will begin our work with the presentation of the report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body to the Conference for the year 2009–10. The report is published in *Provisional Record* No. 1.

I now give the floor to Ms Farani Azevêdo, Chairperson of the Governing Body. After her presentation, I will give the floor to the spokespersons of the groups and open the general discussion.

Ms AZEVÊDO (Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office)

I would like first to recall that tomorrow is the opening of the first ever soccer World Cup in an African country. I want to express how proud we are to have an important event in South Africa. It is a sign of recognition that Africa has the ability to organize world-class international major events. It is also an expression of a more inclusive and democratic world, in which we can all take part. This is why the World Cup is so special, and this is also a reason for us to be happy for South Africa, because the World Cup means the principles and values that guide us in the ILO. So this is the time of South Africa.

I am very honoured to present to you highlights of my report as the Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body for the period 2009–10. The report itself has been made available to you as a Conference document.

The 99th Session of the International Labour Conference marks the first anniversary of the Global Jobs Pact, as well as the second anniversary of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. These two instruments, and the Decent Work Agenda they have embraced, provide a powerful framework of policy resources to help us overcome the effects of the economic and social crisis. They are profoundly human texts. They place *people* at the centre of the economic rebound and *employment* at the heart of recovery policies.

The Governing Body, over the year in which I have had the honour to direct its work, has devoted much thought, dedicated vigorous efforts and shown unwavering commitment to guiding the Office to promote and implement the Social Justice Declaration and the Global Jobs Pact.

In June 2009, the Pact was introduced in the agenda of all UN programmes and funds, as well as in the international financial institutions. With the

support of more than 160 countries, the UN Economic and Social Council adopted the resolution, “Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact”. If employment and social protection were to be the drivers and ultimate purposes of the recovery, the Pact had to be streamlined into the multilateral system. What was born as a portfolio of concrete measures had to become an international reference. It had to be an inspiration to a more sustainable economy and a more democratic and legitimate international order. As was stated last November by Minister Celso Amorim of Brazil in the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization, a new and more inclusive global governance is required to protect the most vulnerable members of society. We heard similar messages from Mr Compton Bourne, President of the Caribbean Development Bank, and from Ms Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in the same Working Party in March. These developments, as well as the adoption by the UNDP Executive Board of a decision on the Global Jobs Pact, have helped promote employment as a key parameter for a coherent response by the multilateral system.

Despite the efforts on the multilateral front, the implementation of the Pact at the country level remained a priority. In November last year and in March this year, the Governing Body and many of its Committees examined topics related to the crisis, including the development of partnerships with national and local governments and the inclusion of the Pact in the activities of the Decent Work Country Programmes. The Governing Body was able to take a series of decisions to guide the Office on these issues. These decisions will definitely contribute to a jobs-based recovery that benefits the poor – precisely those who have borne the brunt of the recession.

The International Institute for Labour Studies, with the support of Brazil and France, in the person of our President of the Conference, Gilles de Robien, held a seminar on national efforts to overcome the crisis. This event provided a rich exchange of concrete experiences, policies and practices that have enabled the Pact to become a reality on the ground.

Our discussions at the November and March sessions of the Governing Body mapped out a clear line of action for the work of the Office. In the course of last year, the Global Jobs Pact has been tested by a deceptive economic recovery with limited impact on employment. It has also been tested

by new sovereign debt crises, which cannot overshadow our priorities. These tests reinforce the current importance of the Pact, and they confirm the solidity of its provisions. The Global Jobs Pact is as crucial today as it was a year ago.

Gender equality also deserved the attention of the Governing Body. We examined with great care the follow-up of the resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work. We analysed and discussed the Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15, which is already under implementation. We have instructed the Office to introduce gender-sensitive language into the ILO Constitution.

International labour standards constitute a cornerstone of our Organization. The Governing Body has worked to strengthen this pillar, including through the analysis of several specific cases that deserved its attention. For instance, we examined reports concerning the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), at both the November and the March meetings of the Governing Body. After listening to the members of the Governing Body and to the ILO officer and personnel on the ground, my fellow Officers and I drafted objective conclusions which reflected the discussions held in the plenary, and which will hopefully contribute to promoting, in a results-oriented, transparent and constructive manner, the values of ILO regarding the eradication of forced labour.

It is essential that we have an ILO that is better equipped and more able to respond to the problems of the twenty-first century. The Governing Body has recognized the need to adapt itself to a changing world. Over the last year, the Governing Body has been able to advance in the improvement of its own mechanisms. It has also laid the groundwork for deliberating on the functioning of the Conference. A Working Party was established precisely to make the functioning and the structures more efficient, more effective and closer to current social realities. The work of this Working Party is currently in progress, but it has already been fruitful. It has stimulated governments to enhance their coordination and therefore strengthen tripartism. It has also contributed to the establishment of a more efficient and transparent agenda-setting mechanism, which enables our programme of work to benefit more directly from the contribution of our tripartite constituency.

My country was one of the founding members of the International Labour Organization in 1919. It has supported the ILO throughout its long history. President Lula, in his speech at the Global Jobs Summit last year, reiterated, as I do now, this support for the ILO. This crisis is by no means over yet; these are difficult times for the working people of the world. As President Lula said here at the ILO, “At a time when so many paradigms are disintegrating, the ILO represents a ‘reserve’, in political, ethical and moral terms”.

From 2009 to 2010, the Governing Body has worked to keep the ILO that way. It has been an honour for me to preside over its deliberations, but above all a great responsibility. I am grateful to the Director-General for his support. I am grateful to my fellow Officers, Sir Roy Trotman and Mr Daniel Funes de Rioja, for their collaboration, experience and wisdom. I am grateful to this Organization, to its members, to its staff. I am particularly grateful to

its values and principles, and to those of you who had the patience to listen to me this morning.

Original French: The PRESIDENT

I think I am speaking on behalf of all members of the Governing Body at any rate, that it was a great pleasure and great honour to work under your kind authority – and I say that advisedly because you do have authority but it is always exercised with a smile, along with your concern for efficiency. It is we who commend you and thank you for this year spent under your guidance.

REPORTS OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL: DISCUSSION

Mr FUNES DE RIOJA (*Employer, Argentina; speaking on behalf of the Employers' group*)

As the Executive Vice-President of the International Organisation of Employers, Employer Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body and Chairperson of the Employers' group of the International Labour Conference, it is my pleasure to respond to the Report of the Director-General to the 99th Session of the Conference.

As we move from crisis to recovery, the role of the private sector as the generator of employment needs to be reinforced in the work of the ILO.

Without a private sector equipped with the right regulatory environment and confidence to invest, productive employment will lag behind economic recovery.

Meeting the job challenge and returning to growth is the number one priority today and it is a shared challenge. It requires stable macroeconomic frameworks; quality pro-competitive regulatory frameworks, including balanced labour laws; and an entrepreneurial climate that supports doing business.

Pro-employment policy frameworks need to include the fundamentals of access to credit, the rule of law and respect for property rights.

It needs to be supported by education and vocational training programmes aligned to the full employment needs of business, particularly the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector.

Entrepreneurship needs to be encouraged.

SMEs are often seen as the pool from which further jobs will emerge, but for this to prove true, more entrepreneurs need to feel confident to invest and to innovate with new business ideas to create enterprises where productive employment and decent work can be generated.

The ILO has some of these tools.

We have the Global Jobs Pact, adopted last year, as well as the discussions on sustainable enterprises.

These tools, together with a closer dialogue with employers as to what their real needs are, can help create the environment within which business can succeed.

Within the Office, this requires focus and coherence.

Support for employers in ILO programmes, delivered with and through the Bureau for Employers' Activities of the ILO (ACT/EMP), is integral to the delivery of technical cooperation and to the development and promotion of the right policy choices to help businesses employ.

All of this is captured in the Employers' group vision of the ILO, a document adopted by the Em-

ployers' group and already circulated within the Office.

I also call the attention of the Office to our statements to the G20 Labour Ministers' meeting in Washington, DC last May. Contained in those contributions are the real needs of business that the ILO needs to embrace.

Only by doing so will the calls for job-rich growth be realized now and going forward.

In the future, such employment creation is needed in the face of emerging challenges such as demographic and climate change.

We would like to see an ILO policy with direct recognition of the needs of the business community able to look to this house for the guidance and support they need for meeting the employment challenge.

Advocacy is an important role of this Organization but its advocacy needs to be able to reflect not only the needs of workers, but also the needs of business.

As outlined in the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, this effort must be supported internally by an Office with the knowledge necessary to meet those needs and technical cooperation activities that support these goals.

As I said at the outset, we have our own vision. We have made this vision known and we will continue to work to its realization in the work of this house.

However, I wish to reiterate the Employers' group's concerns, expressed by our spokesperson in his opening comments in the Committee on the Application of Standards, in particular where he stated that tripartite governance needs to be restored to the application of standards. I wish to confirm here that our group will continue to work to address those concerns within the Governing Body, starting in November.

Secondly, a word on the Report of the Director-General, *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*. The Report continues to paint a stark picture. However, we reiterate our view that the ILO has an important role to play in supporting a focus on enterprise creation that is anchored on the Global Jobs Pact.

Coupled with this is more support to skills training for those currently unable to secure employment.

That could be a really positive contribution to the peace process, with economic development and social justice.

(The speaker continues in Spanish.)

This is a tripartite Organization. In some of the committees during this Conference there has been and there is active participation of non-governmental organizations. The voices of society have to be heard, but the voices of society cannot replace the tripartite institutional role that we have and that is recognized in the history of this Organization as giving it its fundamental legality and legitimacy. It is up to the tripartite constituents to capture these voices and to reflect them, but not to replace them. That is our role.

So we have to render unto Caesar his due. I am invoking the assistance of this Conference so that that can be the case. This is both an old and new Organization, old because of its many years of existence and new because of its renewed mandate, with

the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact representing our new challenge, as said by the distinguished Chairperson of the Governing Body, looking to the future.

At the 2009 Conference, it showed that it could adapt, in real time, its response to the crisis that emerged and which we are still facing. We are seeking to adapt the Governing Body to the new needs of governance and policies. The Office has been given an explicit mandate to improve services for constituents and we have noted the active role we have with respect to public and private partnerships.

We note the role of social dialogue. We are fervent admirers and practitioners of it. We respect Governments and Workers and, together with them, we want to build the future. That is our aspiration, but also our responsibility.

Original French: The PRESIDENT

Thank you very much, Mr Funes de Rioja.

With regard to your comment on social dialogue and the quality of it: I have been sensitive to this since the very beginning of this Conference. We have tried to work together to ensure that the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference are strictly observed in all committees, and very quickly everything returned to how you wished, in other words, to high-quality social dialogue. So I would like to thank one and all for all their efforts in the various committees to ensure that we have high-quality social dialogue.

Mr TROTMAN (Worker, Barbados, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group)

I have been looking forward to the June 2010 session of the International Labour Conference since as early as July last year. My colleagues in the Workers' group and I all thought that it was going to provide us with a series of good examples of how, together, we could make the world a better place. The financial world had gambled itself into financial crisis and had managed to drag down the economic foundations of most of the world, as well as the homes, the jobs and the hopes of people across all points on the map. But we had a plan. The ILO, like an armoured knight, charged to the rescue and it delivered our Global Jobs Pact, which captured the almighty G20 as well as all those international and multilateral bodies that had hitherto preached that the market was God, and that the only true gospels were those of full deregulation, job lay-offs at will, wage and salary cuts, and economic growth for its own sake and not for the constituents. We were all prayerful that the Global Jobs Pact would capture the imagination of everyone. Indeed, we have not given up hope and we continue to thank those employers, employers' organizations, and especially those governments, which continue their efforts to apply the Pact.

However, we are disappointed that, whatever the reasons, far too many countries have not attempted to apply the Global Jobs Pact, and some others appear to have rejected the need to adopt new approaches once there were signs that the banks were back in business. What saddens us most at the start of the season is the sense that the commitment to interdependency has again been forsaken, and has been replaced by the old dogma of the survival of the fittest. Our group may yet become a single voice in a wilderness of indifference. Even so, we must

insist that many economies which are in crisis today are there, in crisis, because of exploitation, unfair trade, political marginalization and other forms of discrimination or neglect.

A second blow for the Workers' group, and the second blow against the goodwill we were anticipating, was struck on Monday, 31 May, when many of us were making our way to this Conference in Geneva. Last June – as well as in the June before that – we had conducted very positive discussions calling for the peaceful coexistence of the citizens of Israel, as well as for an independent State of Palestine, whatever citizens might choose to call it. We were asked for technical and other assistance for Palestine, for the workers there to move and work, and for students to move in furtherance of their education. We were hoping, Mr President, to speak about efforts to improve and strengthen relations and to achieve social and economic progress. Regrettably, we have now been forced, as the Workers' group, to condemn the killing by the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) of some nine civilians aboard a ship carrying relief supplies to the people of the Gaza Strip. Our group does not need to enter into the details of this horrendous action. However, it feels that simple human compassion and a respect for justice and human rights will require that we all support the call for a full independent enquiry into the facts surrounding the attacks and the murder, and the bringing to justice of those persons found responsible. Nothing short of full condemnation by this Conference will suffice. It must also be affirmed that the marginalization and impoverishment of some of the people in Palestine will not lead to peace, security or development in the region and that both the Palestinians and the Israelis must be assisted in the greater effort to renounce violence and to find a negotiated peace. The blockade must end and more technical and financial support must be given to the Palestinian people.

Our group, Mr President, does not wish to give an impression of doom and gloom. We do wish to take note, where they occur, of any examples of positive and exemplary action which we feel would lead to the global reciprocal initiatives that we are searching for. We were pleased, for example, by the joint efforts of Brazil and France in seeking to share the experiences of their countries and their countries' response to the global financial crisis. Our group believes that the International Labour Office must keep trying to bring a social response to the demand for recovery, but we feel that shared examples of what has been achieved by countries courageous enough to reject the market orthodoxy will do much more to help other economies struggling to find their own particular solutions, and that is why we are so grateful to Brazil and to France.

It is also important that this moment of stress should not be used as an excuse to look and to plan parochially. In this spirit, the initiative of the Government of the Netherlands in taking on a special project which, if realized, could eliminate child labour by 2016 is to be commended. Our group is happy to support any initiatives which will promote the fundamental principles and rights at work. We are satisfied that support should be given to eliminating not merely the worst forms of child labour, but all child labour. We hope that the Government of the Netherlands will avail itself of the opportunity to partner the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), as well as the Bureau for Employers'

Activities (ACT/EMP) and the many constituents in the field in this noble endeavour. Perhaps another champion of the fundamental principles and rights at work, or another group of champions, will come forward and offer a similar road map to address the issue of freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively. Perhaps those champions are in this room. Perhaps they will also underline the reality that those parties which agree with the right to associate must also seek the right to bargain collectively, for not to do so would be to play with the workers rather than to respect their fundamental and basic rights. Mr President, things could change radically if the larger countries, especially the large influential countries, could set the example by championing the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); and by publicly setting the dates for their ratification during this Conference.

The Workers' group continues to express confidence in our Committee of Experts and in the work they do to ensure that our standards, once set, are subjected to the level of rigorous review that should – and indeed does – command the highest level of respect worldwide, except from those who, from time to time, feel that they may be too big or too powerful to fall under the regulations of our systems. We still believe that the original needs and overarching objectives which brought the ILO into existence remain essentially the same. Setting and maintaining rules for justice, equality and fairness, as well as for the pursuit of democracy, are still the prerequisites for peace and for social development. Those rules must be respected by all and no individuals or group must be beyond the evenhandedness of those rules.

Finally, I wish to say that during the year we had a splendid example of what the work of the experts, and the work we do in furthering the supervisory channels of the house, can achieve. After many years of running battles, as it were, with the Government of Zimbabwe and the International Labour Office, we were able to have a Commission of Inquiry, a report to the Governing Body, and an evenhanded discussion where we all agreed that working together, with technical support provided, could bring about the achievement of those objectives of the International Labour Office which we all aim for. It is our wish that other governments follow that example of the Government of Zimbabwe, and that together we might be able to build a stronger, better, more efficient International Labour Organization.

Original French: The PRESIDENT

I should like to make a statement on behalf of the Officers of the Conference, to remind you of the principles that will govern our discussion.

These principles were established by the Working Party of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office on the Programme and Structure of the ILO and, following their approval by the Governing Body, they were communicated to the Conference in 1967. They are set out in paragraphs 54–58 of the Working Party and are repeated in the Conference Guide, of which you should all have a copy.

The Officers of the Conference would like to draw the attention of delegates to the content of paragraph 58, which states that, to uphold the values

of human freedom and dignity enshrined in the ILO Constitution, in periods of acute political tension the Conference must strive towards the fullest possible continued cooperation in pursuit of the Organization's objectives. Every delegate has an obligation to keep these considerations in mind, and the President of the Conference to ensure they are preserved.

I would like to remind you that discussions of the International Labour Conference should not encroach upon discussions that belong in the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly, upon which the Charter of the United Nations confers certain responsibilities for political decisions.

I ask all delegates to observe these principles. The Officers of the Conference are determined to ensure that they are observed.

I should like to add that I count upon all of you to help our discussions proceed in the spirit of openness and dignity that becomes the highest international body in the realm of social and labour issues.

Freedom of expression is the very life blood of the International Labour Organization. However, so that this right is exercised in a spirit of mutual respect, it is extremely important that all delegates use parliamentary language, respect customary procedure, refer only to the points under discussion and avoid raising issues unrelated to the discussion. We have to accept a certain discipline if we wish our work to be successful.

Each delegate may exercise the right of reply if they believe that their government has been called in to question. In such cases, before the end of the sitting, the delegate concerned must inform the President of the sitting that they wish to exercise this right. To do so, the delegate must come to the podium and submit their request to the Clerk of the Conference, who will give it to the President. The President will indicate to the delegation concerned the moment at which the delegation may exercise its right of reply.

The reply should only deal with the point under discussion. It should not be longer than two minutes and should be worded in proper parliamentary language. Finally, it is not customary in our Organization to grant a right of reply concerning an earlier reply.

I would also like to remind you that the length of statements is set by the Standing Orders of the Conference at five minutes. We have a very full agenda and I am sure that all delegates and ministers participating in the Conference will take this five minute time limit into account when they prepare and make their statements. If the time limit is breached, the President may be obliged to stop the speaker after a reminder before the end of their statement, but I hope that I will not be obliged to do this.

If there is no objection, may I take it that these provisions are approved by the Conference? I see no objection.

(It is so decided.)

Original Arabic: Mr AMOSH (Minister of Labour, Jordan)

I should like to express our appreciation to Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO, because he has prepared the work of this Conference extremely well. We appreciate his concern to ensure the stability of the Organization at the service of the member States and the social partners.

The global economy is suffering from the negative effects of the financial crisis and is facing re-

cession and an increase in unemployment to unprecedented levels which have not been seen for decades. This has led to an increase in workers' protest actions. The questions raised by the Director-General reflect a concern at these very serious issues relating to working conditions which concern many marginalized workers. This also follows from the ILO's vision and strategic objectives as expressed in the Social Justice Declaration. All these questions demand careful examination at a high level in order to deal with the challenges of development, employment and decent working conditions.

Child labour is prohibited in Jordan, and cannot be tolerated. His Majesty King Abdallah II has already made his position clear on this subject. Consequently, the Government of my country is continuing its efforts to eradicate child labour. We have begun to amend our Labour Code to provide for stronger sanctions against child labour. We have also updated the list of jobs forbidden to children, created a national strategy to work to eradicate child labour and, in cooperation with international institutions, we have created a centre for social support for working children and their families. We have also created a training programme for children who have dropped out of school.

Jordan has made much progress on legislative reform in collaboration with partners in civil society and the Human Rights Centre. We have prepared new regulations and guidelines, and the draft amendments to the Labour Code help workers by providing for sick leave, annual leave and end-of-service bonuses, in accordance with international labour standards. We have also adopted regulations on domestic workers and we have set conditions for licensing agencies that recruit domestic workers abroad.

New regulations have been enacted on the tripartite committee with representatives of the three social partners, with the aim of achieving balanced labour relations.

We have adopted a national strategy to combat human trafficking, which was developed by a specialized committee operating under a law prohibiting human trafficking.

We have been working together with the ILO for many years, and I should like to express our gratitude to the ILO for its cooperation in the areas of forced labour, human-trafficking, social dialogue and gender equality. We hope technical support from the ILO will continue, especially in the area of labour inspection for domestic workers, child labour, agricultural workers, and so on.

Any observer of events in the West Bank and in Gaza will confirm the degradation of the economic, humanitarian and social situation that has resulted from collective sanctions, military incursions and the Separation Barrier. The deterioration in the economy is reflected in unemployment and increasing poverty. It is the Palestinian workers who have been the principal victims of this deterioration.

We greatly value the important role played by the ILO and its Director-General, Mr Somavia, in supporting the workers and the employers.

Original Spanish: Ms MERINO (Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Chile)

Good morning, Mr President, members of the Governing Body, Government members, Worker and Employer colleagues. I am particularly pleased

that my first international mission abroad as a Minister of State is to participate in the present International Labour Conference and, of course, I regret the absence of the Director-General and wish him a rapid recovery. I am particularly pleased, as I said, to be here at the International Labour Conference because it offers the Government of President Sebastián Piñera and Chilean society the opportunity to renew the permanent commitment of our country to the ILO's principles and values, which constitute the basis for labour and social protection standards in an increasingly interdependent world.

We would like to stress the new impetus which the ILO is providing as the key actor and main interlocutor among the multilateral organizations. Its technical input and the support it provides to the tripartite definition of social policy is widely recognized by the international community. The Decent Work Agenda and concrete proposals which aim to generate quality employment were reflected in the recommendations of the Ministers of Labour and Employment at the G20 meeting in April. We value and appreciate the consensus that sustainable recovery is impossible without a recovery in employment. This, of course, requires greater coordination between macroeconomic policies and policies related to employment, vocational training and social protection.

Our Government is well aware of the above and has launched a labour and social security programme focused on six objectives. The first involves providing support for the reconstruction plan for our country, which was struck by an earthquake last February, through the introduction incentives to create 70,000 new jobs in the devastated areas and other sector-specific benefits. In this context, I wish to highlight and express our recognition of the ILO's important contribution to this plan, in the form of a comprehensive field study carried out in the disaster-stricken areas. This information has enabled us to work in a more focused manner, and respond to the real needs on the ground.

The second objective is to create 1 million good new jobs, within the next five years, by boosting economic growth and better matching labour demand and supply. These new jobs are also intended to increase the participation of women and young people in the labour force.

The third objective involves the enhancement of vocational training coverage and quality, a key factor in the overall development of our labour force and our country. Our efforts focus on the implementation of a high-quality vocational training system aimed at improving workers' employability, which benefits all workers, and the less qualified in particular, whether they work in small or large enterprises.

The fourth objective is to uphold and enforce workers' rights, in order to enhance the efficiency of the inspection unit of our Labour Department, and promote good labour practices.

The fifth objective is to continue to improve our social security system, expanding its scope and benefits. Thanks to the development of a pension system based on an individual capitalization scheme, supplemented by a solidarity pillar, Chile has been able to deal with the transition towards an increasingly ageing population, thus guaranteeing the poorest 60 per cent of its citizens a basic non-contributory pension, or financial support as a complement to their pension.

The sixth objective is to foster social dialogue, with a view to promoting constructive and participative labour relations by means of tripartite, sectoral boards involving unions, employers and governments, and strengthening the unions' negotiating capacity.

