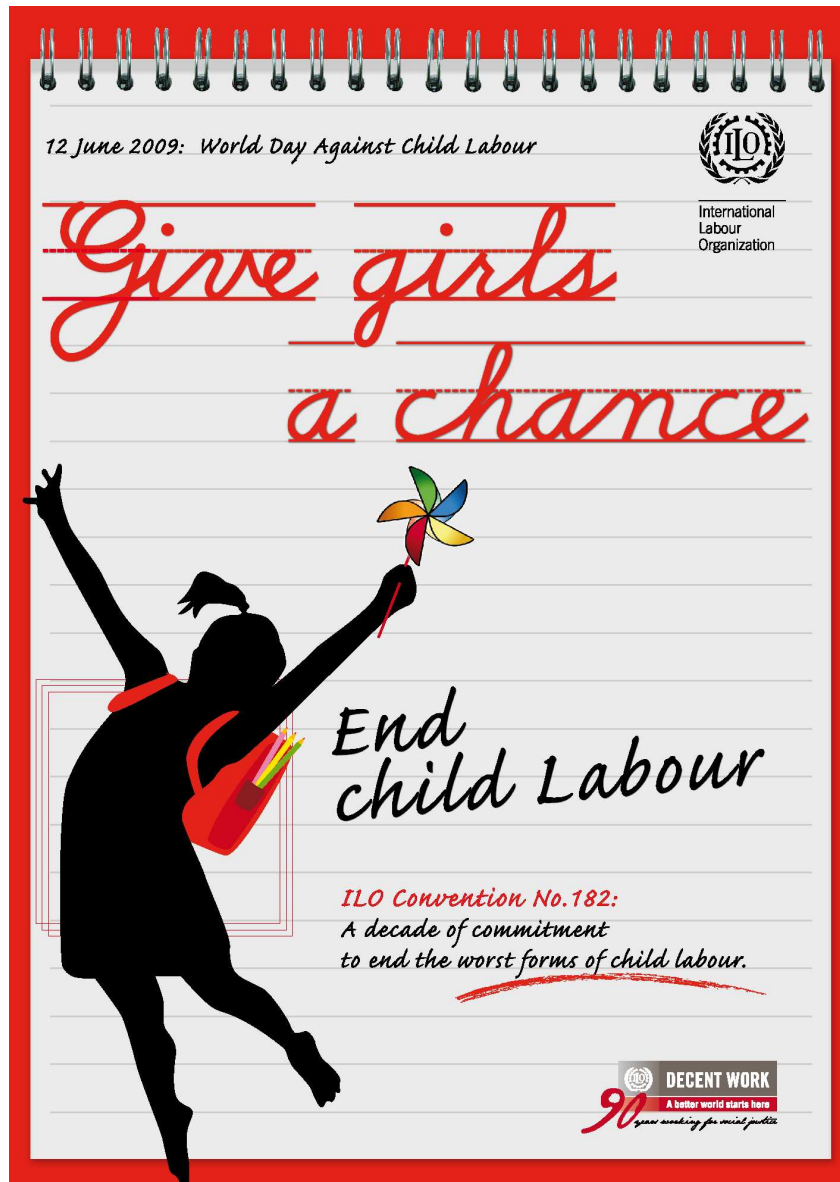


WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

Give girls a chance: End child labour





In 2009, the World Day Against Child Labour marked the 10th anniversary of the landmark Convention No.182, which addresses the need for action to end the worst forms of child labour. While celebrating the progress made over the last 10 years, the World Day highlighted the continuing challenges, with a focus on exploitation of girls in child labour.

In 2009, World Day events were held in over 60 countries around the world.

In Geneva, the ILO marked the World Day with a children's solidarity event organised jointly, for the third consecutive year, with the Geneva based community organisation "Le respect, ça change la vie" and the City of Geneva in front of the UN Building in Place des Nations.





This was followed by a special session of the International Labour Conference marking the World Day and the 10th anniversary of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

The Kenyan band “Haba na Haba” opened the session and children from a local Geneva school were present in the audience.





The United States Senator Tom Harkin addressed the Conference as the featured speaker for the World Day. This was followed by speeches from Mr. J.W. Botha and Sir Roy Trotman, the employer and worker representatives.

“There is no more pressing human and civil rights issue right now than ending the exploitation and virtual enslavement of children in the workplace...Every child deserves spaces to grow...”

