



## FIFTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Report of the Committee on Technical Cooperation

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 11 March 2008 chaired by Mr Yimer Aboye (Government, Ethiopia). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr Jeetun and Ms Yacob respectively.
2. The Committee had the following agenda items:
  - I. Public-private partnerships;
  - II. Technical cooperation activities in occupational safety and health: A thematic evaluation;
  - III. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC);
  - IV. Implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia;
  - V. Other questions.
3. A representative of the Director-General, Ms van Leur, recalled an observation of some members of the Committee on Technical Cooperation that, in comparison with the ILO, other United Nations (UN) agencies had been more effective in showing the results and achievements of their programmes. She acknowledged that the ILO could further strengthen the visibility of its technical cooperation programme. Increased knowledge about the impact of the ILO's technical cooperation activities, as well as more and better communication concerning ILO projects, would enhance awareness about decent work challenges worldwide and also help promote decent work for more women and men.
4. To set the stage for the day's session, the Committee was presented with a video presentation entitled *Technical Cooperation: Making Decent Work a Reality*. The Committee saw glimpses from selected projects: *Bringing an end to child labour in the Santa Filomena gold mines, Peru*; *Decent Work Pilot Programme, helping informal workers develop their business and join the formal economy, Ghana*; *Development of safety and health monitoring services by employers, Bulgaria*; and *Social dialogue training for workers and employers, Indonesia*.

## I. Public–private partnerships

5. Ms van Leur, representative of the Director-General, introduced the paper on public–private partnerships (PPPs) by recalling that in June 2006, having reviewed the role of the ILO in technical cooperation, the International Labour Conference stated in its conclusions that PPPs had potential as a source of funding and expanded knowledge base. The Conference called for the establishment of effective partnerships with other development actors, and the mobilization of financial and human resources, including from the public and private sectors. The Governing Body was to establish and monitor the implementation of clear guidelines and criteria for such partnerships.
6. In response to the Conference conclusions, the Office had prepared, in consultations with the Officers of the Committee on Technical Cooperation, a paper<sup>1</sup> that had been discussed in the March 2007 session of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. At that time, the Committee on Technical Cooperation had not been able to agree on conclusions concerning public–private partnerships. After further consultations with the Officers of the Committee on Technical Cooperation and the tripartite constituents, a revised report had been prepared and placed before the current session of the Committee.
7. Ms van Leur pointed out that the guiding principles in the paper, as well as the reference to the need for operational guidelines, were based on the tripartite agreement reached at the International Labour Conference in 2006. She clarified that the principles for PPPs referred to in the paper concerned voluntary and collaborative partnerships and funding from non-state actors such as the business community and foundations only, and not the multi-bilateral donors.
8. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jeetun, expressed the group’s appreciation of the Office’s efforts in preparing the document in close consultation with social partners throughout, and, following Ms van Leur’s introductory statement, felt reassured of the voluntary nature of the partnership under consideration. The importance of flexibility in guidelines, instead of establishing rigid rules, was underlined.
9. PPPs should not only be the funding modality but the way of mobilizing expertise, skills, knowledge and technology for beneficiary countries. The interests of private companies in partnerships of a business nature should be taken into consideration in seeking PPPs. The Office could achieve its decent work objectives by engaging with companies in a practical manner.
10. Guidelines on PPPs should be established after taking into account the experience gained by the Office and the lessons learned.
11. Mr Jeetun underlined the importance of avoiding micro-management. It was important to allow the Office to manage projects and partnerships with tripartite oversight. The autonomy of each group had to be respected. While echoing the importance of gender equality, he questioned the need for the high level of elaboration in the text. The importance of sustainability of the projects established through PPPs was underlined.
12. Finally, concerning the point for decision, the Employer Vice-Chairperson suggested the insertion of the words “in consultation with social partners”.
13. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Yacob, noted that the document on PPPs captured the views expressed during the consultations, and the principles enumerated did not require

<sup>1</sup> Public–private partnerships for technical cooperation (GB.298/TC/3).

extensive discussion as they had been adopted by the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2006. While the Workers' group had had some reservations on PPPs during 2006, they felt that the ILO's unique tripartite structure could allow PPPs to become a means of leveraging expertise and funding.