Our Government has ambitious goals which require a modern, efficient State, committed to the present and future social needs of the country and able to adapt to new requirements. The work of public servants is essential in carrying out this task. Therefore, in the field of labour relations, the Government will be guided by criteria of excellence, respect and open dialogue with sectoral representatives.

Chile also supports the enormous efforts, led by the ILO and its Director-General, Mr Juan Somavia, to continue the fight to abolish child labour by 2016. We believe that this commitment should be maintained, particularly in the context of the global crisis, as the core values of the society we aspire to consolidate are at stake here.

Finally, the Government of Chile wishes to renew its absolute commitment to tripartism, which constitutes the basis for democratic dialogue, which is essential to building a society with better opportunities and which looks to the future.

I wish to extend my warmest greetings to all the workers in my country, reassuring them that we will deliver President Sebastián Piñera's commitment to provide more and better jobs. In order to do this, we will need the opportunity to create space for trust and dialogue, as we move towards our bicentenary.

It is clear that there are, and will be, significant difficulties along the way, but it is vital that all social stakeholders, taking into account their legitimate differences, contribute to meeting the great challenge of building a better and fairer world.

The ILO provides, and will continue to provide, a space for cooperation, which Chile is always ready to support.

Ms SUNDNES (*Worker, Norway*)

I would like to offer my congratulations on the comprehensive Report presented to this year's Conference. It gives a good overview both of the crisis and of programme implementation for the period. It also gives us an overview of action undertaken by countries thanks to ILO cooperation. For example, 25 countries have adopted new or revised legislation relating to the elimination and prevention of child labour. This is based on input and advice from the social partners, the ILO and other UN agencies.

I would like to follow up the importance of social dialogue in that respect. After years of decrease in the number of child workers, we still estimate that there are approximately 218 million child workers in the world, despite the action taken to implement new or revised legislative provisions. This shows that it is not sufficient to ratify Conventions; they must also be followed up in a tripartite manner with strong social dialogue.

Child labour increases poverty. Children who do not get an adequate education and a society with a poorly educated population will never achieve economic development and welfare.

Because children are paid less, they are often employed at the expense of adults. This, again, leads to higher unemployment among adults but also to the wage dumping and increased poverty among their parents and other adults.

The best way of combating child labour is through education. Education must be the responsibility of governments; it must be free of charge and available for all children. It is also of the greatest importance to ask ourselves how the future looks for young people once they have finished their education. The crisis shows that very often they fail to get a job and do not benefit from their education. We therefore have an obligation to work for economic development which gives us the possibility to create new jobs instead of an economic development giving profits to company and capital owners.

I will now turn to the situation with regard to Israel and offer some comments on the blockade of Gaza.

My Confederation, the LO, supports the Norwegian Government's initiative to request the UN Secretary-General to carry out an independent investigation of the Israeli boarding of the Gaza convoy.

At the heart of the conflict is Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories which has caused soaring unemployment and poverty among the Palestinian people.

The trade union movement in those territories operates under extremely difficult conditions. LO will continue to support and cooperate with the Palestinian trade unions.

We defend the rights of Israelis and Palestinians alike to live in peace and security. The United Nations must take a leading role in peace and diplomacy in the region and must assume responsibility for the reconstruction of Gaza and ensure delivery of food and buildings, so that the workers of Palestine can obtain full and productive work.

If the UN track proves unsuccessful, the Norwegian Government must take the lead in an international campaign against the occupation. A call for an international boycott should be considered.

The Norwegian Labour Confederation adopted a statement on 1 June this year demanding that the 4 June 1967 borders be respected, that the establishment of Israeli settlements be stopped and the wall torn down. Finally, we think that the United Nations should appoint a commission to investigate possible violations of international law and Conventions.

Mr MASEMENE (*Minister of Labour and Employment, Lesotho*)

I also take note of the visionary and pro-active address by Mr Somavia. His Report sets the tone of the Conference. He has offered a number of solutions to socio-economic problems arising from the global financial crisis.

In most of the world, adverse effects of the crisis are still going on, and it will take time for countries to recover from the particular ravages of the global financial crisis. Lesotho suffers the same crisis in that more jobs have been lost for women and men. We hope that international support in this regard will be timely.

My delegation is privileged to participate in this setting of standards of the ILO, as we are called today to promote decent work and social justice.

HIV/AIDS continues to be a crucial concern for the southern African region, despite efforts to eradicate a scourge which decimates the workforce in the region and in the world at large.

The authorities in Lesotho, after amending the relevant labour legislation in 2006, have now translated the amendments into our most widely spoken language (Sesotho) in order to make them accessi-

ble and practically used by both employers and workers at the workplace.

It is fundamental that today, as the question of domestic workers is being dealt with, the Conference ensures that practical considerations should take precedence in this area, and flexibility should be ensured so that the instrument that emerges is wide-ranging and can achieve maximum compliance, rather than just being a paper tiger.

At the strategic level, I am pleased to report that it was concluded that there must be campaigns for social dialogue, for the adoption of the Global Jobs Pact at divisional level.

In Lesotho there is a need to strengthen social dialogue institutions so that the issues of employment can be dealt with. A committee here will be dealing with employment policies in relation to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. This is highly relevant to Lesotho's unemployment situation and the creation of a strategic employment policy.

It is fundamental to know that our response to Lesotho's experience of high job losses and unemployment has been to protect our Better Work Programme, which was conceived as a response to the problems arising from the end of the Multifibre Agreement and is to be launched by the authorities soon. It seeks to illustrate good management, sound industrial waste management and worker relations, and seeks to maximize compliance. I must express our gratitude to the US Department of Labor for supporting this project, and thank the ILO also for all its assistance. The project shows the political will of the Government and the social partners on this issue of compliance with international labour standards.

Original Arabic: Ms ABDEL HADY (Minister of Manpower and Migration, Egypt)

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to contribute to the ILC discussion on employment. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Organization and to the Director-General for the Report on *Recovery and growth with decent work*, which contains an analysis and survey on employment and the challenges related to jobs and job recovery.

First of all, we agree with the Report in that we have yet to recover from the 2008 crisis. We feel that the crisis poses a serious challenge that affects the whole of the international community, that is to say States, industrial institutions, workers, consumers, young people and women. In this context, we would like to highlight something which is mentioned in the Report, namely the increase in the unemployment rate in 2009, believed to be the worst at international level. The Report also refers to the importance of addressing the structural imbalances that led to the crisis. Indeed, this is a vital step if we are to overcome the crisis and avoid a repeat of the situation. There is now a need to review the reform of financial institutions and the international financial system. It has become clear that recovery measures frequently focus on bailing out these institutions, without paying adequate attention to problems in the real economy, the manufacturing industry and the workers.

We feel also that a lack of international consensus would weaken any policies adopted at a national level, in view of the links between the reform process and the movement of capital and foreign in-

vestment flow. In this regard, we welcome the references in the Report to the policies intended to promote funding of manufacturing processes.

Thirdly, we view with a great deal of concern the fiscal deficit resulting from bail-out and recovery packages in many countries, which was mentioned in the Report. Indeed, the international financial and economic crisis poses a very serious challenge in the short and medium term.

One of the scenarios proposed recommends addressing the problem of public debt whilst also taking a long-term view. Now, two years after the global financial crisis, we need to deal with many problems with long-term repercussions for countries and societies.

We do commend the efforts of the Organization in providing assistance to countries. However, we recommend a more regional focus when dealing with the crisis.

The annex of the Director-General's Report refers to the situation faced by workers in the occupied Arab territories, namely the blatant violation of basic human values and international labour standards.

From this rostrum I would like to appeal to the ILO and the international community to put an end to this blockade of Gaza and to provide financial and technical assistance, in order to support the Palestinian Authority in establishing an independent Palestinian State.

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

It gives me great pleasure to address the 99th Session of the International Labour Conference following the successful holding of the fourth general elections in Ethiopia. The elections were held in a peaceful and democratic manner with a high voter turnout. A landmark event in the democratization process in Ethiopia, these historic elections enjoyed active participation by all sections of our society, including our social partners.

I would like to commend the Director-General for his comprehensive Report, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, drawing attention to vital social issues amidst the many global challenges facing the world community.

It is critical that all our countries reaffirm our commitment to the social issues and rights addressed in the Report and adopt well-targeted productive policy packages, as advocated in the Report. For Ethiopia, issues of social integration, increased investment and job creation are some of the key elements designed to ensure that our economic development is consistent with the social development objectives of the country.

The Government of Ethiopia has been diligently implementing policies and strategies aimed at ending poverty through accelerated and sustained economic growth. These consistent and participatory efforts have been yielding tangible results, among others, in expanding education, health and infrastructure services, export promotion and diversification, institutions and capacity building, and in the decentralization of decision-making structures, with a strategic focus on human development, rural development, food security and capacity building.

In the development plan of the country, the agricultural sector has been given central attention, as 85 per cent of the country's population live in rural areas. This sector utilizes labour-intensive technology, and hence emphasis has been given to training the agricultural labour force with effective skills

and modern know-how through the implementation of an extensive agricultural extension programme to sustain and enhance productivity.

The agricultural sector is being complemented by the development of small and medium-sized enterprises as the most effective means of creating job opportunities and achieving faster and sustainable socio-economic development. The Government of Ethiopia has been taking concrete steps to enhance the role of the private sector in job creation and development of the country.

The Government of Ethiopia takes this opportunity to reiterate its determination to build on the achievements in implementing international labour standards in the country. Some of the concrete measures that the Government has been taking include the following: a national occupational safety and health policy has been drafted and will be presented for adoption in order to strengthen the capacity of the current labour inspection system and the implementation of the labour law in general; a national employment policy has been prepared and submitted to the competent authority for approval. This policy aims at combating poverty through job creation, with a particular focus on vocational training and greater coordination among the labour sector and the sectors responsible for the country's economic and social policies; as one of the social protection mechanisms to improve the situation of the workers, a number of workplace HIV/AIDS policies, codes of practice and programmes have been developed and are being translated into action; Ethiopia has developed a national action plan for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in the country, consistent with ILO Convention No. 182.

I would like to underline that all the abovementioned achievements and measures being taken in Ethiopia are designed and implemented within the context of very extensive and intensive social dialogue among tripartite social partners and other relevant stakeholders.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the ILO for the technical assistance and support in our national initiatives in the achievement of the country's development strategy.

In closing, allow me to express our satisfaction that the issues under consideration at this Conference, including standard setting on decent work for domestic workers and HIV/AIDS in the world of work, as well as the discussion on the strategic objective of employment, are all timely and pertinent to the objectives of our Organization. It is fitting that well-deserved attention is being given to decent work for domestic workers. We should now seize this moment and agree on standards that could provide guidance for proper regulation at national level.

Original Arabic: Mr HAMADEH (Employer, Lebanon)

On behalf of the employers of Lebanon and the members of the Board of Governors of the Association of Lebanese Industrialists in particular, I would like to thank the ILO which, once again, gives us the opportunity to participate in the discussion on fundamental principles and rights at work and social protection with a view to making justice, equality and social and economic security a reality.

We have examined the Report and welcome the efforts made and the constant work to achieve the

objectives for a better future in the service of humanity. We would like to make some comments with respect to these objectives.

We support the idea that strong, sustainable and balanced growth accompanied by jobs creation is the only intelligent way forward. It is essential, within the prevailing financial constraints, to give priority to governmental employment promotion and social protection programmes, rather than to programmes that are less productive and less conducive to job creation. We must demand productive and well-targeted measures to stimulate investment and growth while redressing public deficits and expanding the margin for manoeuvre in budgets. Increases in taxation create a heavy burden for people on low incomes, who should be exempted from any additional burden.

Investment in infrastructure such as water, drains and sewers, housing, and in sectors such as roads and ports, represents a basis for long-term development and can contribute to greater productivity and growth prospects. This growth should be accompanied by support for small and medium-sized enterprises of high added value with strong potential for job creation and improved productivity.

This is because in most economic systems, even those that are State run, the private sector plays a key role in promoting growth and productivity and remains the principal source of jobs, facilitating a constant renewal of economic activity. The State must provide the practical and legislative framework for private sector investment companies. State aid must be not just direct material help but also incentives and benefits.

The Report envisages that governments must act collectively to reorganize the international financial system in order to safeguard savings and finance the real economy. We endorse these views, and believe that governments that act in isolation in response to a collapse in the foreign exchange markets and a hike in interest rates aggravate the global recession.

As regards conditions to promote employment creation, the Report indicates that progressive budget consolidation strategies emphasize objectives that will promote an environment favourable to innovation and investment, create a protection floor for the most vulnerable and improve support given to the micro economy.

Medium-term budget strategies require job creation and consequently we must create jobs by developing small and medium-sized enterprises. We have to take into account the fact that a recovery in families' consumption and increased company investment will tend to promote sustainable enterprises, create new jobs and bring about economic growth.

In conclusion, in the light of the principle of justice and equality and the right of all to work and live a decent life, we appeal to you, who represent the world's conscience, and say that what is happening in Palestine shames all of humanity. Allow me to say, from this rostrum, "no" to aggression, to occupation and aggression, but "yes" to a just and comprehensive peace with a view to decent work.

Original French: Mr DIAW (Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service, Labour, Employment and Occupational Organizations, Senegal)

Our congratulations also go to our excellent Director-General, Mr Juan Somavia, whom I would like to commend for his dedication, courage and

intelligence in carrying out his mandate – all qualities that enable the ILO to continue, despite the crisis, to promote the ideals and values upon which it was founded.

All the social issues on the agenda of this session, particularly those relating to employment, HIV/AIDS, international labour standards and domestic work, are of special interest to the Government of Senegal. Indeed, prompted by our concern to meet social challenges and the needs of our society, we are making a huge effort to tackle and resolve these issues.

In the same spirit, we are working to achieve the objectives of the Global Jobs Pact, which our Conference adopted in June 2009, as the most appropriate response to the crisis. Given the importance of the issues involved, His Excellency Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, played an active role in the Work Symposium held in Ouagadougou on 1 and 2 December 2009 on the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact.

Similarly, with respect to the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda and international labour standards, I would like to commend the excellent initiative of the Government of the Netherlands in hosting the The Hague Global Child Labour Conference on 10–11 May 2010, in partnership with the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. I reaffirm my country's full commitment to the main objective of this meeting, namely to strengthen the global movement for universal ratification by 2016 of the ILO's Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

In setting this goal, the international community confirmed yet again that it is aware that child labour constitutes an obstacle to full respect for human rights and to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It evidently also wished to reaffirm that this is a scourge which contributes to the aggravation of the economic crisis and to greater injustice.

I should like to take this opportunity to stress, on behalf of Senegal, the need to ensure that these actions for the promotion of children's rights are part of a coherent global policy for poverty reduction, the acceleration of growth and the promotion of employment. Accordingly, we reaffirm our commitment to the implementation by the ILO of the Decent Work Country Programme as the most appropriate framework for cooperation with the ILO, in order to build a development policy based on social justice.

In this context, we have taken important measures for the consolidation and creation of decent jobs, including the adoption of a national employment policy and a national strategy for social protection. These instruments will be implemented through a process of productive social dialogue, which has always been a hallmark of the relationship between the State and its social partners.

In concluding, I would like to reaffirm Senegal's commitment to continue its full involvement, alongside all the Members of the ILO, in overcoming the economic and social crisis, so that human dignity is preserved and universal peace is attained. In doing so, naturally I am thinking especially of the Palestinian people and all the Palestinian workers who have been unfairly deprived of the full exercise of their fundamental rights.

(*Mr Nakajima takes the chair.*)

Original Spanish: Mr MARTÍNEZ (*Worker, Chile*)

The crisis that has so seriously harmed the world economy also offers certain opportunities. Opportunities to correct errors and to create a better future. What is needed is a broad vision of how to build a world of development and well-being for all on the basis of an economy which is fairer and more sustainable, with more participative democracies.

The tremendous social inequalities generated by policies of wealth accumulation by the big businesses and the financial sector have been aggravated by the crisis and have created a level of need in the population which is not compatible with the human condition and departs from the values of decent work.

The poor quality of jobs, atypical types of contracts and informal employment, have all contributed to increasing existing inequalities and widespread use of outsourcing through subcontracting. This, in turn, has progressively increased social inequalities.

The recipe of tackling the deterioration of economies through more flexible and precarious employment arrangements is not an acceptable option. In some countries such as Chile, labour relations cannot be any more flexible than they already are, and yet growth is stagnating, while Chile heads the world rankings of social inequality.

The social drama of unemployment is used as a pretext to cut wages and limit social coverage. "Junk jobs" are becoming institutionalized, and all this is taking place alongside vast profits of big business, which is accumulating wealth whilst spreading uncertainty and despair.

Some governments make promises to eliminate unemployment during their election campaigns and then, once elected, do the opposite. I would like to denounce here, from this international tripartite forum, the wave of dismissals of public servants carried out by our new Government, whose words are not matched by its actions. The CUT of Chile shares the view that the policies of a modern State should be regulated and efficient, but this does not mean that we should cut jobs. States are not doing their job properly when their officials work in fear of losing their jobs and under threat of unemployment. We have therefore submitted a formal complaint to the Governing Body of the ILO so that it may duly note the job insecurity in Chile's public service sector.

There is an urgent need for integrated social policies to ensure that those who are unemployed at least have guarantees for the health and the education of their children, as well as unemployment insurance to allow them to meet their basic needs.

Any economic recovery policy must be based on productivity, fair wages and decent work as part of a balanced and sustainable economy; this is the basis of a solid and fair strategy.

We would like to mention here domestic workers who have as yet not achieved any recognition. Domestic workers in private homes find that their hours are endless, that their days of rest are not respected and the treatment which they experience cannot be considered decent work.

To establish standards for domestic workers is an absolute imperative, an ethical imperative. We have to try to remedy the damage which has been done in

the past in this sector and we should therefore adopt a Convention and a Recommendation for domestic workers employed in private homes. This is a necessary and fair step towards eliminating discrimination which so seriously affects this sector of the working population.

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

As a veteran of 32 years' regular attendance at the International Labour Conference, it is a matter of pride and joy for me and for the Organization of African Trade Union Unity to hear the ILO's voice being raised loud and clear within the United Nations system, the G8 and G20, advocating for a fair globalization, decent work, and social and economic justice. This advocacy has given the ILO the moral authority that some other international institutions do not have because of their advocacy of neo-liberal financial and economic policies which are responsible for the current global financial and economic crisis.

Also worth mentioning are the various capacity-building programmes the ILO has been providing to its tripartite constituencies to enable them to overcome the crisis. Our organization, and workers throughout Africa, have also been beneficiaries of some of these capacity-building programmes through financial and technical support of the African Regional Office and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). The latest of these capacity-building workshops was held for more than 80 top African trade union leaders on Social Dialogue in Africa – The Algerian Experience, in Algiers, Algeria, from 12 to 13 May 2010. These types of workshop assist African trade unions and their leaders to take active part in processes of socio-economic development at the national, regional and continental levels in Africa.

Our members are playing leading roles within the African Union's Economic, Social and Cultural Council and the other structures of the African Union Commission. Our objective during the current biennium is, in collaboration with the ILO, to strengthen the sub-regional trade union organizations of our continent in order for them to be empowered within their regional economic communities to facilitate: the creation of tripartite structures within the regional economic communities and implementation of decent work country and regional programmes and other relevant programmes; active participation in all the processes of regional economic integration; and the defence of trade union and other human rights.

Our organization will continue to ask for the support of the ILO to build the capacity of our members in employment creation; implementation of the OATUU Gender Commission's programmes; elaboration of macroeconomic policies; implementation of the new HIV/AIDS instruments; strengthening of social dialogue; strengthening of capacity of workers' representatives on social security boards, etc.

On the present financial and economic crisis, I would like to give some advice to all the governments of the world. This is born out of the experience of the African countries in the implementation of the IMF–World Bank's neo-liberal structural adjustment programmes from 1980 to the year 2000.

The main elements of these structural adjustment programmes were: massive retrenchment of workers in the public sector; withdrawal of subsidies for

food, housing, health, education, transport and public utilities; high interest rates, varying between 20 and 40 per cent; financial deregulation and trade liberalization. The result was devastating for African countries and peoples, leading to the destruction of most of the industries established since independence, causing what development economists call “de-industrialization of Africa”; massive debts and debt servicing; a massive increase in poverty; political and social instability (for example, the withdrawal of the subsidy on rice by the democratically elected Government of Liberia led to the overthrow of the democratically elected Government of Liberia in a coup led by Master Sergeant Doe and almost 15 years of civil war); the weakening of the public services and a high increase in corruption; and the destruction of education and health infrastructure in most African countries.

Now, therefore, governments which have now started to adopt IMF–World Bank-style neo-liberal structural adjustment programmes as a response to the present financial and economic crisis are warned not to repeat Africa’s sad experience of 1980–2000.

Let me ask governments this simple question: Whose side are you on? Are you on the side of your peoples or on the side of the manipulators of the market? If you are not on the side of your peoples, you will be sorry for it. A word is enough for the wise.

Original Spanish: Mr YAGUAL YAGUAL (Worker, Ecuador)

Following the introduction of a whole raft of legislation which has affected the rights and achievements of workers, the labour sector in Ecuador is currently facing difficulties as a result of the absence of real labour–management relations.

Ecuadorian workers, under the provisions of the Constitution and the Labour Code, have been calling for respect for their fundamental rights. The rights enshrined in article 11 (No. 3), article 33, article 66 (Nos 16 and 17), and articles 325 and 326 which deal with workers rights and guarantees which must be respected by the Ecuadorian State, are not being upheld as a consequence of a whole series of draft laws that ignore what has already been achieved through collective bargaining. The labour sector, through the unions, recognized by the Ecuadorian State, has been asking the Government to respect the provisions of the Labour Code related to collective bargaining, namely article 220, as well as article 248, which deal with revisions of collective agreements, and freedom of association dealt with in article 440, paragraph 2, which deals with labour disputes brought before the labour inspectorates pertaining to non-compliance and violations of collective agreements in the private and public sectors.

The Ecuadorean workers have asked the State to respect ILO Conventions Nos 87 and 98, which, of course, constitute the mechanism that workers demand to ensure true freedom of association and collective bargaining, and which the State should respect in compliance with article 424 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, a provision which protects the weaker party, namely the workers. Over the years, the Labour Code has been regulated labour relations between workers and employers in both the private and public sector, in line with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador and the international agreements which have been duly recognized by the State. However,

making the Labour Code more flexible would have an impact on guarantees of labour rights in Chile. Workers in the electricity and oil sectors have been dismissed, although those sectors had enjoyed stability for many years, and collective agreements have not been respected.

Outsourced workers are not guaranteed job stability, in line with Constituent Order No. 8. The majority have been dismissed by public and private companies, creating even more unemployment in the country. I think that these observations, made on behalf of the workers of Ecuador, should be taken on board and given due consideration, in order to achieve good labour–management relations in my country.

Original Spanish: Mr MORANTES (Worker, Colombia)

I would like to refer to the Report of the Director-General and I emphasize the importance of this work. With regard to the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, stepping up the fight against child labour and the campaign for decent work are vital in these times of crisis. The work of the ILO in the strategy to apply the Global Jobs Pact, presented by the Chairperson of the Governing Body, is also very important.

In some countries, it is being stated that the economic crisis is already over and that companies are starting to recover and make a profit. However, it is worrying that workers who were dismissed mid-crisis have not been re-employed. This means that the effects of the crisis are still present and that it is the workers who have paid the cost of it, resulting in millions living in poverty.