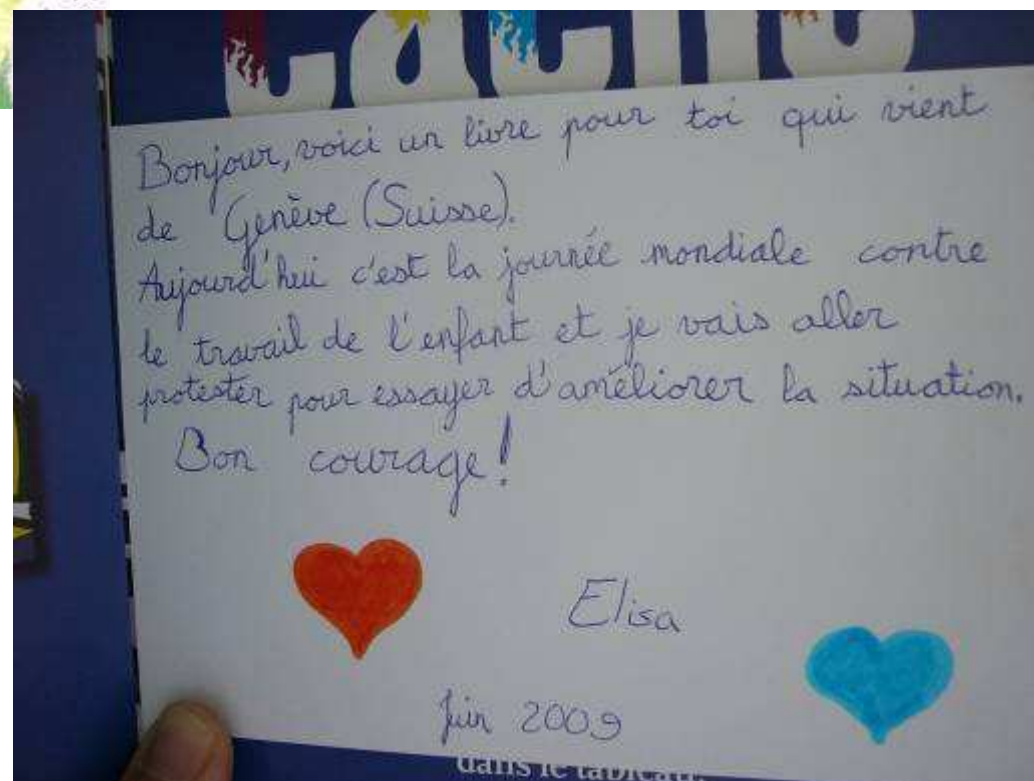
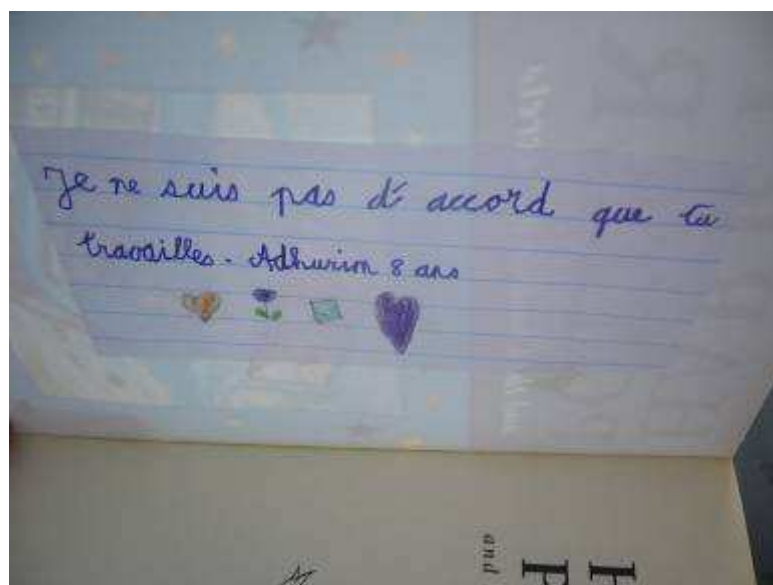
Extract from the Senator’s speech