14. While PPPs were already well established in the UN system, guidelines specific to the ILO were necessary to ensure that there would be adherence to the ILO's mandate and mission. Referring to the comment made by the Employers' group that the guidelines should not be too rigid, she stressed that the ILO should not accept partners that did not uphold the core values of the ILO. Those who exploited or abused workers' rights should not be accepted as partners.
15. The Workers' group remained committed to the guiding principles outlined in the paper and invited the Office to make explicit reference to them in any future PPP agreement.
16. The Workers' group agreed that there was a need to develop operational guidelines. Their formulation as well as implementation should adhere to the key elements embodied in the guiding principles. The partnership proposal process should include consultations on the proposed partners and relevance of the partnership to the ILO's strategic objectives with the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP).
17. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, noted the complementarities between the ILO and its social partners' expertise with that of the private sector, and welcomed PPPs as a means of increasing job creation and generating revenue in Africa. The need for a clear understanding of the local companies, legislation and trade unions was also stressed.
18. The representative of the Government of Sweden, speaking on behalf of the industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), highlighted the essential role of PPPs within the technical cooperation framework of the ILO as a means of enhancing decent work objectives, bridging funding gaps, and guaranteeing sustainability and local ownership. The importance of ensuring consistency of private sector operations with the ILO mandate and values was underlined, as well as the need to report on PPPs to the Governing Body. Concerned with the ability of the ILO to monitor the extent to which partners respected "its mandate in their own operations", the spokesperson suggested the deletion of those words from one of the guiding principles.
19. Subsequent discussion on the issue of the deletion of particular words focused on IMEC's elaboration of the concern. The Employers' group, while sympathizing with IMEC's position, accepted that it was part of the paper. The Workers' group reiterated that while PPPs were desirable, measures were necessary to prevent, for example, a company that abused workers' rights in one country from playing a philanthropist's role in another.
20. The representative of the Government of Japan regretted that in the context of the UN reform, the ILO's operational guidelines still lagged behind those of other UN agencies. He maintained the need to respect ILO values and principles, while at the same time maintaining flexibility in the PPPs.
21. The representative of the Government of India mentioned good results from PPPs implemented in his country. He stressed the need for them to be guided by the interests of tripartite constituents, to be demand driven, and to include a sustainability component in the delivery system. In addition, the critical success factors for establishing and implementing PPPs should be examined.

22. The representative of the Government of Nigeria declared that PPPs were a strategic tool intended to maximize the impact of development while ensuring greater transparency and accountability.
23. The representative of the Government of the Philippines pointed out the potential to increase the visibility of the ILO and the Decent Work Agenda through PPPs, and also to improve the expertise of ILO constituents.
24. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom stated that PPPs should be used in support of the “One UN” system, and should not lead to fragmentation of UN funding at the country level.
25. The representative of the Government of the United States expressed her satisfaction with the clarifications provided by the representative of the Director-General, and more specifically the fact that guiding principles for PPPs did not concern agreements with bilateral donors. Expressing full support for the IMEC statement, the representative of the Government of the United States concluded by reaffirming the importance of PPPs as a tool for the ILO.
26. The representative of the Government of Senegal underlined the need to pool funds and resources.
27. A representative of the Director-General, Ms van Leur, responded to the debate. She assured that lessons learnt would be taken into account, that the operational guidelines would take into account many of the issues raised in the debate, and that tripartite constituents, as well as ACT/EMP and ACTRAV, would be consulted in the establishment of operational guidelines.
28. *The Committee on Technical Cooperation invites the Governing Body to:*
  - (i) *request the Office, after consultation with tripartite constituents, to establish and apply, on the basis of the guiding principles, operational guidelines, and to develop and disseminate promotional materials for public–private partnerships; and*
  - (ii) *request the Office to regularly report on public–private partnerships in future sessions of this Committee, and, as appropriate, to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee (PFA).*

## **II. Technical cooperation activities in occupational safety and health: A thematic evaluation**

29. A representative of the Director-General, Dr Al-Tuwaijri, Director of the SafeWork programme, introduced the item. She highlighted some success factors learned from the evaluation, including the importance of social dialogue, confidence-building measures for ensuring sustainability, labour inspection for promoting occupational safety and health (OSH), and replication of practical and local level experience for maximum impact. She described major challenges such as raising the profile of OSH particularly amongst donors, placing OSH higher on the political agenda through national OSH policies and strategies in line with the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187). A key for fund mobilization was the integration of OSH elements in

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Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). She sought guidance from the Committee on ways to tackle those challenges.