I feel that freedom of association is indispensable for decent work. That is why it is extremely worrying that, in Colombia, the right to freedom of association is obstructed, with workers who join or found a trade union being immediately dismissed. The murder of trade unionists continues; there have been 29 victims this year. Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for exercising trade union activities. Sixty-four per cent of all killings of trade unionists in the world in the last ten years occurred in Colombia. The trade union movement is also the victim of many other acts of violence, forced disappearances, threats, attacks on trade union headquarters, etc.

In Colombia, the trade union movement has suffered from state-organized violence, for example so-called “false positives” or extrajudicial executions of civilians by the forces of law and order. This also applies to the Administrative Department of Security: the justice system established that this department organized and carried out a number of activities against the trade union movement. It submitted lists of trade union leaders to be assassinated, and such assassinations were carried out, and intercepted communications to trade union leaders, court judges and leaders of the opposition.

Companies and the State use many forms of labour mediation, notably through the proliferation of pseudo-cooperatives which have changed the face of the real spirit of the cooperative movement by abusing labour relations and labour and trade union rights.

The public health system has collapsed, leading the Government to declare a social emergency. The origin of this crisis is the neo-liberal model, which made the right to health a private business, leaving millions of citizens without options.

In 2006, we subscribed to a tripartite agreement on the right to freedom of association and democracy. Its application has been quite difficult, as its main objective has not been fulfilled. Social dialogue has remained without results and impunity of crimes against trade unionists continues to be at 97 per cent.

Despite this picture, Colombia was excluded from the list of cases to be examined this year in the Committee on the Application of Standards, because of the inconsistent attitude of employers who, by threatening this regulatory monitoring system of the ILO, violate human rights and destroy the trade union movement.

The Government of Colombia has accepted a high-level, tripartite ILO mission. We hope that this will contribute to obtaining objective information on the situation of human rights and trade union rights in Colombia and to the fulfilling of the ILO recommendations that have not yet been implemented.

We request that the appointed representative of the ILO in Colombia has a profile and a mandate that enables him or her to help and contribute to resolving the complex labour and trade union problems in the country. We also hope that technical cooperation will be strengthened.

The workers of Colombia wish the international community at this Conference to hear the Colombian people's call for social justice.

Original Arabic: Mr SAYED SALMAN (Worker, Bahrain)

I represent the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions and I would like to talk about the issues most of concern to our movement.

We are fast approaching the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference, which will be held next year. All those who fight for trade union rights, social justice and human dignity will cherish that occasion, regardless of which group they are affiliated to.

The history of this Organization is filled with events as a result of which international labour standards have been strengthened. Those standards have arrived in regions where workers were not only denied fundamental labour rights, but also where they were deprived of a means to claim those rights. However, now, thanks to the tireless work and unique efforts of our Organization, those ways and means are not only available but have gained in strength to break the vicious circle of poverty, marginalization and unemployment. As was said by the Director-General in his opening statement to the Conference, the Organization has, year after year,

made it possible for its Members to respect the standards.

The ILO has supported our struggle in the period preceding the recognition of freedom of association that our workers were asking for. We now have a trade union movement that garners international and regional respect, despite the small size of our country and small number of our workers. This would not have been possible without the logistical and technical support of the Organization, for which I extend my thanks.

I do not believe that the struggle for social justice has come to an end; it has just begun, at all levels. That is what we realized, as a trade union, from the day of promulgation of the freedom of association legislation in the Kingdom of Bahrain. We have come to realize that we moved from the stage of claiming our right to freedom of association to claiming our right to effectively exercise it. Our battle is currently taking place on two levels: the legislative level and the level of practical application.

On the practical level, our workers are suffering today from arbitrary dismissal, in both the public and private sectors, because of their trade union activities or their political opinions. This, notwithstanding the fact that the Kingdom of Bahrain has ratified the ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), which prohibits any discrimination on the basis of political opinion. Although the financial crisis affects companies, workers have borne the brunt of it. It is not fair that workers should face the consequences of a crisis that was the result of bad management of financial institutions.

The inclusion of discussions on employment on the agenda of this Conference reflects the importance you attach to the issue of employment in the context of the financial crisis. As a trade union, we have always called for State intervention in the economy, to allow enterprises affected by the crisis to remedy those effects by maintaining, or even increasing, employment levels. However, we do not believe that the Government's response addressed the ramifications of the crisis, which led to large numbers of workers in banks and large companies losing their jobs.

On the legislative front, allow me to quote the Director-General when he described the Committee on the Application of Standards as the vital organ of this Conference, as it makes international labour law. We have faced major challenges at the legislative level in our country.

(The Conference adjourned at 12.10 p.m.)

Fourth Sitting
Thursday, 10 June 2010, 2.30 p.m.
Presidents: Ms Powell and Mr de Robien

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

Original French: The PRESIDENT (Ms POWELL)

We shall now continue the general discussion on the Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General.

Original French: Mr NAPOLEON (Worker, Haiti)

This International Labour Conference is something that we in the Haitian trade union movement have been looking forward to for a long time, and we want to sound the alarm, not only to the ILO but also to foreign investors, calling on them to help us create stable and decent jobs. That would enable Haitian workers, both men and women, to regain their dignity as human beings – which is essential for development; and believe me, the trade union movement is already one of the main players in the reconstruction of our country.

The earthquake of 12 January 2010 not only devastated our country, but it also inexplicably destroyed our economy and the environment within our society, and the main victim of this terrible disaster has been the Haitian working class. It is no secret to anyone that they have been abandoned and left to their own devices. They are waiting for help from international partners, they are waiting for international aid with dignity, but this is something that has to come through job creation. That is what we expect and what we are determined to achieve.

Apart from the material, social, economic, environmental and other damage wrought by the devastating earthquake of 12 January, in which over 300,000 human beings lost their lives, and which also led to economic collapse, no one was spared, and all the key sectors of our economy have been hit. In any case, workers in our country are becoming poorer and even more vulnerable. Today, the problems faced by the Haitian workers are there for everyone to see: they are poorly housed in miserable shanties, and no one knows when they will reach the end of their tribulations. The will is lacking to put an end to their Calvary. Yet they keep on walking under the thorns. Although there are some jobs still in some of the outsource factories, these are not guaranteed, working conditions are harsh, and people are sacked daily. There has been a rash of unlawful dismissals, and the labour inspectorate of the Ministry says nothing about these abuses.

The working class in our country is at the epicentre of our economy, but it has always been despised and abandoned. Working men and women living in shanties are even now left unprotected from the scourges of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Children have not been spared either, and child labour is on the increase because many families do not have jobs and are unable to meet their children's needs. The trade unions want to address all these problems. We have to put a stop to them, otherwise we will be mortgaging the future. Therefore, the Haitian workers are calling on the ILO and international trade union organizations to show their solidarity with our children so that we can eradicate child labour in Haiti.

Faced with this terrible plight, the Haitian trade unions take the opportunity of this 99th Session of the International Labour Conference to launch an appeal for solidarity to the leaders of the ILO so that they can take an active role in assisting the workers of Haiti.

We believe that the ILO, which has had to combat poverty and unemployment in the course of its work, should work hand in hand with the trade unions in the reconstruction of our country so as to include all the different social and occupational groups in its vocational training, providing training to young workers to enable them to find jobs and meet the needs of rebuilding the country.

I believe that today the ILO should make its presence felt alongside the workers and employers and the trade union movement, which has a key role to play. We need this desperately, and we trust the leaders of this magnificent international institution and especially its esteemed Director-General not to stint on their assistance to the Haitian trade unions, in order once again to contribute to the social, economic, sanitary and environmental reconstruction of Haiti.

Something has to be done; the country is devastated, wrecked, unrecognizable and disappointed. There are no jobs, and people have to be helped, or there will be no stopping the wave of Haitian men and women who will migrate abroad in search of a job, with the resulting brain drain.

Faced with all these factors, we can say that the absolute poverty caused by this loss of jobs and by unemployment is putting us under pressure. Please stand by us with your support so that we as a trade union movement can make our contribution to rebuilding our beloved country.

This year's Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, provides an excellent analogy of the global financial economic crisis and how together we can design a Global Jobs Pact to address the jobs crisis.

This Report is therefore an excellent basis upon which we can reflect, at times of crisis, on our counter strategy and on the march forward.

Kenya agrees that recovery is still in the balance, as evidenced by a sharp decline in production and a large increase in unemployment. While there are signs of recovery, it is clear that it is weak, with many developing countries worldwide still worrying about how to cope.

While job growth may have appeared, global unemployment is still blighting particularly the developing countries. The labour market is characterized by changing patterns of work, including part-time work, involuntary temporary work, informal employment, pay cuts and benefits reductions, to mention but a few.

We agree that recovery with progressive social stability can only be achieved through strong, sustainable and balanced job growth. For Africa, we must ensure that quality work is at the heart of the recovery, guided by the Ouagadougou road map, which has been the main one for recovery.

One significant lesson from the crisis is that political, social and financial stability are interrelated, as evidenced by the solutions to the crisis proposed by global leaders in this august house last June, leading to the Global Jobs Pact.

We therefore advocate enhanced cooperation, collective responsibility in pursuing policies that promote productivity, dignity and rights at work, social protection programmes that help support families and social cohesion.

In Kenya, the impact of the crisis had been transmitted through declining export earnings, lower commodity prices, reduced remittances and declining development assistance and foreign investment, further compounded by the effects of the earlier food and fuel crises. Poverty reduction targets were adversely affected, impacting most of all on the rural population, youth, women and other vulnerable groups.

In an effort to secure recovery, we introduced in July 2009 an economic stimulus package for economic growth and employment which included, among others, an expansion of youth and women's development funds to promote self-employment and to build on the entrepreneurial culture; the establishment of a consolidated social protection fund for cash transfers for orphans, vulnerable children and persons with disabilities; additional investment in labour-intensive infrastructure projects; and ongoing impact studies.

We thank the ILO for having agreed recently to assist us in developing employment and social protection policies which are now in progress, and which we believe will strengthen the above initiatives.

Kenya is concerned about the new twist to the financial crisis regarding national debt and budget deficits, raising doubts about the stability of the international financial and monetary systems, which might jeopardize prospects for growth, especially for the developing countries. We therefore support the proposal by the Director-General that the issue

of job creation should be central to recovery. We also support the proposed restructuring of the field offices, especially the correspondent offices that will address member country needs. It is our hope that this will be rolled out with immediate effect.

We urge the ILO to remain steadfast in its strategy of supporting constituents to utilize the Global Jobs Pact through technical support, knowledge sharing and international policy dialogue.

We also request the International Labour Office to ensure that the measures taken towards recovery reflect the national needs of the constituents are long term and can provide policy options that stand the test of time.

Finally, allow me to commend the Director-General for his efforts in ensuring that the Pact is globally embraced.

Original French: Mr NKILI (Minister of Labour and Social Security, Cameroon)

I am very pleased to be able to participate in the general discussion of the Report of the Director-General, *Accelerating action against child labour*.

This inhuman phenomenon is destroying the future of nearly 215 million children throughout the world and is holding up the efforts of member States to combat vulnerabilities. Children are the adults of tomorrow and for them to be able to enter the world of employment properly equipped to find decent work, they must stay in school to obtain education and professional training.

As far as jobs are concerned, Cameroon has declared the period 2010–19 the decade of employment. In fact, the fight against unemployment, underemployment and poverty has always been a real concern of the Government. To face this scourge, the Government has undertaken to revise the strategy document for the reduction of poverty from 2003. The new strategy, entitled "Strategy document for growth and employment" (DSCE), was adopted in August 2009. This document is the first phase in the achievement of the vision for development up to 2035.

Moreover, Cameroon reaffirms its commitment to adopt the guidelines of the Global Jobs Pact. This commitment was expressed in September 2009 at the seventh ordinary session of the African Union Labour and Social Affairs Commission in Addis Ababa. It was once again expressed in December 2009 at the first African Decent Work Symposium, which took place in Ouagadougou.

With this in mind, our country will be organizing, in July 2010, a forum on the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact. This meeting will bring together the Government, employers, workers, decentralized territorial authorities and civil society to find a concerted approach to a national jobs pact.

In 2004, a ministry was created for ensuring free primary education and 16,000 teachers were recruited to make up a shortfall of nearly 40,000.

Hundreds of schools and thousands of classrooms were constructed in the most distant corners of our country to bring schools closer to children and to encourage them to stay in education.

In 2008, a study was carried out on children in Cameroon that revealed that child labour exists in rural areas, particularly in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and hunting. Moreover, children living in poor households are more likely to be working in this environment than others. These children are generally unpaid help for their families.

The adoption by our national assembly of the law of December 2005 on the trafficking of children intends to combat this vile phenomenon.

Thanks to the help of the ILO with the WACAP and LUTRENA projects, 5,000 child victims of trafficking were identified in three very agricultural regions. More than 2,000 of them who were still of school age were reintegrated into the school system. As part of this, children were trained in car mechanics, plumbing, electricity, hairdressing and information technology. When they left the centres, the children received start-up kits from the Government which allowed them to have sources of income and to become independent.

However, 3,000 children identified in these three regions are still waiting and, if nothing is done, there is the risk that they may go back into the circuit of exploitation where their situation will be more difficult. Cameroon, therefore, is launching an urgent appeal to development partners to seek their multiform help to continue this work in the seven other regions of the country. Let us work together to protect our children in distress, as the Government of Cameroon is doing.

Finally, we would like to point out that Cameroon is strongly resolved to take up the challenge of sustainable development for all. That is how we must view the Yaoundé international conference in May 2010, organized by the Head of State, His Excellency Paul Biya. The declaration issued following this meeting is another step towards the search for sustainable solutions for a fair and balanced globalization. Cameroon is counting on the support of the international community.

Mr SAJINARAYANAN (*Worker, India*)

I am extremely happy to stand before the global assembly of labour at a time when the ILO has passed its 90th year. Let us appreciate the tireless efforts of the ILO in bringing about radical changes in the world of work. It proved again that it is one step ahead when the Global Jobs Pact was adopted last year against the background of the global financial crisis.

It occurred to us that the ILO had always been instrumental in establishing workers' rights and setting standards in relation to the various proclaimed rights.

I would therefore propose that the next ten years should be taken as crucial in that the ILO must play a historic role in reaching the grey areas of the world of work. Instead of reaching those we have already reached, we must fulfil our mission of reaching those we have not yet reached.

There are large grey areas of labour left out in many countries and deprived of bargaining power and hence, most exploited. This includes the unorganized or informal sector, women workers, child workers, migrant labour, those in forced labour, bonded labourers, trafficked workers, low-paid workers, casual labour, contract labour, tribal workers, the poor and starving, and other vulnerable sections. For most of them socio-economic justice is a distant dream. They can genuinely expect Himalayan accomplishments ahead from the ILO. Newly emerging sectors like IT, special economic zones (SEZs) and so on are also areas where social protection and social dialogue are absent.

The ILO's tripartite constituents have to take up this task as a dedicated mission during the ten years to come, because without this we may not be able to

touch even the tip of the iceberg. Let the ILO chalk out an action plan and bind it upon national governments and other social partners. Governments should see the task as a part of their national development agenda.

Governments all over the world should realize that a society is measured by the way it treats its vulnerable sections. The ILO should set up a tripartite monitoring agency for this purpose. Let "transform the world of work" be our new slogan, our clarion call. Let a new renaissance take place. The ILO has to intrude into the unfathomed areas of the working world so that people are not left alone to seek their own means of obtaining economic justice.

The ILO should take up the challenge, fill the vacuum, organize the needy and persist in its endeavours until the goal of decent work for all is achieved. This is the historic role the ILO has to perform over the coming ten years.

The recommendation on employment this year would be a move forward at a time of crisis. The historic assignment of giving new life to HIV victims would take a step ahead through the recommendation.

The killing of trade union workers is a scandal. Sincere compliance with standards by governments would dignify the spirit of global unity in an era of social dialogue. Let us make the world a better place to live in.

I must congratulate the Director-General for introducing this year the cause of domestic workers as one of the main themes for discussion. The long-cherished proposed Convention on decent work for domestic workers should relieve the suffering of millions of domestic workers the world over. Women workers constitute the major part of this group. The issues here range from combating extreme forms of exploitation to decent wages and service conditions. Their issues differ from country to country and from developed to developing countries or least developed countries. The tragic plight of migrant domestic workers begins with migration, when they are exploited by recruiting agents. A sizeable proportion of domestic workers must be seen as a most helpless and downtrodden group and is one estranged facet of forced labour. The most vulnerable domestic workers, who are subjected to extreme forms of forced labour, include live-in workers, child workers, tribals, migrants, and others. They require the urgent attention of all lawmakers and enforcement agencies. Civilized societies should hang their heads in shame when we hear nightmarish stories of hapless, vulnerable domestic workers. Domestic workers, including Indian migrant workers abroad, have seen some light at the end of the dark tunnel after a long wait of 50 years. Let us strive to adopt a Convention that can redress the plight of this neglected group.

Mr GAMINI KULAWANSA LOKUGE (*Minister of Labour Relations and Productivity Promotion, Sri Lanka*)

We are meeting again one year after adopting the historic Global Jobs Pact, which provided a framework and a resource for practical policies for the multilateral system, governments, workers and employers to recover from the crisis. I believe it is timely to review the progress made in implementing the Global Jobs Pact. In this context, I commend the Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, and highlight the areas focused on crisis response and the way forward to

stronger, more sustainable and equitable development.

Compared to most countries, Sri Lanka has been affected marginally by the crisis. The Report of the Director-General classified Sri Lanka among the countries with slower but positive GDP growth and a slight but moderate increase in unemployment rates during the financial crisis.

Despite an almost 30-year civil war, the Asian tsunami in 2004 and the recent financial crisis, during the past four years, Sri Lanka has recorded average economic growth of about 5 per cent per annum.

Our success is due to the people-focused policies adopted by the Government of His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka. The Mahinda Chinthanaya, the Government's ten-year national development strategy, demonstrates its commitment to achieving the multiple goals of rapid economic growth; employment generation; reduction of poverty accompanied by redistributing justice; regionally balanced development; and environmental sustainability.

The United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report 2009* showed that Sri Lanka has made considerable progress in alleviating poverty. Over the last five years, poverty has dropped from 23 per cent to 15 per cent. The latest Millennium Development Goal data indicate that the country is well on track to attain the goal of eradicating extreme poverty by the 2015 deadline.

With the positive sentiments of the global business community, coupled with the gradual returning of northern and eastern provinces affected by 30 years of war to their economic activities and the economy entering a low-inflation and low-interest-rate regime through positive macroeconomic policies, Sri Lanka has begun to show high prospects and stimulus to economic activities.

We have learned that the impact of the global economic crisis, or any other disaster, is likely to be painful for the poor unless reforms are made to the social protection sector.

Setting up unemployment benefit schemes, consolidating existing social security systems, increasing coverage to certain segments of workers and enhancing the effectiveness of the existing safety net schemes are some of the important areas to be addressed in our crisis response, as well as when promoting decent work in the country. In this context, as a first measure, I hope to introduce a pension scheme to members of the employees' provident fund using a minimum share of their contributions in order to ensure the receipt of regular income when the workers are out of employment.

In spite of all our efforts and achievements in social and economic development, Sri Lanka cannot be complacent with what has been achieved in terms of sustainable development. However, in all our achievements, the support and cooperation from our social partners should be commended.

The role played by the social partners during the financial crisis endorsed the view expressed by the ILO Director-General in his Report that social dialogue is a key to ensuring sustainable recovery.

In conclusion, I wish to endorse fully the view that the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization would be an effective tool to guide the policies and actions of the member States, as well as the ILO. In this context, we think that the

ILO should enhance its capacity and become more innovative in its approach.

Original French: Mr KONE (Minister of Labour and Social Security, Burkina Faso)

I would like to reiterate the support of the President of Burkina Faso, Mr Blaise Compaore, for Mr Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Office, for his leadership of our organization and his commitment to facing, with the support of the tripartite constituents, the challenges of the economic crisis in order to ensure social justice throughout the world.

I would like to welcome the addition to the agenda of important issues which relate to current problems and require urgent solutions, namely the establishment of a standard related to HIV/AIDS in the world of work, decent work for domestic workers and the application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations. I think that these tripartite debates will lead to consensual solutions in line with the principles of decent work. What is more, the high-level discussions on the Global Jobs Pact, micro-economic policies and the role of productive work and social protection, will certainly contribute to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

This debate reinforces our shared values and, particularly at an African level, promotes the strategies adopted within the framework of the First African Decent Work Symposium, held in Ouagadougou.

With the President's permission, I would like to thank the ILO, on behalf of the Government of Burkina Faso, for the confidence placed in my country with respect to organizing this Conference and the broad support which contributed to the success of this historic meeting.

The adoption of the Global Jobs Pact, at the instigation of the ILO, is an important achievement which follows unexplored paths in order to prevent and mitigate the social impact of different crises.

Burkina Faso welcomes the fact that this Pact has been accepted by the international financial institutions and the UN system, as well as the fact that it correlated with the relevant conclusions concerning employment and poverty drawn at the summit of African Heads of State and Government in 2004 at Ouagadougou.

My country is fully aware that eradicating poverty requires the creation of decent jobs for all, and it is with a view to this objective that we have now ratified the Conventions relating to employment policy, health and safety at work, maternity protection, health and safety at work in agriculture and the promotional frameworks for health and safety at work, and the instrument for the amendment of the ILO Constitution.

In order to implement these different instruments, the Government of Burkina Faso has introduced a process designed to integrate these standards into national legislation, through the adoption of a national Labour Code or law, and the adoption, in the near future, of a national labour policy document, as well as an action plan to implement the policy, in line with the national guidelines in the field of development policy.

Within this context, steps are being taken to improve the visibility of the labour market and of social dialogue, and to ensure better social protection for all workers in Burkina Faso. These steps include disseminating the text of the reforms pertaining to

the labour sector and the social sector, which might improve the business climate and foster the creation of decent jobs for all. They also include a sectoral strategy to combat HIV/AIDS, as well as the creation of a universal, national health-care system, for which the feasibility study has almost been completed.

I would like to express my country's satisfaction with the exemplary nature of the cooperation with the International Labour Office, and I would like to state that we are fully prepared to pursue this rich and dynamic exchange of experiences, to the benefit of the social partners, in accordance with the ideals of our Organization.

With this objective in mind, Burkina Faso intends to continue to be a catalyst in the process of mobilizing the constituents with regard to employment and labour issues, through the guidelines of its Decent Work Country Programme, which aim to create employment and a fair income for all.

Under the enlightened leadership of the President and with the benefit of the ILO's expertise, I am sure that the delegates here are determined to ensure that the 99th Session fulfils all of its promises and that, through the discussions and the proposals made, consensual solutions will be achieved, in order to deal with the threats faced by the business sector and the world of work as a whole. It is clear that this is a global crisis, but thankfully there is also a great deal of solidarity in the world.

Mr ATWOLI (*Worker, Kenya*)

I thank the Director-General for his Report, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, which provides us with what one would call the initial review or assessment of what member States and constituents have achieved in implementing economic recovery measures as outlined in the Global Jobs Pact agreed at the Summit last year.

The Report's scorecard presents mixed results, though generally promising across and within ILO member States if the momentum is not lost. However, though signs of economic recovery are evident, jobs growth, which was the centrepiece of the recovery measures on the whole, still remains elusive recording a lower rate of economic growth.