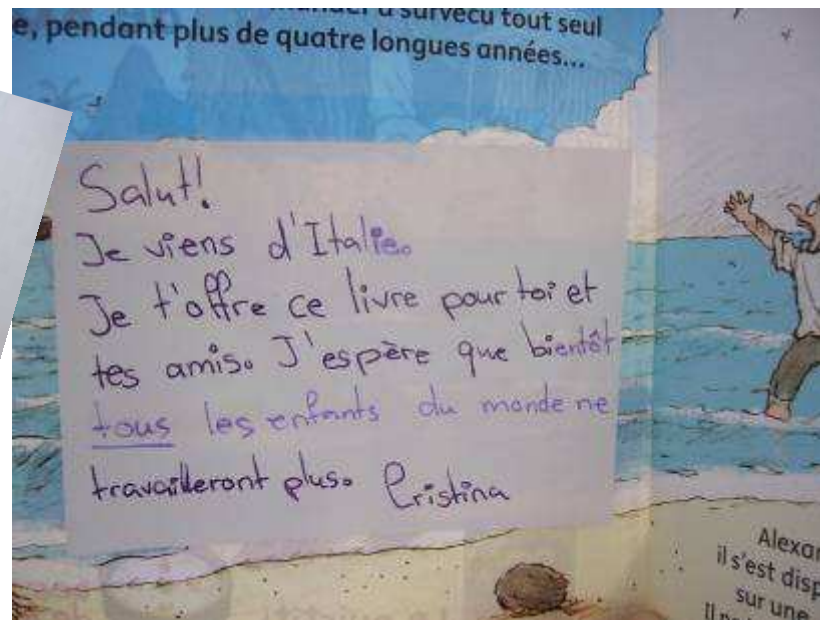
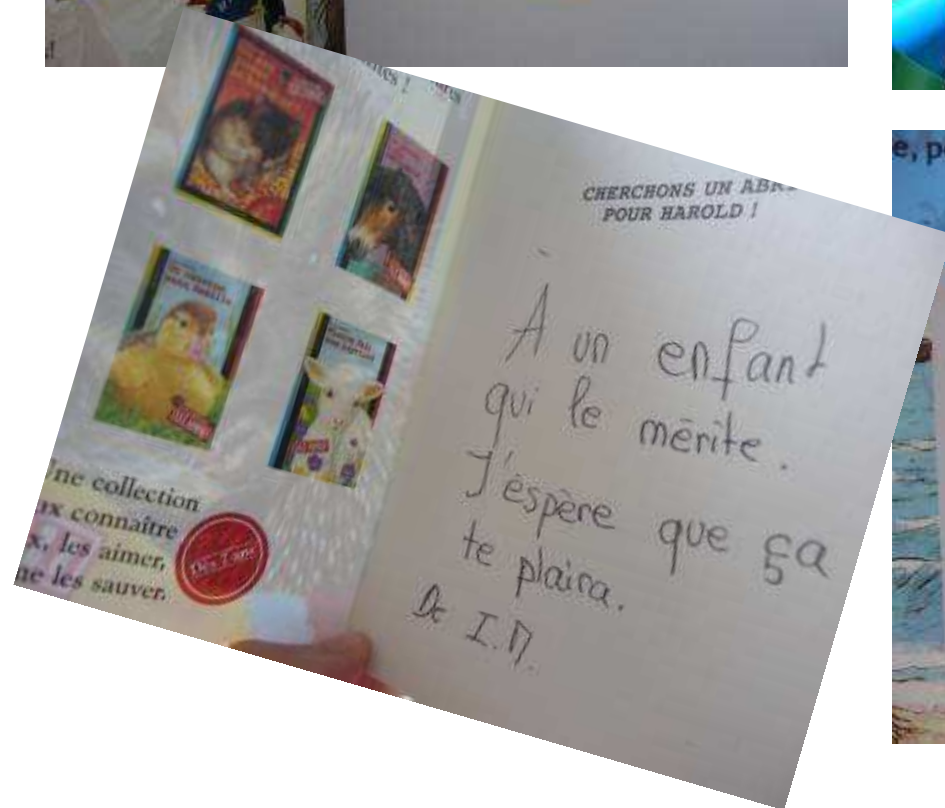


Students from a local Geneva school, Ecole d'Onex-Parc, attended the special session of the ILC.



The children arrived in Place des Nations before the official opening of the ceremony to donate books for children less fortunate than them, with their personal messages inside.





The pinwheel is the symbol of the World Day and all the children were given “make your own pinwheel” kits which they assembled with help from their teachers, ILO interns and police cadets and students from the UK. They were thus encouraged to join the “Pass it on!” pinwheel campaign.





The event began with music from The Kenyan band “Haba na Haba”, from the slums of Nairobi. They developed their musical skills in a youth centre supported by the ILO-IPEC programme.





A group from the Global March Against Child Labour marched from the ILO to Place des Nations to join the event.



The children took the lead, addressing questions to: Mr. Rémy Pagani, Mayor of the City of Geneva...



“...what will you would do to mobilize other Mayors in Switzerland to take action against child labour?”



...Mr. Charles Beer, State Councillor was asked “...will you help build awareness on child labour among school children in Geneva by introducing the issue in local schools?”

Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, Founder of the Global March Against Child Labour, who was present with a 13 year old former child miner from Nepal was asked *“what has changed since the entry into force of the Convention on the worst forms of child labour?”*





...and Mrs. Antonia Cortese, Secretary Treasurer, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, brought the voice of teachers to the event. She was asked *“How do teachers help in the fight against child labour?”*



ILO Director General, Juan Somavia and Senator Tom Harkin joined the event.



A book of messages and drawings from children whose lives had changed thanks to the support provided by the United States was presented to the Senator.



A former child labourer and young global marcher from Togo, Ablavi Benjamine Agbodjan, sent out her appeal against child labour.



Girls and boys from a local school in Geneva read their appeal against child labour, written on the canvases hanging from the giant chair:

“By participating in this World Day, we, children in Geneva, symbolically Representing all the children of the world, celebrate the 10th anniversary of Convention No. 182 against the worst forms of child labour. We are happy to see how much progress has been made over the last 10 years. Unfortunately, there is still a lot to be done, particularly on the situation of girls in Child labour, who are severely exploited. The poverty and vulnerability of children, and the traditions and customs of a country must not be used as an excuse for such unacceptable practices. By our presence today, we demonstrate our support for these children, and we call for equal rights, dignity and respect for everyone - both girls and boys – in all countries.”

*Classe 912B23
du CO de la Florence*

The authorities present added their signatures to the canvas signed by the children in their appeal to end child labour.





The event ended with a rendition of the song “Libérez les enfants” and a release of balloons.