Threatened with sovereign debt crisis, member States risk being forced by market pressures to halt stimulus packages which have been responsible for curbing financial meltdown, in order to forestall defaulting on debt obligations and ballooning budget deficits. As a workers' representative, we concur with the Director-General's Report that such measures would be premature and counterproductive, as the private sector in many economies still lacks the ability to independently anchor recovery measures, and the public or government role remains crucial.

We cannot allow a fallback into recession – we as ILO constituents already have instruments to guide us through the recovery process and back to a shared prosperity. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization provides a framework upon which to implement the Global Jobs Pact.

These are instruments which have gained worldwide acceptance, including endorsement by the G20 Leaders' Summit in Pittsburgh and the follow-up meeting of their labour and employment ministers in Washington, DC. In our view, deepening and

fast-tracking the implementation of the Jobs Pact hold the key to quick and sustainable recovery.

Kenya, just like many other member States, registered modest economic growth of 2.6 per cent in 2009, up from 1.6 per cent in 2008. However, this growth fell far short of the annual labour force supply, which is estimated at 750,000 persons. Indeed, the modern or formal sector, which is expected to have decent jobs, registered 55,500 new jobs in 2009, up from 34,000 in 2008, compared to the proposed total job creation of 10.4 million in 2009. Clearly, therefore, most of the jobs were not “decent”, which does not portend well for the overall recovery of the economy.

The Kazi Kwa Vijana (jobs for youth) programme, which is one of the measures designed to boost employment and protect income security, has yet to realize its objectives, owing to design and implementation flaws. Non-involvement of social partners, as well as the Ministry responsible for labour, is also partly to blame for this. This was a political project without foresight which excluded the tripartite partners.

Kenya recently enacted a new labour law regime which was achieved through tripartism and social dialogue, but what is perturbing is that the gains made in the area of worker's compensation were clawed back through a court order obtained by some lawyers in cahoots with some employers who had been fleecing workers of their compensation benefits obtained under the common law courts. We note that our Employer partners have not been fully supportive of our initiatives to reinstate the legal provisions struck out, and we want to reiterate and appeal to them to cooperate.

We also take issue with some employers who, instead of embracing the Jobs Pact measures of retaining employees in employment in the short term, have resorted to arbitrary declaration of redundancy under the guise of global economic and financial crisis.

Before I conclude, I want to record our appreciation to the leadership of the country for facilitating the inclusion of the workers' right to strike in the proposed National Constitution, which is about to be subject of a referendum in August this year. This is a manifestation of the respect the country has for workers, in as far as their right to bargain equally with their employer is concerned, and it is going to ensure that social dialogue and the voice of workers are entrenched in our workplaces and practices, as advocated by the ILO.

Original Spanish: Mr PUIG (Minister of Labour, Dominican Republic)

This Conference is taking place during difficult times. There is still uncertainty surrounding the process of economic recovery following the global financial crisis and many millions of people have not been able to re-enter the job market. The crisis has led to important paradigm shifts: fixed notions about development have to be abandoned. State action is fundamental in speeding up the process of economic recovery and in starting to define new economic and social development models that are focused on human beings.

The ILO has made important contributions to this process, such as through the adoption of the Global Jobs Pact. This Pact, based on the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, was welcomed by the international community and has

played an essential role in the definition of comprehensive and coherent policies to confront the global economic crisis.

The Dominican Government would like to congratulate the ILO on the work it has done, while calling on it to redouble its efforts so that the objectives established in the Global Jobs Pact can be achieved. The coordination of the ILO with multilateral cooperation institutions and agencies is fundamental in searching for creative and innovative responses to redefining a new architecture for international economic relations based on a more just and balanced vision of development.

As regards the Dominican Republic, we would like to point out that the rate of growth, in terms of the national economy, was affected by the global financial crisis. Nonetheless, because of a wide-ranging process involving social dialogue and the adoption of appropriate social and economic measures, the country achieved growth rates of 3 per cent of GDP in 2009 and the forecast is that we will achieve a growth rate of 5.5 per cent in 2010. At the same time, the Dominican social security system was strengthened, which meant that the number of beneficiaries and the amount of benefits were increased and the different types of welfare assistance services focused on the poorest people were extended.

The Dominican Government adopted the Global Jobs Pact and the Employment Ministry took on decent work as a strategic objective in its strategic plan for 2009–12, putting in place in a coherent and an integral way the labour standards of more and better work, strengthening of the social security system, equal opportunities and non-discrimination at work. All of this was on a basis of broad social dialogue. In the same way, the Dominican Government has prepared a proposed national development strategy for the next 20 years, and decent work is one of its strategic objectives.

In accordance with the objectives I have just mentioned, there has been a strengthening of the tripartite bodies involved in social dialogue, such as the Consultative Labour Council and the National Employment Committee. In the context of the latter committee, we have started discussing the formulation of national, regional and sectoral policies and plans aimed at increasing the level of formal employment throughout the country.

Furthermore, we continue to strengthen the culture of upholding labour standards as part of a modernization of the system of labour inspection and with a view to making it more professional. An integral system of labour registers has been set up and a division of labour actions has been set up in order to simplify procedures and guarantee higher levels of efficiency and quality. In 2009, 31 new trade unions were registered, 35 new collective agreements were signed and there were 59 conflict mediation activities.

The Dominican Government is committed to guaranteeing equal opportunities and non-discrimination at work. We support the adoption of the instrument on HIV/AIDS and the world of work that is being discussed at this Conference.

Similarly, we support the adoption of a Convention and a Recommendation on domestic work, which will make possible the regulation of working conditions in this important economic and social sector.

We want to take advantage of this possibility to bring to your attention the difficult situation in which the people of Haiti, brothers to the Dominican people, are living in as a result of the terrible earthquake that struck on 12 January this year. Last week, with the participation of representatives of 54 countries and the main multilateral bodies, an ambitious recovery plan was adopted for the Republic of Haiti. We make an urgent call to the ILO to become actively involved in this process in order to guarantee that, on the basis of your institutional experience, you can play an important role in setting up an economically prosperous, socially fair and environmentally sustainable development model, under the guidance and leadership of the men and women of Haiti.

Mr AUNG (*Deputy Minister of Labour, Myanmar*)

The Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, with its analysis of the financial crisis, the lessons and the policies to deal with its impact and recovery, will serve as a useful tool in our search for a better world of work. It also reflects the fact that the ILO has an important role to play in the recovery.

As the policy lessons have underlined, we believe public spending on infrastructure to be one of the major driving forces for creating jobs in Myanmar. Many infrastructure projects to build highways, bridges and dams and reservoirs for irrigation and power, for example, are being carried out these days with the participation of the private sector. These projects bring about the immediate creation of jobs for the local population, particularly the more vulnerable groups. They will also bring about long-term development for the country as a whole.

We have heard the Director-General's views on enhancing ILO capacity to face the new challenges. These views deserve very careful consideration by all, and we need more time for a closer look at them. Our comment at this juncture would be that most of the views and measures contained therein can help enhance the capacity of the ILO to deal with the new challenges of our time. However, we should also bear in mind that the financial implications are another important factor in our consideration.

Mr President, I would also like to comment on the Report of the Director-General, *Accelerating action against child labour*. This Report details the conditions of child labour around the world; the efforts of ILO and international cooperation for the decline of child labour; important achievements on the road to 2016; ways and means of turning challenges into opportunities; and the measures for eradicating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. I congratulate the Director-General for his far-reaching views on the eradication of child labour.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight our efforts to that end. The Union of Myanmar acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991. In line with the CRC, our Child Law was enacted in 1993 and rules relating to that law were promulgated in 2001. Furthermore, our National Committee on the Rights of the Child and its working committee have been formed for the effective implementation of the provisions of the law.

Mr President, Myanmar is advancing towards the elimination of forced labour practices with a firm political will and the full cooperation of the ILO.

Additionally, awareness-raising workshops on the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), are being held in various states and divisions of Myanmar. The Supplementary Understanding has been translated into the different national languages and made available to the public. At the same time, a simply worded brochure for the public has been approved and is being distributed. As such, it is hoped that forced labour will come to an end in the very near future.

Mr President, the rights of the workers will be crystallized after the elections to be held this year. Laws required for the upcoming elections are already in place, and political parties are registering in line with those laws. After the elections, the new Constitution will come into effect. In this Constitution, approved by 92.48 per cent of eligible voters, the rights of the citizens – including those of workers to express themselves, to assemble and to form associations and organizations – are enshrined in the chapter on citizenship and the fundamental rights and duties of the citizens.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Myanmar remains committed to further cooperation with the ILO to eliminate forced labour in the country.

Mr VARELA (Employer, Philippines)

The worst recession since the Great Depression that visited the global community underscored how interconnected economies and societies are. The nations of the world, through various collaborative mechanisms, are hard-pressed to leave the economic storm behind.

Given the magnitude of the problem and the urgency to confront it, the collective response was a crisis mode. This situation, however, can only be temporary. There is indeed a need for a long-term recovery.

The question, therefore, is how to proceed from a crisis response mode to the much-awaited recovery programme. The transition process is admittedly complex and arduous. There are formidable obstacles. The sovereign debt happening mainly here in Europe and the deficit burden are the common predicament of many countries and complicate the task even more. The Director-General is correct in pointing out that risk is certainly there and we must be prepared and vigilant.

To think of the pathways to a recovery programme in purely economic terms is to ignore the intricate interrelationships of the social and political dimensions to the dynamics of economics. No less than a holistic approach is necessary.

We must therefore bear in mind that recovery at the onset must be focused not by restoring confidence in the financial system alone, but, most importantly, by keeping business afloat and ensuring that employment and jobs, and decent and productive work are foremost on the agenda.

It is in this context that the Report of the Director-General for the 99th Session of the Conference serves as a timely and valuable framework for a sustainable and balanced recovery programme.

We can only speak of the process of transition to recovery, inasmuch as the global economy is still far from reaching that goal. In many parts of the world, the financial crisis is not yet over. In fact, to the legion of unemployed whose jobs were swept away by recessionary pressures, recovery is not felt.

While we are at a stage of transition to recovery, it is incumbent upon the International Labour Conference to have the resolve to use its moral persuasion and institutional goodwill to carry on its advocacy work for the Decent Work Agenda more so now than before.

Those in charge of policy formulation at the international, regional and national levels should factor job creation into their list of priorities as a basic concern. The universal principles of social justice ought to play a significant role in determining economic directions. Addressing what ails the global economy without considering its social ramifications is counterproductive.

Employers' groups in the Philippines are in full agreement with the Director-General in calling for a sustainable and equitable recovery programme that seeks to benefit every stakeholder sector, particularly the most vulnerable to any downward economic shift. We believe that, for any recovery programme to be meaningful for all, it must necessarily include employment generation. As the Director-General put it, "there is no sustainable recovery without jobs recovery".

Indeed, we cannot overemphasize the rationale of jobs creation as a centrepiece for any recovery programme. Jobs creation is economically logical, socially necessary and politically wise.

In the Philippines, we have just elected and proclaimed a new leader. Transformational policies for the post-crisis period now have to be put in place to change our nation's growth trajectory and underscore that our country's competitiveness challenges in various strategic areas are to be confronted and made to pave the way so that private enterprises can flourish. It is also an opportune time for us to push for economic recovery measures and policies that not only improve our country's competitiveness standing but also mainstreams the principles of decent work, including social dialogue and participation of all stakeholders concerned. The political and social climate in the country plays a key factor in putting forth recovery and growth measures within the sphere and context of decent and productive work, and this is the best time for us to take advantage of the optimism expressed by the new leadership, coupled with improved business sentiment and investors' confidence in the country.

Our work, however, is not yet done. We have only begun laying the building blocks to regain the strength and robustness of our economy, thus positioning ourselves for further growth. We must continue to do so by delivering what is best and what is appropriate, including adopting an international instrument on decent work and what is necessary for the mutual gain and benefit of employers and workers.

Mr FOLLO (Worker, Ethiopia)

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the ILO, on behalf of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and myself, for the opportunity to deliver a speech at this important conference.

The CETU is one of the tripartite partners of the ILO in Ethiopia, as it is the only vanguard and sole national trade union that has been formed to protect the well-being of Ethiopian workers and it strives to ensure the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions and other standards in Ethiopia. In this regard, Ethiopia has ratified 21 ILO Conventions.

The CETU held its 14th Congress on 9 March 2010. As part of a commitment to transparency, workers elected their leaders during the Congress by democratic means. We are also engaged in our country's democratic processes. This year, the CETU, in agreement with 12 professional and civil society organizations in Ethiopia, formed a coalition to observe the fourth general election 2010 in Ethiopia. The coalition deployed more than 40,000 observers throughout the country. The election was free, fair, democratic and peaceful. I strongly believe that this kind of activity helps to keep the workers and the general public interested in fostering a culture of democracy in our country.

Madam President, distinguished delegates, as you all know, the whole world is trying to recover from the global financial and economic crisis. The crisis damaged the global financial system and companies who employ many workers. I admire the effort made by leaders of developed countries, financial administrations and other international organizations to mitigate the damage caused by the crisis. However, I still want to urge the international community, financial institutions and international organizations to pay special attention to developing countries and workers in those countries.

The other issue which I want to raise is the problem of HIV/AIDS. Ethiopia is among the countries affected by HIV/AIDS. Research shows that the epidemic mostly affects persons between the ages of 15 and 49. This indicates that the workforce in the country and our development agenda are under threat. As a result, the CETU, as the representative of the workers, is engaged in prevention and the protection work related to HIV/AIDS in the workplace, together with other stakeholders such as the Government, the Employers' Federation, the ILO and other governmental and non-governmental organizations. The CETU, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Employers' Federation has developed the national policy on HIV/AIDS prevention and protection in the workplace. We are also working with our members on HIV/AIDS prevention, care, support and treatment programmes, with the support of various organizations. Therefore, the CETU places special emphasis on the proposed draft Recommendation on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. We therefore support the adoption of the Recommendation.

Finally, I would like to stress that the ILO should take a leading role in organizing efforts to support workers in developing countries facing problems related to the economic crisis. I want to thank the ILO Subregional Office and the ILO headquarters for their overall support. I also call on the ILO to further strengthen its financial and technical support.

Original Spanish: Mr HUMERES (Employer, Chile)

Ladies and gentlemen, the international crisis, which spanned parts of 2008 and 2009, and the boosting of employability have both been on the labour agenda since the ILO assembly last year.

Chile has taken the relevant steps to deal with these problems and it has done so successfully. Nevertheless, in February of this year, our country experienced the fifth worst earthquake since records began. The loss of precious human life was a catastrophe that we will never forget.

The level of material damage was high and particularly severe, as dwellings, highways and roads

were lost and schools and hospitals were destroyed, as were many businesses and centres of production. Although this dire disaster posed a tough challenge for the business sector, the employers' contribution to the recovery of the economy and the labour market has increased. We have made a commitment to rebuild lost or impaired productive capacity as soon as possible.

We hope that we will soon be able to get back on the path of sustainable economic growth. In order to do this, we need public policies which foster competition, innovation and are able to stimulate the economy, thereby fostering more and better entrepreneurial activities, in order to decrease unemployment and create new jobs.

In this regard, Chilean employers certainly appreciate and have lent their support to the action taken by our current Government in the areas affected by the earthquake. Special labour regimes have been created, granting more flexible access to unemployment benefit and reconstruction permits have been created to allow workers and employers to agree on the terms and conditions related to the suspension of the employment relationship.

As far as job creation is concerned, we understand that it is vital to create an appropriate framework for companies, so that they can take on more workers.

The employers, the Government and the workers have to be creative in terms of efforts to create new types of jobs, taking into account new technology and the new ways in which companies are formed and operate, by fostering training and retraining schemes.

However, we also need additional measures to improve the quality of education and to ensure relevant, lifelong vocational training, as well as a better system for certifying vocational skills and more effective employment agency services, as tools for improving the employability of individuals.

Finally, we believe that we, as actors in the field of labour relations, should work to preserve the tripartite nature of the ILO, as Mr Daniel Funes de Rioja stated yesterday. We have to build confidence, in order to achieve a fruitful social dialogue to create the right conditions for sustainable business, by means of agreements which allow us to overcome obstacles within the labour system which undermine the employability of the most vulnerable groups in society, in particular women and young people, and hamper the growth and development of small and medium-sized companies, which are essential to improving employability and achieving balanced and harmonious social and economic development in our country.

Original Spanish: Ms VICENS BELLO (Employer, Dominican Republic)

The Dominican Republic welcomes the Report of the Director-General and emphasizes the need to create a way forward that favours the generation of more and better jobs. That will require a new architecture of cooperation of the United Nations and the main multilateral agencies at the commercial, social and economic level and in terms of environmental sustainability.

Over the past two years, our economies have been affected by the worst external shock in living memory, generating important changes in the legal regulatory framework in order to tighten the regulations, following the serious consequences of deregulation or weak regulation and oversight in many countries

and in the capital and labour markets, as well as in the organization and operation of those markets.

These changes are taking place in the middle of a boom in the informal economy, increasing unemployment, a rise in interest rates and increasing prices of oil, oil products and food. That has all led to greater uncertainty and social exclusion because of the failure of the regulatory bodies that allowed speculation on a large scale, lack of regulation and an increase in unemployment.

The negative expectations of potential changes in some of the causes of the crisis have led us to conclude that the virtues of the system have come to an end and we now have to unite in our efforts to achieve a new wealth-creation model that will be more inclusive, in which development will be more human and where there is a better distribution of wealth within each society. All of this needs to be accompanied by new standards that ensure the necessary change in vision to give rise to a more effective world economic order.

To do this, we need to generate an accumulation model that is based on four solid development pillars; technological, economic, social and institutional, and environmental.

The first will allow the promotion of research and education and the creation of new entrepreneurs and business opportunities and will apply the results of research and technological development to the production of goods and services.

We think the economic pillar is necessary to generate and better distribute wealth. This would be a revision of the institutional order established in 1944 in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in the United States, on the basis of agreements that establish an international economic order to adapt the global financial and trade architecture to the new era. This will incorporate the need to combat social imbalance in countries by using resources in a more rational and balanced way.

Restructuring the rules, as well as international institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and others that they fund, will help to generate investment, increase consumption, create new jobs and reduce poverty.

The third pillar should be achieved by improving education to increase access to the labour market and better opportunities, as well as productivity and competitiveness in companies that require more and better flexibility and modernization of labour regulations so that they promote job creation and retention instead of being straightjackets on the development of labour markets. Therefore, it is indispensable that there are sustainable enterprises.

No country can grow or develop on the basis of inflexible standards that are outside the context in which they are applied and do not allow changes.

We do not want this proposal to be seen as one that ignores rights; we want to protect the right to formal and sustainable employment on the basis of provisions that support and promote investment in and creation and preservation of formal jobs. Ignoring this has led to an increase in the informal economy in countries such as the Dominican Republic.

History has shown us that not applying timely measures can be extremely harmful, so we urge that we should not get bogged down with texts that do not reflect reality and that we move with the times. What is happening should be not seen as a backwards step but as a step forwards that could allow a large number of people who do not have a job or

who have only been able to find one in the informal economy to access to the formal economy.

In the environmental pillar there should be a balance between production and the environment. We need to adopt measures that create a new international growth and wealth-creation model and better regulation as a market. We want to have a system that avoids the crisis which the current system has led us to. The crisis has shown that it is important to update a lot of labour legislation, including in the Dominican Republic. All of these actions are absolutely necessary in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and promote a more just and inclusive society, which is what we all want.

Monsignor TOMASI (*Apostolic Nuncio, The Holy See*)

The effects of the financial and economic crisis have globally damaged the welfare of families and individuals. Timid, uneven and uncertain signs of recovery notwithstanding, the impacts of the recession have stifled progress in poverty reduction and increased unemployment in developed countries, and every household has suffered setbacks in low-income countries. By 2015, another 20 million people in sub-Saharan Africa and 53 million globally will find themselves in extreme poverty. While there is general agreement on the need for structural reforms, vested interests must not shift most of the burden to wage earners, rural people and already marginalized groups in society. Economic mechanisms bereft of ethical criteria will not lead to constructive solutions.

The crisis can open up a new way of looking at the role of markets and the role of the State. The food crisis of 2008 showed that countries lacking basic food supplies could not simply rely on market forces to secure food for their people. Hence, a degree of self-sufficiency and better regulation of the commodities market became the logical conclusion.

The 2009 financial crisis showed that financial markets are not self-regulating. Greed prevented the suspension of a process whose systemic risks had been foreseen by many. Financial measures and the assurances provided by States and central banks saved the banking system and avoided financial meltdown, but they were unable to prevent the subsequent serious economic crisis that has resulted in a significant increase in unemployment and precariousness, affecting the most vulnerable people and countries.

Another result has been the enormous amount of public debt generated, especially by the most advanced economies. Public budgets and growth will be affected, taxes will rise, purchasing power will fall and unemployment will grow. The risk is that it will jeopardize the weak economic recovery. This is problematic for the most advanced economies in that the prospect of fiscal consolidation will constrain economic growth. Recent experience has shown the adjustment coefficient to be the level of unemployment, the purchasing power of people and their ability to feed, educate and care for themselves. Justice demands that people's suffering should be more than just a coefficient of the adjustment of the economic system. While the merits of the open market in terms of creating wealth should be acknowledged, some additional and internationally coordinated action appears necessary, together with the development of some means of common governance. We need to bear in mind that work is about more than earning wages; it is a

means of self-fulfilment and achieving one's goals in life.

The Holy See fully supports the ILO's aim to give priority to individuals and their work in the search for innovative and dynamic policies to remove the structural impediments to economic recovery. The focus on domestic workers and the vote in favour of a new binding instrument for their protection converge with the concern of the Church to give precedence to the most vulnerable members of society. Domestic workers are doubly at risk. First, they come from the most disadvantaged segments of society, with very limited resources for protection; and second, their working environment leaves them open to exploitation. The need for a new binding standard – an international convention on domestic workers – appears undeniable. It will promote opportune national legislation for their protection and support their rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining and union representation. An education campaign should be initiated to make both domestic workers and employers aware of their respective rights and duties. This widening of the horizon in the world of work offers both a challenge and new possibilities. As Pope Benedict XVI states in his social encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, labour unions, which have always been encouraged and supported by the Church, “looking to wider concerns than the specific category of labour for which they were formed ... are called to address some of the new questions arising in our society”.

As part of this widening of horizons in the global struggle for decent work, attention should focus on other categories of workers in need of protection: the masses of still unorganized workers, rural workers and unemployed youth. Rural workers, in particular, are often left out.

The economic crisis can become an opportunity. The complexity of the situation makes it difficult to make the right choices. If, however, the recovery comprehensively embraces all workers, if it renews the tripartite dialogue at the core of the ILO mission and gives priority to people and their talents, then a step forward will have been taken in the pursuit of justice by the international community.

Mr SYED MOHAMUD (*Worker, Malaysia*)

I am proud to represent the workers of Malaysia, through the Malaysian Trades Union Congress, at the ILO during a year when the agenda includes a discussion on a binding Convention to finally and effectively end modern-day slavery of domestic workers.

With the exception of a few, most countries do not include domestic workers under existing labour laws and thus allow employers to exploit domestic workers with impunity. These workers, predominantly women, are compelled to work long hours, with low wages and poor working conditions.

We are disappointed and surprised that some countries that derive enormous economic benefit from their citizens' remittances, including Indonesia, India and Bangladesh, were not supportive of the proposal for a binding Convention this week. Millions of their nationals toil under extreme conditions in countries around the world. We see the Convention as providing protection, respect and decent work for domestic workers. A government's disregard for the welfare of its citizens is most shocking.

The discussions this week provide the foundation for an instrument to truly make history. We appeal to all delegates to support this historic and noble effort. Let us resoundingly reject slavery in any form.

I call on all governments to support the Decent Work Agenda and call on the Malaysian Government to now proactively support this Convention, indeed, to take a lead in promoting it in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. We must acknowledge the contribution of domestic workers to families, other workers and our national economies.

Workers across the ASEAN region hope that our governments take their commitment seriously to achieve decent work for all. We believe that the prosperity, development and the full realization of dignity for working people depends on fulfilling this commitment.

We want to ensure that national labour legislation across our region fully respects workers' rights. We expect that, where legislation does not meet these standards for domestic workers, then, in the spirit of the ASEAN Charter, fundamental human rights, including core labour standards, will be acknowledged and extended.

We welcome and stand by the clarion call, decent work for all.

Original Spanish: Mr ECHAVARRÍA (Employer, Colombia)

Concerning the Director-General's Report, I would like to highlight the employment-oriented agenda, which sets ten strategic objectives, one of which is addressed to employers and refers to enhancing an enabling environment for innovation and investment in sustainable enterprises. Now, while this is certainly important, it does not cover all of the actions that should be taken, which were formulated at the recent meeting of labour ministers of the G20, and which were aimed at achieving recovery with job growth.

I would just like to mention certain decisions which are not covered by the Report and which we Colombian employers consider to be important.

As regards the economy, for example, employers need governments to take measures to stabilize fundamental economic indicators, restore confidence and provide incentives to promote business and ultimately create jobs. Workers need more efficient labour markets and lifelong learning to improve their occupational mobility and provide them with greater flexibility at work, as well as balanced and sustainable social protection systems.

Now this does not mean that we have to cut back on regulation, but it does mean reforms to boost productivity and provide smaller enterprises with tax incentives so that they can join the formal economy and stay in business.

In addition, modern hiring practices that meet the need for a rapid response to the global financial crisis enable high employment to be maintained and should therefore be promoted by governments.

We Employers support the development of a global strategy for formalizing enterprises, which both responds to the financial crisis and meets the need for labour market adjustment in a long-term perspective.

Such a strategy includes universal access to education, tailoring vocational training to the needs of the labour market, employability and flexibility

throughout working life, through a process of continuous improvement.

The ILO should recognize these realities in its reports, so that it can be seen as the UN agency which contributes to recovery of the economy and recovery of jobs in particular. If it does not do so, other institutions and agencies will take on this policy role. Therefore, rather than referring to the banking system and reform of the financial system, it should confine its opinions to social and labour policy, an area in which it is recognized and respected.

Rather than referring to the ILO's capacity to take up these new challenges, I would like to talk about the cooperation activities that have been undertaken by the ILO Office in Colombia, as mentioned in the reports of the Director of the International Labour Standards Department, who visited our country recently, and the Committee of Experts itself in its annual report. These activities have been carried out with the firm support of the Government and the social partners, as a result of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia.

We employers would like to express our appreciation for the continuous support of the ILO, which has enabled us to carry out guidance and training programmes for employers on various labour issues, through workshops and seminars in various cities throughout the country.

We also welcome with interest the efforts of the Social Dialogue Programme and the studies and proposals aimed at improving the functioning of the tripartite consultation committees, at both national and regional levels.

ILO assistance has been reflected in recent changes in labour legislation approved by Congress and the Government, aimed at bringing it into conformity with ILO Conventions.

The same is true of the case-law in the high courts and of judges. The training programmes and courses for judges and prosecutors have enabled officials of the judiciary to be better informed of international standards.

Lastly, measures taken to protect human rights and investigate crimes against trade unionists and the judges handling such crimes have produced very positive results compared to the years preceding the signing of the abovementioned tripartite agreement.

The ILO has detailed information on this, so I need not go into further detail.

In a recent communication to the Director-General, the President of the National Business Association of Colombia (ANDI) expressed considerable satisfaction with the substantial progress that has been made over the past decade in terms of the number of organized workers and the number of trade unions registered in the country, most of them in the private sector. We employers would like to reiterate our firm determination to be part of this cooperation process and continuing ILO support in Colombia.

Considerable progress has been made in Colombia in several areas, but it is the social and labour sphere which is the area of competence of the ILO, and it has made a valuable contribution, which should be a source of pride for the Organization.

Original Arabic: Mr MAJDALANI (Minister of Labour, Palestinian Authority)

We have taken note of the international mission Report presented by the Director-General relating to

the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories; the methods used and the conclusions presented are quite remarkable. We appreciate the efforts made to produce this Report; we would like to assure you that we wish to strengthen our cooperation with you in order to improve the observance of labour standards by Palestine.

The actions by the Israelis and the policies of occupation and settlement have led the Palestinian economy to the verge of total collapse, causing increased unemployment and poverty, especially over the past decade. In the light of these facts and the serious violations associated with settlement activity, the Palestinian Authority is nevertheless endeavouring to fulfil its obligations and meet its commitments to the international community and to its people, who are seeking peace, and has adopted a range of measures as part of a national campaign against products made in the settlements. The campaign is based on three essential pillars, namely: the peaceful resistance of the people to combat the Separation Barrier, Judaization, the destruction of our homes and the withholding of identity cards; the continuation of diplomatic and political initiatives at international forums to achieve peace – and I appeal a here for condemnation of acts of piracy against civilians of the liberty convoy and for an international commission of inquiry to be set up and for an end to the blockade of Gaza; and, thirdly, continuing efforts to strengthen our institutional capacity and the boycott of all products from the settlements in Palestinian markets.

The President has also taken a decision to boycott all products manufactured in the illegal settlements of the West Bank, and we have launched the Programme for National Dignity.

The National Palestinian Authority, in spite of its very limited resources, the tremendous burden that it has to bear, and the activities of Israeli extremists, is not neglecting its duties and is trying to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and create jobs for the unemployed, through legislative and other action measures and ambitious programmes.

Our people, which has already suffered much, needs your support in order to be able to impose the will of the international community on the Government of Israel. Our people is determined to continue its struggle for a just and equitable peace until all its rights are guaranteed under international law, an independent State is established, refugees are able to return, and all prisoners currently languishing in Israeli prisons are released.

Mr OTAALA OTIAM (*Government, Uganda*)

Africa remains the region worst hit by unemployment, particularly among youth, and by HIV/AIDS, child labour, high population growth and the overall public debt burden. I am therefore happy that this 99th Session of the International Labour Conference is addressing a number of these problems.

My delegation and I commend the Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, for addressing the detrimental consequences of the financial crisis on the world of work, for highlighting some of the strategic challenges ahead, and for proposing lasting solutions for the recovery.

On this note, therefore, we wish to convey our deepest appreciation for the ILO's support for a rapid impact assessment of the global economic crisis on Uganda. A report published in November

2009 provides key policy priorities for the Government to address with regard to the labour market crisis in the country. I am happy, again, to report that the Government has started pursuing these recommendations.

Uganda has had some of the worst experience with HIV/AIDS but, with a great deal of political will and commitment, as well as public education and the provision of relevant preventive information, the country has managed to bring down prevalence from 18 per cent in the early 1990s to about 5 per cent as we talk today. Whereas the situation seems to be stagnating at this level, we are happy to share with this august assembly our modest success story of how we have done it, and to encourage other countries with the words “yes, you can; you too can do it”.

We are challenged by the fact that every year we still have around 110,000 new cases of infection. About 50 per cent of pregnant mothers still lack access to antiretroviral medicines to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, which, in the modern world, is becoming a thing of the past.

I am happy to report, however, that the Government has once again stepped up the campaign to change the attitudes of our people, while also making antiretroviral treatment available to people living with HIV/AIDS through the support of the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), UNAIDS and others.

We therefore regard the ILO’s proposed standard on HIV/AIDS and the world of work as yet another window of opportunity to tap into additional resources from employers for the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Allow me now to turn to youth unemployment. Tackling youth unemployment is a national priority. The effort to do so will continue to be affected by the estimated 3.6 per cent annual growth in the size of the labour force. Therefore, the challenge is that the Ugandan economy has to create about 390,000 new jobs a year to absorb the new entrants.

In an effort to address the problem, the Government is finalizing a national employment policy to create more and better jobs. As an effective strategy, skills development is considered essential to the pursuit of improved productivity, incomes and access to employment opportunities. Other measures that the Government has put in place to facilitate this cover, among others, universal primary and secondary education, vocational training, and apprenticeship to harness skills and the potential of youth in self-employment creation. In addition, the Government has noted that the availability of labour market information on a regular and timely basis is one of the tools needed to minimize the mismatch between job supply and demand. We are optimistic that these strategic balance-creating measures will open up opportunities for youth employment.

Meanwhile, in keeping with the goals of the Decent Work Agenda for Africa, the Government of Uganda has, through extensive consultations with stakeholders, developed a national decent work programme; and we are now looking at social protection as another avenue in working with the tripartite partners.

To conclude, my delegation welcomes the efforts of the ILO to strengthen the capacity of the country and its social partners to address the challenges of globalization and decent work. It furthermore supports the principle of working together at the re-

gional level to share experience and common approaches within our respective regions; and acknowledges the contributions made by the ILO and other development partners to the development efforts in Uganda.

Original Arabic: Mr EL-AZALY (Worker, Egypt)

We have examined the Report of the Director-General, *ILO Programme Implementation 2008–09*. We would like to thank the Organization for having organized, in 2008–2009, a number of seminars on social dialogue in Egypt, which were attended by trade union leaders on the Steering Committee of the Egyptian Trade Union Confederation, the presidents and members of various other trade union steering committees and the leaders of a number of trade union committees.

We agree entirely with the Director-General regarding the need to ensure free, compulsory and quality basic education for all and to create the necessary social protection floor to create jobs, in order to help families overcome poverty and so that their children are not obliged to work, especially in the agricultural sector, where the majority of children work without any remuneration, as they are employed in family enterprises.

With regard to the Director-General’s Report on the follow-up to ILC resolutions of 1974 and 1980 condemning the Israeli authorities for acts of discrimination, racism and the violation of trade union rights and freedoms in Palestine, the occupied Syrian Golan and the Shebaa farms in Lebanon, we affirm that the actions of the Israelis have constituted attempts at colonization, the racist Separation Barrier, ethnic cleansing, assassinations and arrests, not to mention the horrific massacre in international waters involving the freedom convoy which aimed to break the blockade imposed on Gaza.

We call for an end to these practices and the blockade imposed on Gaza in particular. We believe that the attack launched by Israel on the convoy constitutes a violation of international law. Israel considers itself to be above the law. It has really gone too far and its actions violate international humanitarian law.

I wish you every success in your work so that fundamental and human rights may prevail.

Ms THAPPER (Worker, Sweden)

Madam President, finding the right road to world economic recovery is an enormous challenge facing us.

Since the worldwide economic meltdown more than two years ago, efforts to find fair solutions for all have been at the centre of the ILO’s work. The Director-General’s Report shows that you have come up with both a comprehensive analysis of what went wrong and a set of suggestions on what has to be done in order to make sure that we get started on a fair and workable way forward. I thank you for the Report.

Many parties have important roles to play to achieve this much-needed solution. Governments, workers, the business sector and international institutions have to do their bit. We know there is no sustainable recovery without job recovery. Two of the keys to success are decent work for all and social stability. We must focus on building a social protection floor for the most vulnerable. The work to prepare the right transition to clean energy through green investments and jobs must be a prior-

ity on everybody's agenda. The basic elements which are necessary include effective social dialogue and collective bargaining, based on mutual respect between organized workers and employers, in order to build trust and cooperation in the world of work, together with the strengthened application of international labour standards. I believe that we also have to strengthen global dialogue to encourage cooperation between countries to find balanced international solutions to common challenges. Alone, we are never strong. We depend on each other, at a local as well as at a global level.

The fight against unemployment is crucial and, in the Report, it is clear how many countries are running the risk of maintaining a high unemployment rate in the long term. That cannot be allowed to happen. In Sweden, nearly 10 per cent of people are currently unemployed and, among the young, the unemployment rate is alarming, at nearly 25 per cent. Alongside these negative figures, we have more people than ever with no income security whatsoever, as a result of being kicked out of the unemployment security system. We now see how this bad policy has had very negative consequences and we are convinced that it is not the way forward. Instead, we advocate active and effective measures to create new jobs, with education and vocational training being two of the most important policies we want to see in place, together with more resources. We also see more evidence of precarious labour market conditions affecting young people, women and immigrants. We can never accept a society that is torn apart or where the same standards do not apply to all workers. Such a system will never promote decent work or a society with a strong welfare system.

Social protection systems constitute the first line of defence when workers are affected by job losses. Substantial unemployment benefits, health insurance, old-age pensions and child benefits all protect workers when they face difficulties. Active labour market policies offer a way to create new jobs and allow workers to contribute to the economic growth of society once again. In the Director-General's Report, social dialogue is presented as the key to managing the crisis and promoting recovery, and I absolutely agree. In times of financial hardship, social and tripartite dialogue are essential, not least in order to avoid the risk of workers' rights not being respected.

The only and lasting solution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine is the creation of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State, living in peace and security with Israel. The situation for the people in the occupied Arab territories continues to be very serious. Figures show a very small economic improvement in the West Bank, whilst the situation in Gaza continues to be depressing, as the unemployment rate stands at over 40 per cent, the education system is in ruins and the parameters for economic growth are not in place. The legitimate right of the Palestinian people to statehood and to economic and social development is a responsibility that belongs to all of us. The Palestinians can no longer be denied decent work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

The Swedish workers will continue to show support and solidarity to the Palestinian workers in their very precarious situation. Recent events involving the efforts to provide humanitarian aid to

the people in Gaza and the violent reaction of the Israeli Government are absolutely wrong and must be condemned.

Mr MOHAMED (*Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Mauritius*)

The Government of Mauritius, which took office in 2005, was again sworn in following general elections last month. These elections were hailed as being fair and free by all the international observers: this bespeaks a vibrant and mature democracy.

Under its new mandate, the principles of unity, equity and modernity will underpin the pursuits of our Government.

Since I am now on the subject of equity, the Director-General's Report, *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories* shows us a picture that is more than worrying.

The solidarity of Mauritius with the Palestinian people is unequivocal and unbreakable. We are, therefore, deeply concerned by the military raid on the Gaza-bound humanitarian aid convoy in international waters, causing tragic loss of lives and casualties. We strongly condemn this unilateral action by Israel. We look forward to a unified and sovereign Palestinian State taking its rightful place in the concert of nations where the workers of a Palestinian State will also enjoy unity, equity and modernity.

The world of work has had to adjust itself to the effects of the financial crises of 2008 and 2009, and we are now struck by another crisis in the euro zone. Mauritius and other export-orientated small economies are once again innocent victims of a crisis not caused by us. We therefore call for immediate action to bring changes to the international financial architecture.

In this respect, a question must be asked: why is Africa still only a special guest of the G20 rotating chair system? This can only question the representativeness and legitimacy of the process. In light of the recognition that the crisis has had a disproportionate impact on Africa and compounds further its development challenges, we call for formal inclusion of Africa at all future G20 Summits.

Mauritius has engaged in a process of wide-ranging reforms over the past years to strengthen economic resilience. Such resilience provided us with fiscal space to adopt a package of budgetary measures to assist, among others, enterprises in difficulty and to preserve employment. At the same time, necessary changes were made to our labour legislation to enhance social protection systems so that they could cushion the loss of income as a result of job loss.

As the new Minister of Labour, I shall build on these policy measures with greater focus on saving jobs and protecting workers.

Mauritius welcomes the ILO deliberations on decent work for domestic workers. The Government of Mauritius has, since 1983, given legal status to domestic work by regulating wages and conditions of employment. Additionally, our legislation provides for freedom of association, social security, daily and weekly rest, maternity leave and provisions against unfair dismissal and workplace violence.

Mauritius will also support the ILO Recommendation on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. The Government of Mauritius has enacted various measures, such as the HIV/AIDS Preventive Meas-

ures Act, and we have also adopted a national multisectoral strategic framework for HIV/AIDS 2007–11. We are therefore convinced that the ILO Recommendation will guide us in this respect.

With the support of the ILO, we also hope soon to finalize a national employment policy (this is a priority of mine), which will also reflect outcomes of debates under the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

With respect to child labour, Mauritius has ratified the two ILO core Conventions on child labour. We have enacted the Child Protection Act, the Ombudsperson for Children Act and the Employment Rights Act, which prohibits the employment of persons below the age of 16 and is in line with the Education Act, which provides for compulsory education up to the age of 16.

Instead of being a pretext for inertia, the economic downturn challenges us all to re-engineer our policy and seek innovative approaches that work for our people and for sustainable economic recovery in keeping with the principles of broad-based social dialogue and the Decent Work Country Programmes. Let us rise to the challenge, bearing in mind the wise words of our Director-General, who said that we cannot afford the risk of economic recovery without a decent work recovery. We shall, indeed, compare notes next year.

Original Arabic: Mr DAHLAN (Employer, Saudi Arabia)

The Report of the Director-General covers a number of important subjects that deserve our attention and careful study, in particular the parts relating to the social partners and training the labour force in order to achieve strategic objectives such as the right to work and equality of access to employment between men and women. The aim is to ensure decent work and a decent income for all, to create jobs and end poverty, and to ensure social protection for all.

The strategic objective on tripartite social dialogue is the most important, in my view, since it enables all the social partners to participate in the decision-making process.

The Government of Saudi Arabia has been able to achieve these objectives as the result of an economic and financial programme which has enabled us to overcome the repercussions of the global financial and economic crisis. Our Government has adopted stringent measures to overcome the repercussions of the crisis, which has affected many enterprises.

I commend the activities of my Government in re-invigorating the market. It has allocated US\$500 billion for development projects in order to enable job-creation schemes to be implemented over the next five years to overcome the crisis.

The private sector in Saudi Arabia has paid a great deal of attention to improving conditions of work and workers' rights, and the rights of domestic workers in particular, especially as the Gulf States employ over 12 million foreign workers, who send some \$50 million home in remittances, thus contributing to financing education programmes and improving living conditions in their own countries.

We hope that, during the discussion of the Committee on Domestic Workers, restrictions preventing the continued employment of such workers in the Gulf States will not be imposed, as this would force us to find different solutions to these problems.

The efforts made by our Organization to ensure the application of international standards and fundamental rights at work prompt me to ask all the participants, the ILO and all the international organizations to make every effort to achieve the same objectives in Palestine, the Syrian Golan and all the occupied Arab territories.

We call on the international community to lift the blockade on Gaza in order to guarantee human rights in this region; we must do everything possible to ensure the creation of a Palestinian State and guarantee all of its rights at the international level.

AIDS is an increasingly serious problem internationally, which requires the industrialized and oil-producing countries to allocate part of their revenues to promote scientific research in order to overcome this disease, which has claimed so many victims in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

We call for an end to the manufacture of weapons, in particular weapons of mass destruction and for the allocation of these resources instead to research to combat our real enemy, which is AIDS.

Original Russian: Mr ALIMUKHAMEDOV (Government, Uzbekistan)

In the Director-General's Report, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, the focus is on job creation: sustainable and balanced growth with strong job creation is the only sensible way ahead, a global economic priority, the starting point in securing recovery and ensuring that it is job-rich.

The action taken by the Government of Uzbekistan in this area is entirely consistent with the strategy and principles of the ILO. Above all, it ensures sustainable economic growth. In Uzbekistan we have succeeded in overcoming the effects of the global crisis and increasing our GDP growth by 1.5 per cent as a result of measures taken by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, and our GDP is now expected to register 8 to 9 per cent growth - one of the highest indicators in our region.

Even before the Global Jobs Pact developed in 2009 by the member States of the ILO in order to overcome the crisis, the Government of Uzbekistan, already in 2008, adopted a package of crisis recovery measures, including specific job recovery and job growth measures.

We have strengthened our financial and banking sector, and have allocated a considerable amount of resources to promoting small and micro enterprises, as well as major investment projects. That is why Uzbekistan has achieved dynamic growth in job creation, with growth in 2009 reaching 1.4 times that registered in 2008. In 2010, in accordance with the measures adopted by the Government and Parliament, 950,000 new jobs will be created.

The main job creation measures for 2010 are aimed at the following:

- first, supporting domestic enterprises producing for the export market, modernization of key industries and investment, which is planned to create over 56,000 jobs;
- second, development of small and micro enterprises, as well as farming, which is expected to lead to the creation of 600,000 new jobs, or 63 per cent of the total;
- third, incentives for home work, mainly in cooperation with production enterprises. The development of home work, including traditional handicrafts and family businesses, is expected to result in the creation of 208,000 new jobs;

– fourth, expansion of productive, social and market infrastructure and reviving profitable enterprises, which should lead to the creation of 83,000 jobs.

Thus, the inclusion of Uzbekistan in the Report of the Director-General among the countries that have achieved a positive GDP growth rate and low unemployment amounts to recognition of the fact that the measures taken by the Government to maintain and increase employment are consistent with the ILO's strategic objectives.

Uzbekistan has also adopted a new law in order to ratify the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), and is implementing a national plan of action in this field.

We need to differentiate between child labour, which is forbidden until the age of 16, and the worst forms of child labour, which is why we severely punish any person caught promoting the worst forms of child labour.

We would like to thank the ILO in general for the assistance that it has provided.

Original Arabic: Ms HAMADY (Minister of the Civil Service and Administrative Reform, Mauritania)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Juan Somavia and to congratulate him on the excellent quality of his Report, as well as the Appendix dealing with the difficult working conditions experienced by the Palestinian workers under occupation. I would like to say from this rostrum, on behalf of the Government of my country, that we condemn the acts perpetrated by the Zionist State against the peace flotilla. We would also like to express our unconditional solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Palestine, and particularly in Gaza.

We agree with the Director-General that it is necessary to continue our efforts to achieve a fair globalization, taking into consideration the need to alleviate poverty and create decent living conditions for workers, particularly in the light of the current crisis.

I welcome the Global Report, which looks at one of the main themes of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, namely combating child labour.

Our country has ratified the fundamental ILO Conventions, as manifested in the adoption of the necessary legislation, such as the Labour Code and its implementing regulations.

This year we will be reviewing the collective agreement and continue the revision of the provisions of the Labour Code.

In addition, this year our Ministry has focused on capacity building in the labour inspectorate. Accordingly, we have recruited 40 new inspectors and will start construction of premises for the labour inspectorate in the main towns to enable it to carry out its functions of supervising compliance with labour legislation and guaranteeing social peace.

The Government of Mauritania has integrated social dialogue in all its development strategies. In this context, our Ministry is currently considering establishing a national council on collective bargaining among the social partners to strengthen social dialogue in our country.

As regards working conditions, the public authorities are continuing their efforts to implement the electoral programme of the President of the Republic, Mr Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. This programme, which won the trust of the Mauritanian

people, attaches special importance to workers and to improving their working conditions. It includes the following measures: increasing the salaries of public servants and introducing transport and housing allowances; and implementing a land purchase scheme for workers, as well as loans on easy terms to enable them to build housing.

Our country is determined to continue its efforts to provide decent conditions to workers despite the economic challenges and global financial crises.

I would like to conclude by thanking the ILO for its constant technical assistance to our country.

Original Spanish: Mr DEL RÍO DOÑÉ (Worker, Dominican Republic)

I would like to welcome, with enthusiasm and hope, the important Report presented by the Director-General, Juan Somavia, which highlights fundamental aspects of the development of the ILO in the world as part of an ongoing quest for peace through social justice.

Our country, ensconced in the Caribbean, is one of many developing countries to have suffered various problems which have affected the whole world as a result of the major global economic crisis. We are undertaking major efforts, involving the whole of Dominican society and based on dialogue and consultation, in order to move closer together and find solutions to the many problems which affect us as a society.

It is a source of satisfaction to the Dominican workers that there has been a drop in cases of HIV/AIDS in our country, according to the most recent ENDESA survey. This achievement is the result of major efforts undertaken by the Presidential Council on AIDS (COPRESIDA) and the Ministry of Labour, together with the main trade union organizations (the Workers' Trade Union Autonomous Federation (CASC), the National Council for Trade Union Unity (CNUS) and the National Confederation of Dominican Workers (CNDT)) as well as other organizations involved in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention policies in the workplace.

We have also made significant progress in our fight to eradicate child labour, particularly the worst forms of child labour in various sectors of the economy.

The trade unions continue to fight to achieve a more open society and the application of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), as there are still attempts in some sectors to impede freedom of association.

We acknowledge that we have managed to set up important trade union organizations in companies which had violated the right to freedom of association and we have managed to conclude important agreements with employers' organizations, such as the agreement signed with BEPENSA in Mexico, or the creation of a trade union at Coca-Cola, affiliated to the CASC, these being examples of trade union activity in companies which had previously created obstacles to freedom of association.

We also acknowledge the positive work undertaken by the Ministry of Labour, in implementing the labour law despite the fact that there have been cases of labour inspectors not respecting this legislation.

We urgently need to revise and update the Labour Code. The ILO itself has made the relevant recom-

mentations, which we hope will be implemented without harming the workers, given that historic advances have been made on the basis of the new Labour Code.

We continue to promote Act No. 87-01 establishing the Dominican social service system, and significant progress has been achieved.

The CASC has managed to achieve a situation whereby thousands of workers in the informal economy and their families are now receiving benefits on the basis of a social security system through the creation of the Mutual Services Association, AMUSSOL-CASC, which is a historic step for the workers in this sector. We have also set up a life insurance scheme for this sector, and the poorest workers now have somewhere to turn in the event of the death of a worker or a family member.

The workers, particularly those belonging to the CASC and its affiliated organizations, are making steady progress in their fight to achieve significant changes for the whole of society, and particularly for unionized urban and agricultural workers, and to facilitate the organization of the people, aware and responsible in their fight for a just society, where the core Conventions of the ILO and national legislation are truly applied, providing full employment, decent work and ensuring that we can all exercise our rights as human beings and children of God.

We shall continue to show solidarity to the neighbouring country of Haiti. The CASC and its affiliated organizations will maintain their commitment to the Confederation of the Haitian Workers (CTH) and the workers in Haiti.

We would like to extend our greetings to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA-CSA) and their affiliates, with whom we organized a major international summit in the Dominican Republic on the reconstruction of Haiti, which was a great success.

We would also like to greet the Government of our country and its President, Dr Leonel Fernández Reina, and thank him for the solidarity that our country demonstrated through its involvement in reconstruction efforts throughout the world.

Finally, I would like to call for the release of all trade union prisoners around the world, particularly those still imprisoned in the Republic of Cuba and who are fighting for their human rights. We await their liberation so that they can exercise their right to freedom of association in particular.

Mr MENSAH (*Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, Ghana*)

The Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, provides a good overview of the work of the International Labour Office over the past year, and an account of its performance in seeking to achieve the targets set. The Report covers the activities undertaken in the areas of, among others, the promotion and realization of standards; fundamental principles and rights at work; the creation of opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and incomes; enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection; and strengthening tripartite social dialogue. We note that in all these areas the cooperation of the ILO's tripartite constituents has been crucial.

We note the work the International Labour Office has been doing to provide the tripartite constituents with technical assistance to develop policies and

programmes that address HIV/AIDS in the workplace. With the ILO's assistance, countries like Ghana are in the process of drafting HIV/AIDS legislation and workplace policies. We are grateful to the ILO and would like to urge it to increase its technical support in these areas in view of the negative effects of the pandemic in the workplace.

Another area of the Report I would like to highlight concerns advances in gender equality. Considering that women are generally the breadwinners for households in many developing countries, we are happy to note the ILO's strategies to create greater opportunities for both men and women to secure decent employment and incomes, and to ensure stable working conditions and social security coverage. The Government of Ghana recognizes that gender equality is essential to growth and poverty reduction, and to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, we believe the inclusion of gender issues in the ILO's system-wide action plan for the period 2010-15 to promote employment and decent work would reinforce the ILO's four strategic objectives, and would also contribute to supporting the Government of Ghana's efforts to mainstream gender issues and perspectives into national policies and all development programmes through capacity-building and advocacy.

To achieve this, the gender dimensions of development have been incorporated into all development programmes in Ghana. In that connection, with the collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies, gender-responsive budgeting is being implemented in Ghana. The Government makes sure that gender needs are met through adequate resource allocation for the attainment of effective and holistic development. Although many challenges remain, we are confident that the ILO will continue to provide member States with support and advice to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks and policies.

The Report of the Director-General provides details of cooperation between the ILO and other United Nations organizations, and shows its increased engagement in the United Nations reform process. We welcome the integration of the decent work concept into joint United Nations programmes in Africa. We believe that this is necessary to avoid duplication of resources, to enhance coherence and coordination, and to enable the continent to benefit from increased synergies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

We note with gratitude the mobilization of additional resources for decent work initiatives in Africa. This has made it possible for Ghana to benefit from the Decent Work Agenda. The initiatives in Ghana include the provision of training workshops for small and medium-sized enterprises.

We note with gratitude the efforts and commitment of the ILO to assist member States. We gather that the Global Jobs Pact is widely supported yet share the Director-General's concerns that the current financial crisis could threaten global recovery. We therefore support his call for strong collective action by governments to re-regulate the global financial system in order to pave the way for the stable management of public finances that is necessary for recovery and growth.

Finally, the question of workers in the occupied Arab territories continues to be a matter of concern for the international community.

I would like to conclude my statement by urging all member States to renew their commitment to the ILO and its unique tripartite structure.

Original French: Mr MOBUTU NZANGA (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Employment, Labour and Social Welfare, Democratic Republic of the Congo)

I would like to transmit to you the message from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary at the end of this month. Within the framework of the priorities of the Republic, it has undertaken great efforts to improve the socio-economic situation and is resolutely committed to strengthening flexibility in the world of work, in particular, through measures taken to improve the business climate to encourage investment. This has already led to greater confidence and encouraged growth, which will lead to an increase in employment and better redistribution of income.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is overseeing very carefully the effective application of the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

The Government is aiming at substantially reducing the rate of unemployment. This is why it has encouraged the restructuring of various actors involved in public employment sector and in the private employment services, in order to establish an information system on the labour market.

The year 2010 is the year of social protection in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Matters of employment and social protection are of such vital importance that the ministry dealing with employment has been promoted to the highest possible level in Government and is headed by a Deputy Prime Minister.

In order to do this, the Government has made every effort, through various ongoing reforms, to realize its vision of facilitating access to decent work by improving the living and labour conditions of people in the working and rural sectors.

We consider the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization as a tool for sustainable social progress. The examination of its follow-up system during the session will enable our Organization to have a better understanding of the situation and the needs of member States. This will allow the Organization to respond more effectively, using all the resources at its disposal, in particular, standard-setting action, technical cooperation and research.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo considers that the Global Jobs Pact of 2009 is also a very important tool for the recovery of economic activity and the creation of new employment opportunities.

Within this framework, our country has benefited from the support of the ILO, receiving three multi-disciplinary missions relating to the process of national employment policy formulation and vocational training, the reform and extension of social protection, and the strengthening of social dialogue and the international labour standards.

The final adoption of a Convention together with a Recommendation on decent work for domestic workers will enable my country to strengthen legislative and regulatory measures.

The Report of the Director-General, *Accelerating action against child labour*, amply demonstrates the interest that our Organization has on this issue. For my country, the final abolition of the worst forms of child labour is of great concern to the Government. Measures have been taken to achieve this. During

the last session of the Conference, the Committee on the Application of Standards presented very interesting conclusions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It called on the member States of the ILO to help my country put an end to the recruitment of children as soldiers.

I would like to reiterate the request of the ILO to its member States to provide assistance to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to promote vocational training and the reform of social protection.

With regard to combating HIV/AIDS in the world of work, it should be recalled that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has established a national policy to combat HIV/AIDS that is based on a multisectoral approach. The Strategic Plan 2010–14 has included the world of work as one of the priority sectors for the national response to contributing to national growth and reducing poverty.

A number of actions have been undertaken by actors in the world of work who have become aware of the threat and the damaging consequences of HIV/AIDS on the productivity of enterprises. This includes, in particular, the creation in 2001 of an inter-enterprise committee on combating AIDS, the integration in 2005 of combating HIV/AIDS into the inter-professional national collective labour convention, and the organization in October 2009, together with the ILO and other partners, of the first national forum on mobilization in the world of work against AIDS.

In order to support this action, on 14 July 2009, a law was adopted on the protection of the rights of persons living with HIV, which makes particular reference to people at work.

This national law has enabled us to target key sectors in a national response to HIV/AIDS, during the establishment of a national strategic plan to combat HIV/AIDS.

In September 2009, the Democratic Republic of the Congo chaired a meeting in Malawi aimed at setting up an HIV/AIDS forum in the private sector for member countries of the Southern African Development Community.

This is why the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the opportunity of adopting an international standard on HIV/AIDS in the world of work during this Conference, and we call for greater mobilization of resources and closer cooperation with the ILO and other development partners.

I would like to recall that the Government of my country is firmly convinced of the power of social dialogue in seeking solutions to the many questions that are included on the agenda of this session.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to thank the ILO, development partners and friendly countries for the joint efforts that have been made in order to grant assistance to my country in the various fields, including that of employment.

Mr TARTAGLIA (*Worker, Italy*)

This Conference is taking place while we are still in the middle of one of the deepest and worst economic crises ever. As shown in many ILO reports, global imbalances are a major factor behind these crises. The unfair distribution of wealth has distorted the global economy. The financial crisis, the result of a long process of the financialization of the economy, has further aggravated existing economic

and social problems in both the developed and the developing world.

Developing countries have a huge shortage of decent jobs, since these are not being generated by economic growth. This decent work crisis is accompanied by high living costs and the impact of the world food crisis, leading to situations of endemic poverty.

Industrialized countries are not immune, either. In Europe, over the last 20 years, wage moderation – despite the rise in both inflation and productivity – and fiscal policies based on labour taxation have reduced workers' purchasing power. Almost all countries are facing increasingly insecure employment conditions, the casualization of employment relationships and the deregulation of the labour markets. Speculation on the financial markets has provided much better opportunities for short-term profit, instead of providing loans to companies willing to innovate, conquer new markets or create decent jobs. Huge imbalances have developed between the financial sector and the real economy, between rich and poor countries, between overpaid managers and underpaid workers. Inequalities between men and women have remained substantial. The crisis also has an environmental dimension. Our planet's resources will not cope with the consumption model of the industrialized countries. Migrant workers, especially women, are the first victims of the crisis, suffering new and increasing discrimination. Illegal status is often forced upon them by repressive – if not xenophobic – laws, and they remain far from achieving equal treatment, even in the few cases in which the laws do not discriminate against them.

The crisis is proof of the unsustainable nature of the neo-liberal policies adopted in the last three decades, which have promoted the deregulation and liberalization of markets and the privatization of public services.

Many governments have taken extraordinary measures to address the crisis, focusing overall on helping to stabilize the financial markets. However, even if some steps forward have been taken, we are very far from taking the necessary common decisions on the regulation of the financial sector and from achieving the essential goal of putting an end to speculation and focusing on the real economy.

The speculative attack against Greece and, more generally, against the euro, shows that the financial institutions bailed out by taxpayers are once again on the road to exploiting the real economy and accumulating huge earnings on the backs of the majority of people. The European Union itself, instead of acting as a positive example of development, with a focus on rights and welfare, is failing to provide a sufficient impetus for the best part of its social and labour policies. It is not enough to inject money into the economy. We need to change its principles to make sure that the economy generates social justice, development for all, equity, stability and long-term prosperity. The ILO recommendation on the need to extend unemployment benefits and additional training opportunities to all – particularly to vulnerable workers – and to put in place emergency employment schemes, has not been implemented by the majority of governments.

The Decent Work Agenda has to be placed at the core of the new system of global economic governance, which still needs to be built. The ILO has a vital role to play here, calling upon governments

and the other international institutions to effectively implement the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact. In a new, multi-polar world, the State needs to recover its rightful position and assume its proper role. It must ensure the establishment of a socially and environmentally responsible new economic system. Public intervention has to be the most important guarantor of social cohesion.

It is crucial to set fair rules for world trade, to support national development plans and prevent inequalities from deepening. The priority must be to establish decent jobs and achieve real salaries in line with productivity gains, respecting the right of workers to form free trade unions and negotiate collectively on the redistribution of profits.

Regulation of financial markets is urgently required, establishing an international financial transactions tax, as called for by the trade union movement and an increasing number of governments. The new economic system needs to generate green growth. As well as the ensuring of our planet's survival, environmental protection provides huge opportunities for job creation. Public investment in infrastructure, public transport and renewable energies is needed.

We hope that the coherence of all its constituents can make the ILO a key player in the strategy to overcome this global crisis, affirming peace, equality, workers' rights and decent work, and moving towards a fair globalization.

Original French: Ms DIALLO (Minister of State for the Civil Service, Administrative Reform, Labour and Employment, Guinea)

At this difficult but exciting time, my country truly appreciates the unconditional support provided to Guinea by the Director-General of the ILO and the multidisciplinary team. The people of Guinea and all those involved in the transition recognize his constant commitment to their just cause, and convey their greetings and heartfelt thanks.

Guinea would also like to warmly thank all of the ILO's tripartite constituents for their unfaltering support after the painful events that we have experienced in recent years. Your determination at this difficult time for our people has been an uplifting presence which has enabled us to overcome the obstacles ahead, and to resolutely embark on a process of much-desired change.

Today, we are moving irreversibly towards elections, which we intend to be free, democratic, credible and transparent, to be held on 27 June 2010.

Permit me at this moment, which is intensely emotional and painful for me, to honour the memories of the illustrious freedom fighters who have, through their lifelong sacrifice, enabled us to take the path of change in Guinea. For the first time in this forum, we mourn our absent comrades Dr Ibrahim Fofana, Hadja Magbé Bangoura, and the young journalists Aboubacar Camara and Lamba Mansare. They will remain forever in our hearts and memories. They will always remain symbols of the fight for social justice and democracy in Guinea and in Africa. All of Guinea thanks you for all your expressions of sympathy and compassion, and it takes this opportunity to honour the memories of all of our fallen comrades, on our continent and elsewhere.

My country welcomes the efforts of the Director-General of the ILO and his staff in the field to help Guinea to adopt the Decent Work Country Programme. The implementation of the Programme will be a determining factor for consolidating social peace, which has been sorely tested in recent years in Guinea.

You may know that as early as the thirteenth century, through the Charter of Kurukan Fuga, Africans sought to regulate society using 44 articles of law to set out a new legislative and institutional basis for a society undermined by wars and dissent, in order to restore justice and peace.

The fight against HIV/AIDS at the workplace is a fundamental issue, and my country commends the commitment of our Organization to develop a standard which takes account of all the concerns involved in the fight against AIDS. The issue of corporate social responsibility is an avenue that we are exploring with many enterprises which feel increasingly involved in the AIDS at the workplace project.

The issue of decent work for domestic workers, who often work in the informal sector, is extremely relevant for our countries.

As regards the general discussion on the strategic objective of employment, my delegation welcomes the excellent initiative by the Director-General of the ILO to hold a high-level panel on this important issue, and unreservedly supports his Report.

As regards the informal economy and the promotion of employment, particularly of young people and women, this has largely been taken account of in the policy pursued by the transition Government. The Minister responsible for youth employment, the informal sector and microfinance was present at the opening of this 99th Session and thanks you for the support she received.

In conclusion, my Government would like to reaffirm Guinea's willingness to continue to implement the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, our country having ratified nearly all the instruments mentioned in the Declaration.

Pressing challenges ahead include the urgent need for a policy for social protection for civil servants and state employees, the fight against child labour, and fast-track vocational training for urban and rural youth, young volunteers in the border areas and street children. These are our priorities in the definition of a comprehensive social protection policy which covers the whole population.

I would like to stress the importance and positive impact for Guinea of the ILO's contribution through its programme for the promotion of social dialogue in Africa, especially in the world of work, particularly in the mining areas of Guinea.

My country would like to pay a well deserved tribute to our Organization, and to the Director-General of the ILO.

Mr NGATJIZEKO (*Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, Namibia*)

This 99th Session of the Conference is particularly significant for Namibia because the topics under discussion address the issues that we have identified as burning priorities for action in our country.

Namibia, like many other countries in Africa, is plagued by an intolerably high rate of unemployment, particularly among our youth. We are therefore encouraged that the ILO has chosen the topic of employment for the first discussion to follow up

the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. This affords an opportunity not only to exchange relevant experiences, but also to review, refine and intensify international and national strategies to achieve employment-rich growth.

On his inauguration for a second term of office on 21 March this year, our President instructed the new Cabinet to "hit the ground running" in order to intensify government efforts to alleviate poverty and unemployment. A multisectoral task force of ministers, led by the Prime Minister, is now hard at work to achieve maximum job creation in the short term and to ensure that coordinated national economic and social development priorities centre on employment creation. My Ministry has finalized two key bills that will support national employment creation efforts.

The first one is the Employment Services Bill, which will provide for the establishment of a national employment service and integrated employment information, which will match employers and jobseekers and also monitor labour market skills needs.

The second one is the Employment Creation Commission Bill, which will establish a tripartite commission to coordinate and optimize Namibia's employment creation strategies.

It is common knowledge that southern Africa remains the region most affected by HIV/AIDS and, at present, Namibia has an overall HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 17.9 per cent. We observe that, despite massive efforts to combat HIV and AIDS, many countries, including our own, do not adequately prioritize strategies for prevention, treatment and support of men and women workers at their places of formal or informal employment. I would, therefore, like to assure the Conference that the Government of Namibia will support the adoption of an autonomous recommendation on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, when it comes before the plenary at the end of next week.

Domestic workers constitute approximately 10 per cent of our national workforce and are among Namibia's lowest paid and most vulnerable and marginalized workers. This session's first discussion on decent work for domestic workers comes at a time when the Namibian Government has decided to establish a wages commission to investigate terms and conditions of employment of domestic workers and to make recommendations to the relevant minister regarding the possible setting of minimum wages and conditions of employment for domestic workers. Namibia has learned much during this Conference from the experience of other member States. We look forward to the adoption of a ground-breaking Convention and Recommendation on decent work for domestic workers at the conclusion of the two-year process.

The Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, *Accelerating action against child labour*, sends an urgent message to all member States.

I therefore would like to express our Government's sincere appreciation for the support Namibia has received under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), and I would like to reaffirm the commitment of the Republic of Namibia to meeting the target of eliminating child labour, particularly its worst forms, by 2016.

Before I close, I want to address an issue of ILO governance that impacts on the effectiveness of the ILO in meeting its constituents' needs and highlights an inequity in the ILO and among member States. I refer to the imbalance in the composition of the Governing Body.

The United Nations has recognized the need for reform to effect a more equitable geographical representation within its governing structures, and I believe that the ILO should be at the forefront, to remain a representative, transparent and accountable United Nations agency, especially within the spirit of social justice and equity, which the ILO itself so strongly promotes. In my opinion, and that of other African member States, the 1986 Instrument of amendment to the ILO Constitution is the appropriate vehicle to achieve reform. The envisaged reform would not only benefit Africa, but would also assure parity in ILO governance between and among all regions. It would also eliminate non-elective seats that ensure that developed countries have a superior voice in Government Body decision-making and in constitutional amendments.

During the 2009 session of the International Labour Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement, at a special meeting, reaffirmed its support for the ratification of the 1986 Instrument of amendment. In October 2009, the African Union meeting of Ministers of Labour reaffirmed the need to promote the adoption of the 1986 instrument. The Governing Body has now decided to relaunch the campaign for ratification.

I therefore appeal to member States that have not yet ratified the 1986 instrument of amendment, including those countries occupying the non-elective seats in the Governing Body, to ratify the instrument in order to democratize the Governing Body and to align ILO governance with the values that the Organization so actively promotes in its external programmatic work.

Original Portuguese: Mr MAZIO (Worker, Mozambique)

The Report of the Director-General, *Recovery and growth with decent work*, clearly outlines the activities carried out within the overall context of the ILO's objectives. It also gives a clear view of the challenges that the world must address in order to promote fairer labour relations based on balanced, free, democratic and equitable social dialogue.

The Report analyses clearly the pillars of decent work based on the development of secure and lasting employment where the fundamental rights of workers are respected, and where fair wage policies, better working conditions, social protection and the freedom to exercise trade union rights are the norm.

The Mozambique trade union movement has assumed the responsibility of laying the foundations for decent work by strengthening its structures in the workplace and creating new structures in newly established enterprises, while striving to secure space for collective bargaining with a view to establishing mechanisms for regulating collective labour relations.

The approach we have adopted with regard to decent work for domestic workers reflects the Organization's commitment to developing fairer labour relations for all workers. In our country, the trade union movement is strongly committed to the unionization of domestic workers in order to promote and defend their legitimate interests. The planned adoption of international standards for this sector

will, without doubt, be a big step forward in the promotion of decent work for those workers.

The openness of social partners in Mozambique to dialogue within the framework of the Consultative Committee on Labour, as well as the creation of provincial tripartite forums and independent structures for arbitration and reconciliation in labour disputes, have helped bring stability to labour relations.

We still have significant challenges to face in order to make decent work a reality and to overcome the difficulties stemming from a competition and profits-based market economy that rarely devotes enough attention to social and human aspects.

We are well aware, as a trade union movement, of our weaknesses in terms of both knowledge and intervention. In that regard, the trade union movement in Mozambique is striving to build its strength, to be more present and active in the struggle to defend workers.

It is important here to underline the usefulness of the ILO's technical assistance for training trade unionists to participate effectively in collective bargaining, and in the launching of employment initiatives to make equal rights at work a reality for women and men, as well as to ensure the development of social dialogue.

The Mozambique trade union movement urges the ILO to work with us and to help us, within the framework of its action in our country, to devise and implement concrete programmes for the promotion of decent work.

We also stress the relevance of the fight against HIV/AIDS both in the workplace and in the wider community. HIV/AIDS is literally a plague on the whole world, particularly the developing countries including Mozambique. AIDS is a genuine threat that has already had a negative impact on weaker economies and has exacerbated poverty. The ILO's approach to the pandemic shows clearly that all social partners throughout the world must now, more than ever, take serious steps to tackle this problem.

We, the trade unionists of Mozambique, are aware of this responsibility. We are unflinching in our efforts to introduce education programmes to try to limit the number of new infections and to combat discrimination against, and the stigmatization of, people living with HIV/AIDS. We are also aware of the fact that only the coordinated action of all social partners at every level, both nationally and internationally, can bring us success in the face of what is now known as the disease of the century.

We congratulate the Director-General on his Report and hope that it is approved and turned into a tool for setting the course and carrying out the work. We wish the ILO every success in its action to promote fairer labour relations.

Original Farsi: Mr YARAHMADIAN (Worker, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The Conference provides an occasion for cooperation and brainstorming among global workers, employers and governments, with a view to respecting and protecting common ideals, as well as tripartism and social justice.

Despite efforts by the ILO and the workers around the world to achieve responsible and fair globalization through which employment and social responsibilities could be promoted, we are witnessing recurrent global economic and financial crises as a major impediment in that direction, which, in turn,

makes it extremely difficult for the workers to carry out their proper social responsibilities. The inertness of the international financial institutions with respect to carrying out the necessary reforms in their basic strategies has led to untenable situations, particularly in developing countries.

Oligopolistic tendencies in access to know-how and technology, inequalities in market shares and the inability of developing countries to repay their debts have given rise to a cycle of informal markets and lawlessness in international financial relations. Thus, it would be illogical to expect the workers' communities around the world to maintain their dynamism and livelihoods under such volatile conditions in which their respective social partners evade their responsibilities.

Child labour looms as an outgrowth of poverty and unsound national and international economic planning. The plight of nearly 800 million workers living in poverty in the twenty-first century raises serious questions. To this we can add 250 million children working under the most deplorable circumstances.

Child labour is a stigma on the face of human civilization. The community of workers of the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the ILO's goals, recommendations and strategies and therefore calls upon governments to live up to their respective obligations, particularly in supporting fundamental labour rights while engaging in partnership with workers' representatives. On the other hand, we believe that strengthening workers' associations in the informal economy could limit exploitation and new forms of slavery.

In spite of the recommendations of the 2006 session of the Conference regarding promotion of vocational training as a measure to prevent child labour, unfortunately the track records of governments in this respect seem extremely poor. In order to level the playing field for mobilization and participation of workers' communities to combat child labour, I propose the involvement of tripartite mechanisms in drawing up vocational training programmes and in reorienting the ILO's technical cooperation towards more concrete objectives.

The workers can be assured of the outcomes of the relevant efforts only when they themselves become directly involved in the formulation of global strategies alongside their social partners. Moreover, decision-making approaches and reforms in global structures should be based on the realization of universal justice rather than on the vested interests of a few capitalistic circles under the pretext of globalization.

The elimination of discrimination, the realization of peace and improvements in socio-economic indicators based on social justice, as well as employment-based growth, are constituent parts of the ILO's work. Thousands of Muslim and Christian Palestinian workers live under the deplorable conditions caused by the racist policies of the Zionist regime and struggle to defend their most basic human rights.

Today, the anxious eyes of the Palestinian children and their empty hands are pointed towards you and all the justice-loving movements of the workers around the world, as well as the ILO.

None of the internationally adopted norms, standards and obligations are heeded or respected by the Zionist regime within the occupied territories. The ILO and the workers' movements of the world face

the question as to how they would like to draw up their respective justice-loving policies and plans against "Zionist apartheid" and the plight of a nation's annihilation.

I hope we can stand tall in response to this historic question of the Palestinian children. I salute the thin hands of the Palestinian children; long live honesty, peace, security and justice.

Original French: Mr AGUIAR KINT (Minister of Labour and Public Services, Benin)

I will be focusing in my statement on the matter that is of so much concern to us, and has been for the last few decades: HIV/AIDS.

The incidence of HIV/AIDS in Benin has increased from 0.36 per cent about 20 years ago, to a level of about 2 per cent since 2007. This means that although we have a low level of HIV in the country, it is still nevertheless a real public health problem and therefore something that is holding up development. In fact, 84 per cent of those who are HIV positive or have AIDS fall within the age range of 15–49 years, that is to say, the working population.

Given the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS since the epidemic was first declared, Benin has taken the bull by the horns, by setting up HIV monitoring centres and adopting a national strategic framework to combat HIV/AIDS.

The negative impact of this epidemic on the world of work and on socio-economic development have prompted the authorities and the social partners to make major efforts to limit the damage to sustainable development and the adverse effects with regard to the attainment of Millennium Development Goals.

A number of measures were undertaken even before the adoption of the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work in 2001. I would like to mention some of those measures.

Given the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS infection, a national programme was set up to combat AIDS, and the safety and health authorities organized a survey on the incidence of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B in a number of economic sectors. Although certain procedures were not properly respected, in particular in relation to the issue of prior consent, and the results of the survey could therefore not be published, the trends revealed by the survey led to awareness-raising activities with regard to a number of enterprises.

In addition, focal points for combating HIV/AIDS were set up in all the relevant ministries and other institutions, the principal partner in terms of funding being the Multisectoral Programme for Combating AIDS. Following the suspension of the Programme, activities aimed at workers in ministries and certain public enterprises experienced some difficulty.

The second main focus of the national strategic plan was intended to make good the inadequacies of the first, and made the campaign against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS in the workplace one of its seven principal objectives (Objective No. 3: STDs and HIV/AIDS in the workplace). This led to a 25 per cent reduction in the impact of STDs and HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

In addition, the ILO AIDS project over the period 2003–07, with funding from the US Department of Labor, achieved some significant results. For example, we trained labour inspectors and a number of Benin employers. A tripartite national declaration to

counter HIV/AIDS in the workplace was signed, and support measures provided for a number of companies to help them with their response to HIV/AIDS.

The third element was the adoption by the National Assembly and the enactment in April 2006 of a law concerning HIV/AIDS prevention, care and monitoring in the Republic of Benin.

The Ministry of Labour and the civil service have made major efforts to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

Given the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS, various other steps are also planned for tackling HIV/AIDS in the workplace. These include additional training programmes, both for workers and for staff of institutions.

A crucial means of reducing HIV/AIDS in the workplace is to disseminate the framework document for combating STDs and HIV/AIDS and to continue with efforts to train labour inspectors. We must keep up our resolute campaign to combat the epidemic. Benin is in favour of defining international standards in the form of a Convention in the context of the discussion that has been in progress since last year. We hope that this leads to concrete results.

Mr AUNG (*Employer, Myanmar*)

First of all, allow me to briefly introduce our organization, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI). It is the leading national apex non-governmental organization. Under the umbrella of UMFCCI there are 58 affiliated associations. Its membership numbers about 19,700, including individuals, local and foreign companies and cooperatives.

The UMFCCI is playing a vital role as a bridge between the State and the private sector. Thus, UMFCCI takes the main responsibility for developing the private sector, on the one hand, and, on the other, for organizing the business sector to participate in national economic development according to the State's policy. In addition, UMFCCI is always endeavouring to safeguard the business interests of the private sector and helps find ways and means to develop this sector and lead it into the era of globalization.

UMFCCI always takes a keen interest in workers' affairs. We are aware of a number of complaints on forced labour issues in Myanmar. Consequently, one of the ILO reports highlights the principle of business leaders combating forced labour and trafficking. In fact, forced labour does not exist in our private sector's business societies and the employee is working under the agreed employment contract in various fields of business.

With their strong religious and cultural background, most employers treat their workers with compassion and hospitality. Rather than just treating them as paid servants, they extend help in various ways to support their families' social, health and educational needs. It must be said that the employer-employee relationship is generally harmonious.

UMFCCI, as a leading organization of the private sector, assumes responsibility for combating forced labour. We are actively cooperating with the Ministry of Labour to solve every aspect of forced labour.

Under the market-oriented economic system, the private sector contributes more than 90 per cent of GDP, as well as the largest proportion of employ-

ment in the recent period. The trading sector also plays an essential role in the Myanmar economy since the adoption of a market-oriented system. After the imposition of economic sanctions, all the various trade-related sectors have been affected and have declined in general, and the garment, wood-based, fishery, tourism and hotel industries and foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow have suffered in particular. A number of export-oriented industries were closed and thousands of employees became jobless owing to the imposition of sanctions. More importantly, employment-oriented FDI of manufacturing sectors is extremely scarce owing to sanctions. Consequently, this has a huge negative impact on the labour force currently working as well as on the potential labour force. This seriously harms innocent ordinary people at the grass-roots level.

For the benefit of our people who have faced considerable difficulties, I would like to conclude with a request, through you, to lift the prevailing sanctions imposed upon Myanmar. We also assure you that UMFCCI will cooperate with the ILO and other relevant international organizations in combating forced labour and trafficking issues in Myanmar.

(*Mr de Robien takes the Chair.*)

Ms IBRAHIM (*Government, Maldives*)

Before I focus my attention on the two major issues that have been included in the agenda of this session, namely, decent work for domestic workers and HIV/AIDS and the world of work, let me present an overview of the employment situation in the Maldives.

The Government of the Maldives has on several occasions re-emphasized its strong commitment to promoting and supporting the ILO's vision of promoting the Decent Work Agenda, both in law and in practice. It was a priority of the present Government, led by His Excellency President Mohamed Nasheed, a champion of democracy and human rights, to become a full member of the ILO and this vision was realized less than a year after he assumed office.

The Maldives has not yet ratified any of the ILO Conventions; the steps taken to incorporate the eight core Conventions into domestic law are ongoing. A tripartite workshop was held in Malé, the capital, on the implementation of the eight core Conventions. At the end of the workshop, the international labour standards expert observed that there are no legal obstacles to the Maldives ratifying the core Conventions. During the seminar, the Honourable Minister Hassan Latheef reiterated the Government's commitment to ratifying the Conventions as soon as possible.

The employment population in the Maldives is estimated to be around 120,000 locals. Unemployment and underemployment are prominent among young people and women. When gender differentials are considered, the female unemployment rate is considerably higher, at 24 per cent, than male unemployment, which stands at 8 per cent. This lower level of female participation in the workforce is partly due to the lack of suitable employment opportunities, coupled with taboos related to working away from home. Each year, a large number of high-school leavers remain unemployed and underemployed. This is either by choice, due to preference for white-collar work, or for various other rea-

sons, such as mismatch of skills and experience to the type of work available.

The Maldives economy is heavily dependent on its foreign labour force. More than one third of its entire labour force are migrant workers. Currently, the Maldives has a migrant workforce of about 100,000, while its population is slightly above 320,000. There are a large number of domestic migrant workers in the Maldives. They come mainly from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and other neighbouring countries.

The Constitution of the Maldives grants the right to work, to organize trade unions and to strike, and prohibits forced labour and discrimination. The Employment Act mandates employment agreements, prescribes a 48-hour working week and provides for annual and other leave comparable to international standards.

Maldivian employment law covers all workers employed in the country. The law provides for and guarantees the statutory minimum rights of all workers, including migrant workers. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that, when it comes to domestic workers, the level of compliance with the law and regulations is low. To remedy this situation, the Labour Relations Authority, mandated with the responsibility of maintaining and regulating labour standards, has been strengthened and reinforced.

Further plans are under way to develop programmes that focus on employers and domestic workers and that aim to create awareness about minimum statutory rights.

The number of recorded cases of HIV is very low in the Maldives. Employment law is silent on the rights of workers who are HIV positive.

Before conclusion, on behalf of our delegation, our prayers and unfettered solidarity and thoughts are for the brothers and sisters in Palestine and other oppressed communities in the world. I hope that this session of the ILC and the deliberations in it will highlight the potential for action in the important areas we have chosen for debate and bring fresh insights into the complex issues and problems for the ultimate betterment of all mankind.

Mr MAIPAKAI (*Minister for Labour and Industrial Relations, Papua New Guinea*)

I am honoured by this opportunity to present my country's response to the Report of the Director-General on recovery efforts relating to the global jobs crisis and the Global Report, *Accelerating action against child labour*.

My Government and the citizens of Papua New Guinea have once again expressed their support for these reports, a message I am happy to convey to the ILO at this Conference.

Once again, the Director-General and the Governing Body of the ILO have proved their efficiency and competence in presenting Reports that are a real inspiration and reflect the reality in the world of work with regard to efforts to achieve decent work throughout the world, which no doubt challenge our capacities to take positive action.

A year ago, the ILO took custody of recovery mechanisms, when the world was hard hit by the economic and financial crisis, through the Global Jobs Pact. We expressed our support at that time, basically as a precautionary measure, due to the relative economic stability and financial growth we were experiencing. Subregionally, we in the Pacific have had to reinforce these precautionary measures,

as a sign of our commitment to our global friends and economic partners who were hard hit by the crisis.

Indeed, we did that comprehensively in Port Vila, Vanuatu, in February 2010, where our political voice reflected our collective will through the Port Vila Statement, wherein we considered the global financial crisis as a threat to our small and vulnerable economies.

We did not intend to do that outside the scope of the Decent Work Agenda, hence we agreed on the Pacific Action Plan on Decent Work, a way of strengthening our country-specific Decent Work Country Programme, thus reaffirming the Director-General's calls to address the crisis through decent, productive and smart work.

Our Decent Work Country Programme emphasizes the importance of correlated and effective labour laws that provide protective opportunities for both the employers and the workers to flourish through decent work and growth. That was why we indicated to the ILO that we want to improve our labour laws, give prominence to employment, skills training and human resource development and also allow tripartism to flourish, as these are our best means to address the global crisis, should it filter into our economy.

In order to show its commitment to the ILO's efforts, my Government, through the National Economic Council, adopted the Decent Work Policy two weeks ago, as a policy to usher in the tripartite-endorsed Decent Work Country Programme, and to allow it to find its place on the country's long-term development agenda.

Again, we have opted to be proactive, by enabling all the multinational players in the economic development processes of our country, especially in the infrastructure, exploration and exportation of national commodities, to take notice of the effects of the global crisis and comply with national policy strategies to improve and increase national employment.

The financial benefits of the economic boom experienced since 2002 are being gradually translated into an improved social and physical infrastructure, with the prospect of facilitating more employment opportunities in the national economy. Papua New Guinea views this as a positive development amidst the global financial crisis, as foreign investment continues to filter into our economy.

Although it has an economy that is now robust and globally recognized, Papua New Guinea is also going through a lot of changes. These changes, although they reflect progressive development, do pose potential challenges to the basic and fundamental rights of citizens. It is therefore incumbent on us, as the current Government, to strike a balance between economic prosperity and human dignity.

In supporting the Director-General's eloquent emphasis on accelerated action against child labour in his Global Report, my Government fully supports the Report. Papua New Guinea is now going through the process of accepting the fact that child labour is indeed a growing problem in our country.

We now face the reality of the situation and we are addressing these problems using a cross-sectoral approach. The Government's policy and legislation interventions, such as the recent reviews of the relevant laws, and the recently enacted Lukautim Pikin-

ini Act, indicate our level of commitment to protecting the basic and fundamental rights of our children.

My Government's ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and their application in our country, as well as the application of ILO-IPEC programmes, in partnership with the European Community, are further indications of our national Government's commitment to protecting our children.

My Government is planning ahead, through the formulation of Vision 2050, which will be implemented over the next 40 years. Thus, the Conference should note that our Vision 2050 largely bases its aspiration on the concept of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda.

As a country, we look to the ILO for leadership, and we also offer our full commitment to ensuring that the ILO's objectives and agendas are implemented. This is our commitment as we deliberate on various issues over the two weeks of this Conference.

With these remarks, we wish you all good luck in the deliberations and discussions that will achieve outcomes which will benefit people the world over.

Ms MPARIWA (*Minister of Labour and Social Services, Zimbabwe*)

The Government of Zimbabwe welcomes the Report of the Director-General as it provides us with a platform to reflect on what the Organization has achieved in these difficult times, and to collectively come up with a vision to guide us on the way forward.

The Report draws our attention to a number of measures adopted by different countries in addressing the global economic crisis. The idea of sustainability being the sufficiency criteria characteristics of the interventions is well articulated in the Report. The fiscal measures that have seen some countries achieve some successes against the crisis are commendable. However, these measures are unlikely to achieve the desired sustainability without them being premised in employment-centred macroeconomic policies.

In this respect, financial stimulus packages do not provide a basis for a permanent solution. Over-reliance on these measures does spell disaster, sooner rather than later. My Government appreciates that the fragility of the recovery process as currently configured is noted in the Report.

What is needed now more than ever is an employment-oriented agenda for recovery and growth. It is of the essence that, as we focus on sustainability, we need to exercise caution to avoid conditions for a follow-on global crisis of even greater proportions. An employment-centred recovery path is what is desired and this is ably captured in the Report. It is true that social stability cannot be achieved in a jobless environment. Employment is at the heart of the recovery processes.

I wish to further commend the Report for its articulation of the need for job-rich growth that is quality oriented. Indeed, we must always be careful to remember that our overall target is decent work. Our overall targets are based on the desire for both economic and social progress. Durable recovery and sustainable growth will only be realized through a balanced approach that mainstreams the four strategic objectives of the ILO.

Issues of recovery and growth are high on my Government's agenda. The Zimbabwe economy, which is in a state of transition, has already recorded considerable growth that is poised to provide the basis for lasting socio-economic progress. It is precisely in this context that my Government identifies itself with the thrust of this Report.

In my country, the Government and the social partners successfully negotiated a national employment policy framework that will consolidate the restoration of socio-economic stability and provide sustainable means for rapid growth. I am delighted to inform the Conference that this policy framework on employment was adopted by the Cabinet on 1 June 2010.

The Director-General's Report and the conclusions of the recurrent discussion on employment and those of the *General Survey concerning employment instruments in light of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization* from the Committee on the Application of Standards, will provide my Government and social partners with the necessary guidelines needed in the implementation of my Government's workplan.

As we move on to implement the national employment policy, we will seek to strengthen the recovery of industries through supporting sectoral and macroeconomic policies that are employment centred.

My Government takes guidance from the Report's position on public works programmes, with examples of rural employment, as well as its emphasis on support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These are important job creators. For developing economies, the rural economy and SMEs provide the most viable entry points for better employment growth and strategies.

While it may be true that the global economy is recovering, presupposing that pre-crisis economic levels are perhaps within reach, for developing countries like my own, the challenge for growth has been ever present, before and throughout the crisis period, hence the focus on the areas where we believe we can make a difference.

My Government looks forward to closer collaboration with its social partners, the Office and other multilateral agencies in the implementation of the national employment policy, in particular the turnaround of the economy in general.

Original Arabic: Mr SAED (Worker, Palestine)

The situation facing our workers and the Palestinian people as a whole stems from the occupation of our land by Israel and its war machine. We have been subjected to all manner of arbitrary measures. There are 615 military checkpoints throughout the territory, for example, disrupting the free movement of people and goods, undermining the economy and making every aspect of life ever harder. As for the racist Separation Barrier, it has deprived us of 20 per cent of our territory, dividing families and villages and keeping children from their schools, farmers from their land and patients from their hospitals. Unemployment has risen to 15 per cent as a result, leading to a similar increase in poverty. Not only is the continuing policy of land-grabbing and settlement an obstacle to any peace negotiations, but it also encourages the settlers, protected by the Israeli army, to commit crimes against Palestinians. The consequences of the blockade on the Gaza Strip

have been disastrous for our people and our workers.

This policy on the part of the Israeli Government has resulted in more than 1.5 million Palestinian people being confined to an open-air prison for over ten years. Protest demonstrations have been organized against the crimes perpetrated during the occupation of the Gaza Strip, most recently against the peace flotilla representing the international support for the lifting of the blockade. Instead of going into the details of the crimes committed by the Israeli forces against those on board the boats, allow me, on behalf of the Palestinian workers, to present my most sincere condolences to the people of Turkey and other countries for the flotilla's fallen martyrs.

We furthermore request that the decision of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights follow its course, and that an international inquiry be conducted in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Al-Quds, the city of peace and religion, is our capital. For more than a decade, however, the blockade by the Israeli authorities has deprived it of all but one colour: that of the occupation.

In spite of all these challenges, we have decided to continue the national struggle in every shape and form against the destruction of our national economy, the Separation Barrier and the settlements; and to strive to achieve our main goal, namely the building of our own independent State.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the high-level mission for their faithful account of the realities of everyday life for Palestinian people.

Mr YUSON (*Representative, Building and Wood Workers' International*)

Tomorrow, the 2010 FIFA World Cup will start in South Africa. Before the games begin, Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) would like to draw the attention of the ILO to the implications of mega-sporting events because of their impact on the economies of host nations and workers' rights.

Governments see sporting events like the World Cup as a panacea for the problems of economic growth and urban redevelopment. However, these events have direct consequences in terms of promoting the Decent Work Agenda. The World Cup in particular is more than just a game. It is a globalized, commercially viable enterprise. While FIFA is expected to make a profit of US\$3.3 billion from the World Cup, workers will not. Most of those working on infrastructure sites have been employed on short-term contracts, typically of three months' duration and without benefits, and earned poverty wages of less than US\$300 per month. As a result of the huge concentration of construction work, with its complex web of subcontracting arrangements, basic conditions of employment as enshrined in South African legislation have not been adhered to. There was no real and effective enforcement of minimum standards by the main contractors, the Government or FIFA. Although BWI and FIFA had signed a Memorandum of Understanding allowing trade unions to participate in joint labour inspection of worksites, the trade unions were in fact denied any direct participation in tripartite inspections. At the Green Point Stadium in Cape Town, trade unions were even refused the right to inspect the stadium, without any reprisal from FIFA.

BWI acknowledges that the socio-economic impact of these games is not the sole responsibility of FIFA, but what is certain is the fact that the sheer

size and short-term nature of such mega events, which generate huge profits, is an economic phenomenon that cannot be left unchecked and unregulated.

BWI wishes to record that FIFA has undermined the most elementary principles of the ILO notion of decent work, and FIFA must be shown the yellow card.

The struggle for decent work continues. In the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, if FIFA fails to take serious steps to improve conditions for the workers and promote ILO labour standards in procurement policies, we will show them the red card.

Finally we suggest that the ILO should investigate and develop clear proposals on how to develop the Decent Work Agenda, specifically in relation to mega-sporting events such as the World Cup.

I would like to mention briefly a few more issues. In Cambodia, construction workers have been waiting since 2005 for a resolution to three complaints lodged with the Government. In the Republic of Korea, the Government has recently declared that ready-made cement and dump truck drivers are not eligible to join trade unions. In Panama, the Government systematically violates trade union rights.

BWI needs to file complaints with the Committee on Freedom of Association. Unfortunately, this is not moving owing to the lack of response from the governments concerned. For this, BWI is showing the Governments of Cambodia, Republic of Korea and Panama the yellow card, for violating the principles of freedom of association. Justice delayed is justice denied.

Original Arabic: Mr AL-AJMI (Worker, Kuwait)

Kuwait has made great strides in applying international labour Conventions and achieving social justice. It has ratified 19 international labour Conventions, including seven fundamental Conventions. Kuwaiti legislation guarantees the right to work, gender equality, the elimination of child labour, freedom of association and the right to organize and many other issues dealt with in international labour standards.

However, there are many gaps in the legislation which still affect the achievement of social justice as pursued by the ILO and by the Kuwaiti trade union movement as well. Despite the adoption of the new Labour Code for the private sector at the beginning of this year which remedied several of these shortcomings, it did not eliminate them altogether. For although the Code lays down necessary conditions for abolishing the sponsorship system applied in Kuwait, this system continues to be applied today, and no effective measures have been taken to abolish it. This is one of the most important points of divergence in labour relations in our country. The Kuwait General Trade Union (KGTU), which is the umbrella organization affiliating all the unions in the Kuwaiti trade union movement, reiterates its demand that the sponsorship system be abolished in order to achieve genuine social justice.

The second key point of divergence in Kuwaiti labour law lies in domestic work, which is referred to in section 5 of the new Labour Code, which excludes it from its provisions. This large workforce suffers a great deal from violations of their rights, and we consider that their inclusion in labour legislation, or the adoption of special legislation regulating their relationships with their employers, is es-

sential to eliminating a great deal of the injustice and suffering to which they are subjected.

The National Assembly of Kuwait recently adopted an Act governing privatization programmes and processes, which is contrary to the Constitution of the State of Kuwait and threatens the economic social interests of different categories of workers and the overwhelming majority of the people of Kuwait and is radically opposed to the interests of the national economy in general. This Act has met with broad opposition among the trade unions, the people and Members of Parliament, and the fact that it was approved by a very narrow majority in Parliament reflects the widespread popular opposition to this Act.

No sooner was the law adopted than the Government launched a massive campaign threatening to repress trade union freedoms No. 625 intended to oppose the trade union and workers' movements. Based on that decision, a committee was formed with a largely military composition, chaired by the Minister for the Interior, with members from the Ministry of Defence, the National Guard, the Ministry of Labour and other government departments concerned, the aim being to repress strikes and sit-ins, in an attempt at a pre-emptive strike to forestall the wide-scale popular and workers' opposition to the abovementioned law and its effects. The Decision does not bode well for the future of civil peace and security in society among the social partners.

When the trade union movement called a public meeting on Tuesday 25 May 2010 with the slogan "No to repression of freedoms and gagging of mouths", in protest against the policy of violation of trade union rights and freedoms and democracy, we were surprised to see 50 armoured cars and 200 police officers and special units cordoning off the KGTU building, in the first show of military force based on the abovementioned Decision, the aim of which was to intimidate and terrorize those participating in the gathering.

We consider that the right to hold sit-ins and to strike is one of the trade union rights and freedoms laid down in the law for the workers, guaranteed by the constitution and enshrined in the legislation in force, and guaranteed in the international Conventions signed by the State of Kuwait. Therefore, they are rights which cannot and must not be infringed in any form whatsoever. The establishment of the abovementioned committee is considered as a military act of blatant repression against these rights and freedoms, threatening social peace among the social partners. Accordingly, we, the KGTU, present an urgent appeal to the ILO demanding an investigation into the matter and measures to prevent the Government from violating trade union rights and freedoms.

We are working seriously and diligently, in cooperation with the ILO and the other social partners, to eliminate the obstacles and shortcomings in our labour legislation to achieve social justice and prevent violation of trade union rights and freedoms. We hope that the Government will respond to our proposals and aspirations thanks to the good offices of the ILO, in order to achieve social justice for all.

Original Spanish: Mr NAVARRO FERNÁNDEZ (Worker, Cuba)

Not for many years now has the world of work faced such a difficult and threatening time.

Last year the ILO provided an appropriate venue for the Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis which,

after listening to speakers and the diverging views of leaders of important countries, recognized the need for a strategy that should aim to ensure that it is not always the workers who are the victims of the multiple crises that have shaken the world. To that end, the Global Jobs Pact was approved.

In recent months, articles and news reports have triumphantly announced the so-called beginning of recovery. However, the stark reality is the exact opposite. According to the ILO itself, another 34 million workers lost their jobs in 2009, bringing the figure up to around 212 million unemployed throughout the world, and it is also expected that in the developed countries and European Union alone, the figure will grow by another 3 million this year, while over 50 per cent of the labour force will have to make do with vulnerable jobs.

Sharp reductions in public spending have been imposed by the European Union, leading to a rise in the retirement age, wage cuts, more unemployment and other disastrous results, making the life of workers and their families even more insecure and difficult.

It is extremely alarming that at this Conference, at which one of the key items on the agenda concerns child labour, the ILO reports that 280 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are working in conditions of slavery or in jobs that are both dangerous and humiliating, and even as soldiers and prostitutes.

Faced with this stark global reality, we Cuban workers consider that it is not just a cyclical economic downturn; the problem is far more serious: this is in fact a systemic problem. It is the system prevailing throughout the world, which for some years now has shown itself not to be viable, because it is not based on fair solutions and on distributive justice, but rather on selfishness and the individual acquisition of wealth. Under such a system, humanity is condemned to suffer from repeated crises and injustice.

In Cuba, although of course we too have been facing severe restrictions due, on the one hand, to the effects of the current crisis and, on the other, in a decisive measure to the consequences of the brutal economic war waged against us for nearly 50 years, accompanied by media campaigns that are full of lies and distortions of reality, we can say that our children are guaranteed the right to universal education free of charge. Even the most far-flung corners of the country have their own schools and teachers, and this fact has been recognized by UNESCO and by other distinguished institutions.

In addition, we have embarked on a process for overcoming the crisis and modernizing our own economic model, through ongoing social dialogue which includes the participation, not only of the unions, Government and employers, but also of the vast majority of the workers themselves, through the broad-based participatory mechanisms established in our country, based on the premise that no worker shall go unprotected and that the interests of all workers and those of their families shall be guaranteed.

Meanwhile, we continue to act in solidarity with other peoples who need it in the most remote areas of the world, not by giving them our surpluses – because we have none – but by sharing what we have with the human beings who need it most.

We reiterate our recognition of the noble ideals of the ILO and our unflagging commitment to continue working constructively within the ILO.

The Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) and the Cuban unions reaffirm their constant solidarity with the Palestinian people and condemn the constant aggression to which they are subjected, the most recent example being the attack on the flotilla carrying humanitarian aid to the population of Gaza.

Mr SHELTON DEVENDRA (*Worker, Sri Lanka*)

At the outset, I would like to touch upon the situation in my country. It is now one year since the war against terrorism ended. During that black period, the country had to face enormous challenges dealing with civilian refugees affected by the war. Although the majority of these innocent victims of the conflict have been resettled or relocated, there is still more work to be done to bring back normalcy to these areas.

However, the biggest challenge faced by the Government is to find a meaningful and lasting solution to the grievances of the minority communities. Although the main responsibility in this regard rests with the Government, it is a task in which civil society has to play a vital role. As powerful civil society organizations representing millions of workers, trade unions in Sri Lanka have consistently taken up the position that a political solution, arrived at through serious dialogue among all concerned parties and based on respect for the fundamental human rights of all citizens, is urgently needed if a lasting peace, leading to the economic and social development of our country, is to be achieved.

The agenda of this Conference this year includes several items which are of special concern to our country and its workers and, in my view, the discussion on decent work for domestic workers occupies a very important place among them. At present, domestic workers are not covered by the labour laws of our country and this, coupled with the fact that the majority of domestic workers are internal migrants, makes them an extremely vulnerable group.

On the other hand, Sri Lanka being a labour-exporting country, we currently have over 1.6 million workers employed mainly in countries of the Middle East, of whom nearly 1 million are estimated to be domestic workers. Low skills, lack of adequate pre-departure training, exploitation by employment agencies, and physical and sexual abuse make them the most vulnerable group of workers in the world of work.

In 2008, trade unions participated in a tripartite exercise to develop a national migration policy for our country, with the support of the ILO. However, implementation of this policy has still not gathered momentum. Therefore, we hope the discussion will result in a Convention and Recommendation that will confer obligations and offer guidelines to both sending and receiving countries.

The second discussion on HIV/AIDS and the world of work is awaited with much interest. Although Sri Lanka is considered a low-prevalence country, trade unions have played an active role in this area, working closely with the ILO Office in Colombo on a number of initiatives to develop preventive as well as managerial measures. As an initial step, a joint trade union policy on prevention and management of HIV/AIDS in the workplace was developed, to which all the major trade unions

in Sri Lanka subscribed. We are now involved in a tripartite consultative process to develop a national policy on HIV/AIDS in the world of work and we hope that our experiences will provide valuable input to the discussions here.

At almost every Conference over the past years, we have drawn the attention of this house to the failure of our Government to effectively implement, both in law and in practice, the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), on which the entire foundation of this Organization rests. Although it must be admitted that the Ministry of Labour has put in a lot of effort in this regard, the Government seems to be lacking the political will to give effect to these fundamental Conventions that were ratified many years ago.

In conclusion, it is my duty to report that, when I addressed this Conference in 2006, I made reference to the ongoing discussion on the employment relationship. Subsequent to the adoption of a Recommendation on this issue, trade unions have put pressure on the Government to bring in legislation making certain types of labour subcontracting illegal. I am happy to report that, after three years of intense debate among the social partners, we have finally reached tripartite agreement on draft legislation that will hopefully be presented to Parliament this year. If it becomes law, it will be a historic victory for tens of thousands of subcontracted workers presently engaged in precarious forms of employment in our country.

Mr PETRIASHVILI (*Worker, Georgia*)

Decades of deregulation, free-market speculation and neoliberal miscalculations have plunged the world into deep economic recession. Thirty-four million people have lost their jobs and 64 million have fallen below the poverty line. No end to this unbearable situation is in sight. On the contrary, the economic crisis is becoming more dramatic and the quest to end global poverty is ill-defined. Humankind is confronted with huge challenges and economic instability is plain to see.

Naturally, the economic crisis has also had a painful impact on Georgia. With large international financial institutions using the whole country, its population and economy, as a laboratory for neoliberal experiments, and in the light of market fundamentalism, the abolition of mechanisms for state regulation in the fields of labour, health care and occupational safety, and the ignoring of ILO Conventions and universally recognized norms of tripartism, social dialogue and collective bargaining, Georgian citizens see the world in ever-darker colours and feel the wolf-like glare of globalization, compounded by a neoliberal lack of responsibility towards their problems on the part of the Government.

The establishment of a tripartite social partnership commission can be considered the only positive point of the past four years. It came about as a result of the tireless, coordinated work of the ILO, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Pan-European Regional Council (PERC) and members of our movement, the Georgian Trade Union Confederation (GTUC). We regard it as a success when dialogue and general relations with the Government and employers bring positive changes to the lives of our members. Our members and other

workers have yet to benefit from the commission, which is down to the fact that the discriminatory labour code is still in force in spite of the Government's repeated pledges to amend it.

Freedom of association is not still guaranteed. Union leaders and activists are still subject to constant oppression, intimidation and threats, while collective bargaining and occupational safety remains ignored. It will be impossible for Georgia, and the world as a whole, to find a way out of the crisis unless the Government shares the responsibility with all concerned social groups and ensures their full participation in decision-making and in the elaboration of reforms and laws, which calls for real social dialogue to protect the rights of every individual.

In the wake of the recent military aggression of the Russian Federation which put 20 per cent of the country under occupation, this is vitally important for Georgia. Constant provocation from the occupier aiming to shatter the country's economy and sovereignty has not yet been met with a sufficiently strong response from the civilized world. The high rate of unemployment and social distress, along with a range of external threats, further jeopardize Georgia's statehood. The only recipe for overcoming these problems and giving a fresh start to the country's development is to promote truly democratic change, to strengthen civil society, and to strive for civil harmony. None of this can happen without the willingness of the Government to share the responsibility for decision-making with all relevant social groups, without strong unions, and without fostering social justice and peace. These are the priority issues. Whether in Georgia or elsewhere in the world, all of the above will remain unachievable as long as trade unions are perceived to be the problem and not part of the solution.

Mr KALNPEL (*Employer, Vanuatu*)

We value the importance of tripartism and social dialogue in Vanuatu, and we recognize this as the only way to resolve the challenges we face from time to time. We also value our working partnership with the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries in our joint efforts to address the labour market challenges we face in Vanuatu.

The formal private sector in Vanuatu is small in comparison with those of many other countries represented at this Conference, with most major employers being expatriate investors, mainly from Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia, employing local staff.

The main drivers of our economy are the tourism, agriculture and construction sectors, followed by retail services and small-scale manufacturing.

As well as providing services to our private sector members, the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry dedicates a lot of its resources to trying to open up new markets for Vanuatu products and facilitating trade links between countries in the Pacific region. This is an important additional role we perform in order to support the Government's efforts to achieve private sector-led economic growth.

Recent economic growth statistics from Vanuatu have been impressive. In 2009, despite the economic and financial crisis, our economy grew by 4 per cent. In 2010, we expect to see our economy grow again, but perhaps at a slightly reduced rate of approximately 3.5 per cent.

But as General Manager of the institution representing private employers, I have to ask – are these impressive statistics for economic growth resulting in the creation of jobs for our people? If so, are these jobs of the quality standard which is decent work? Are these jobs sustainable? Is the standard of living for the average ni-Vanuatu citizen improving as a result of our economic growth? Unfortunately, the answer is all too often “no”.

In Vanuatu, we are facing an increasingly urgent problem with youth unemployment and underemployment. Far too many of our young people are pushed out of the education system too early, and owing to the lack of formal education and absence of technical skills, they remain virtually unemployable in the formal private sector. The formal private sector in Vanuatu simply cannot absorb all the school leavers each year. Rural young people migrate from their islands to the urban areas in search of income-earning opportunities. In the urban areas, without employment or money in their pocket, youth are attracted to negative influences, including drug abuse and criminal activities. Those who are lucky to get one of the few places in our vocational training schools also find it difficult to find employment when they graduate. Our vocational education colleges are not delivering industry-standard, competency-based training. Our employers complain that they have to start from the beginning and retrain vocational students when they come looking for skilled and semi-skilled employment after graduation.

In Vanuatu, we have much work to do to align the supply side of the labour market – education and training – with the demand side – an expanding private sector and increased opportunities for new business development by micro, small and medium enterprises.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry stands ready to play its part, and we call on the Government of Vanuatu to play its part by developing active labour market policies to promote employment and decent work in Vanuatu. In this regard, the employers of Vanuatu endorse the Port Vila Statement and the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work, which was agreed together with our tripartite constituents at the Tripartite High-Level Meeting: Decent Work for Sustainable Development in the Pacific, held in Port Vila in February 2010. By endorsing the Port Vila Statement and the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work, the employers in Vanuatu in turn endorse and support the ILO Global Jobs Pact. In Vanuatu, implementation of the Pacific Action Plan for Decent Work will affirm our commitment to the application of the Global Jobs Pact in Vanuatu.

We call on our Government to adopt and implement economic policies which promote local job creation. We call on our colleagues in the Vanuatu Council of Trade Unions to assist in our efforts to support our members. We call on our members, the employers in Vanuatu, to ensure that the employment they create is above the minimum standards.

Ms KANYOKA (*Representative, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations*)

There are millions of domestic workers in the world, both in developing countries and developed ones. But for all this time, they have never been recognized as workers in the world of work, with the rights that other workers have.

The role of this sector in economic and social development cannot be understated. As domestic workers themselves say, we are the oil in the wheels. It is our work in households that enables others to go out and be economically active. And yet, our huge economic and social contribution has not been acknowledged until now. Few governments have statistics that measure our true worth. Yet, it is us who take care of your precious children and your sick and elderly; we cook your food to keep you healthy and we look after your property when you are away.

But, over these two weeks at the ILC, we have been making progress. There is now a proposal for a Convention with a Recommendation that recognizes that domestic workers are workers and do have rights. Though many details are still being negotiated, we feel so happy that the fundamentals are in place. The right of domestic workers to be included in decent work has been won, at least for now.

We would particularly like to thank the Vice-Chairperson of the Workers' group on the Committee on Domestic Workers – Ms Halima Yacob – and her colleagues for all their hard work and commitment to the rights of domestic workers.

Facing the economic crisis, some governments, including from the rich countries, are afraid of taking on further commitments. They feel they do not have the resources to organize such things as social security, maternity benefits, occupational health and safety, and regulation of employment agencies. But these are key human rights as well as labour issues.

What is more, I want to tell you that I come from one of the poorest countries of the world, which did decide to make a commitment and has put in place a number of measures to bring about decent work for domestic workers.

My country is the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Government, as poor as it is, recognized domestic workers in the Employment Labour Relations Act of 2004, covering them under the minimum wage legislation, freedom of association, and collective bargaining. And now it has started to include domestic workers in the social security scheme.

One of our biggest problems is poverty in rural areas. Families used to have little option but to send their children to work as domestic workers in the towns and cities, and even abroad. We know they have been trafficked as far as the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia. But, back in 1996, the Government committed itself to eradicating, as far as possible, this child labour, including in domestic work. It saw it as a key part of its poverty reduction programme. It took an integrated approach, involving all the key ministries, including education, agriculture, finance, women, gender and community development, planning, and health, as well as local government. We got a lot of support from the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), for which we are very grateful.

More than 7,000 child domestic workers have been rescued and reunited with their families, returned to school or retrained with new skills. At the same time, we involved the rural communities in planning their own social and economic development. This included new agricultural production cooperatives, entrepreneurship skills and savings and credit schemes, just to mention a few. This shows that, by promoting sustainable development

in rural areas, you can diminish child labour and increase the prosperity of whole communities.

I am just giving you this one example from my own country to show how imagination and commitment – above all by governments – can help to solve problems that at first seem so difficult to overcome.

At this session of the International Labour Conference we have had domestic workers from all over the world not only watching but also some taking full part in the proceedings as delegates. Decent work for domestic workers is an effective way of reducing poverty and increasing the quality of the work provided to millions of households. So, rest assured that we will be back next year.

Mr YIMER (*Employer, Ethiopia*)

The theme of social policy is crucial to alleviating the socio-economic problems of States. Unless social issues are given due consideration, the world faces a bleak future. The Ethiopian Employers' Federation believes this and is promoting job creation through investment in Ethiopia. Socio-economic problems cannot be viewed in isolation from appropriate policy instruments in each country.

We therefore work closely with the Government, the employees' federation and other social partners, and with the ILO, to tackle social problems. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has planned to end poverty through a programme of sustained and accelerated economic growth. This is the basis of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme, and is intended to promote economic and social development. The Federation, as signatory to this Programme, is making a major contribution to its implementation.

Our aim is to create decent work, especially for unemployed young Ethiopians. The small and medium-sized enterprises organized under our umbrella organization are the ones creating more jobs. Most importantly, women, who were previously marginalized in society, are also organized under a number of business associations by our Federation.

Another burning issue that should be given special emphasis is HIV/AIDS. The Federation, in collaboration with social partners and various other stakeholders, is attempting to mitigate the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country and at the workplace. We are actively participating in this campaign at different levels. Awareness raising among employers and employees has been going on for a long time and is set to continue.

The Federation supports appropriate vocational training for unemployed citizens in line with labour market requirements. Occupational health and safety of workers are also on the agenda of the employers and the Federation.

Global warming is also an issue requiring our attention. The ILO has already voiced concern, and recently we participated in Green Jobs Training. The Federation believes that this has to continue and that we must stand as one and save our planet, as the effective use of resources ensures food security and opens opportunities and hope for job-seekers.

As you are all aware, peace and security in a country assures growth and prosperity. That is why democratic practice opens the way to solving a country's political, social and economic issues. Civil society also plays a great role in the democ-

matic process. It is because of this that the Ethiopian Employers' Federation and 11 other civic associations formed a Coalition the main aim of which was to observe the fourth Ethiopian elections. The Federation served as a chairman and more than 40,000 observers all over the country witnessed the elections.

The elections were free, fair, peaceful, democratic and participatory, according to the preliminary report of the Coalition. The overall process was democratic except for some minor issues which can be improved in the future. In my capacity as Ethiopian Employers' Federation President and Chairman of the Coalition of Ethiopian Civil Societies for Election Observation, I can proudly inform you of the validity of the vote. Such locally organized election observation is new to many and could also be a model in African politics.

The democratic process plays a great role in economic growth; that is why annual economic growth of about 11 per cent has been recorded in Ethiopia. This growth cannot be realized without the full participation of local and foreign investors. In short, we, the employers, and especially those of us in the private sector, are the engine of growth and development. The Ethiopian Government has realized these facts and has created a favourable investment environment based on the principles of the free market. The development seen in the country over the last years is the result of these efforts.

Finally, we wish to thank the ILO for its continued support and hope it will continue in the future.

Mr HARRIS (*Representative, Education International*)

Will we have a lost generation? Will we allow market speculation to deny quality education for our children and relevant vocational training for our youth? With the latest phase in the financial crisis, that is the stark political choice that countries now confront.

As the ILO Director-General said in his opening address, the G20 countries, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union all agreed that coordinated stimulus for sustainable recovery should continue in 2010, with planning for credible exit strategies in 2011. But, now, the speculators who caused the crisis two years ago are betting against entire nations, forcing massive cuts in public services, including cuts in vital resources for education and training.

My colleagues in Education International and other global unions often go to meetings where they hear all kinds of theories, but I am here today to talk to you about the reality in the local communities of country after country, where ordinary people struggle day in and day out, not only for a decent life now, but also for a decent future for their children. We all know that education and training are key factors in sustainable recovery and decent work, yet market pressures, driven by unchecked thirst for short-term gain, are placing this necessary investment – public investment – at risk.

Education International, with other global unions, supports the ILO's role as a place where governments, employers and workers can cooperate together on the recovery of the real economy. We strongly support the ILO's role at the G20; we support the recommendations of the G20 labour and employment ministers to the Toronto Summit, calling on the ILO to continue its work with the constituents on a skills and training strategy based on

lifelong learning and a solid foundation of general education. Our inter-sectoral forum in March showed that, but the ILO strategy needs to move from analysis to practical proposals. We have to address the need for many more qualified teachers and instructors. Education International is ready to work with the ILO, as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank, to make the strategy work in practice.

Until a few weeks ago, the head of the IMF agreed with the ILO that there can be no recovery until there is recovery of employment. Today, however, the IMF is back to its old habit of preaching fiscal restraint to the exclusion of social cohesion and so are the G20 finance ministers. We say it is time for the labour ministers who come to this Conference to be more assertive, to insist that the financial sector must be at the service of the real economy, not the other way around. Dismissals of teachers have started in many countries; several hundred thousand more dismissals are expected in Europe and the United States before the year is out. Those dismissals mean quality education denied to several million children and young people.

Global unions, the Global Campaign for Education and constituents of the World Economic Forum, including major IT companies, are all asking the G20 to take two key decisions in Toronto and beyond: to convene a ministerial-level committee to work out how to close the financing gap so as to achieve education for all and, secondly, to support the establishment of a global partnership for teacher education and professional development. We call on the ILO to support these proposals.

At the same time, the ILO remains the institution to which we look for the defence of human and trade union rights. We are worried that the consensus around the ILO's fundamentally important normative role is being chipped away.

How can the Employers' group possibly justify their insistence on taking Colombia off the list before the Committee on the Application of Standards when 14 teacher unionists, and 30 trade unionists in all, were killed just this year? This is outrageous. How can the Islamic Republic of Iran justify the recent execution of a teacher on trumped-up charges? We are going to continue to struggle for the full respect of trade union rights in many countries. We have cases before the ILO, Turkey and Guatemala, but we perceive a general softening of the ILO's position on normative issues, under pressures of various kinds, and we call for greater firmness.

Be assured that Education International, with 30 million members around the world, will continue to work closely with the ILO on programmes. Teachers, who by the nature of our vocation are present in every local community, can play an important role. We have a great deal of experience on education against HIV/AIDS and on issues addressed in the Recommendation on HIV/AIDS in the world of work. Tomorrow we will say more on child labour. We have spoken on the report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART). There is good work being done on an ILO Human Resource Toolkit of good practices for the teaching profession.

We will continue to work closely with the other global unions, governments and employers on a skills and training strategy reaching across sectors. We need more qualified teachers and instructors, with mobility facilitated between industry and colleges, and across borders.

The study planned by the ILO on personnel working in early childhood education will also be important for society as a whole in terms of both growth and equity. In these ways, the ILO is demonstrating value added.

It is all the more important that the ILO, and labour ministers, remain steadfast and firm on insisting on policies for investment in people as a way forward to a sustainable future.

Original French: The PRESIDENT (Mr DE ROBIEN)

May I thank everybody for their contributions and may I particularly congratulate those of you who have stayed this late, especially the delegation of Cameroon, which has attended assiduously.

(The Conference adjourned at 7.20 p.m.)

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