30. Ms van Leur, representative of the Director-General, expressed support for a higher profile for OSH and said that the Office planned to reinforce efforts for resource mobilization in that field in view of the need for balance between the ILO's four strategic objectives.
31. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jeetun, explained that the Employers' group supported ILO initiatives on OSH as it was a common area of interest of employers and workers and had positive links to productivity. Employers had contributed positively to the development of Convention No. 187 and supported the ILO Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health. In order to give better visibility to OSH, the International Organisation of Employers had adopted a statement on occupational safety and health calling on its members for action to promote a preventative safety and health culture. Employers supported the Office's efforts at resource mobilization for OSH in favour of a balanced distribution of resources among the four sectors. With regard to the thematic evaluation, he stressed the importance of basing it on proper project evaluations and of providing in-depth analysis of lessons learned and the factors behind the success or failure of projects. The report submitted fell short of those expectations. It made too many generalizations. Statements such as "the level of project performance ... was very satisfactory", "... benefited from qualified national project coordinators", and "[the project] contributed to poverty reduction" required more explanation to be meaningful. "Associating OSH improvements with productivity and quality gains, and combining that message with best-practice examples is a powerful message" was a good lesson drawn from project activities for small and medium-sized enterprises and farmers. More of those in-depth analyses were expected.
32. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Yacob, welcomed the paper prepared by the Office. She reminded the Committee that OSH was a fundamental right. She highlighted that not protecting that right was a cost incurred by all, by workers through loss of income, by employers through a loss in productivity, and by society and governments through increased social security spending to support disabled workers. She understood that companies had to cut costs but it was unfortunate that OSH was usually the victim. She voiced concern that the report showed funding for OSH had decreased significantly, urged donors to give more significance to OSH and requested the Office to raise awareness among donors of the importance of OSH. She made reference to the adoption in 2003 of the Global Strategy on OSH, which stated that decent work was safe work, and said that she failed to see why an OSH component was not included in DWCPs. She reiterated that DWCPs should focus on all the Office's strategic objectives, and not just some, and that the Office should take that into consideration in the future.
33. On the thematic evaluation, she urged the Office to build in independent evaluations for all projects in future, and ensure that donors were aware of that requirement. She noticed that the majority of technical cooperation (TC) projects in OSH dealt with labour inspection. Although very important, the Workers' group felt that more TC projects should focus on ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions, including not only Convention No. 187, but also the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161), and the Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162). In addition, OSH TC projects should promote social dialogue, not just on technical issues, but also on institutional and legislative frameworks at the national level to promote a safe and healthy working environment. She requested clarification from the Office on how trade unions were involved in the projects. She pointed out that OSH should be a tool for improving social dialogue between social partners, as it was an area which all parties agreed upon. She highlighted that future TC projects on OSH should be focused on

prevention, and tackle OSH issues dealing with disabled workers, migrants and women. She concluded by urging the Office to integrate OSH into DWCPs.

- 34.** The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, welcomed the report by the Office. He reminded the Committee that OSH had always been at the heart of the ILO's mandate, but queried whether the importance of OSH was just used as a catchphrase by the Office. He noted the apparent lack of importance attached to OSH by the Office compared to the other strategic objectives. He informed the Committee that occupational accidents and diseases were increasing in developing countries, due to the introduction of new technologies, chemicals, and the relaxing of OSH standards in order to promote trade and investment. His group felt that the importance of OSH had been diminished, as it seemed no longer to be a stand-alone subject, but a component of broader programmes. His group welcomed the ILO's Global Strategy on OSH and Convention No. 187 as important tools for improving OSH at the national level. However, developing countries needed technical and financial assistance to implement them. He concluded that the Office should intensify its work to make OSH an important part of the Decent Work Agenda.
- 35.** The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea thanked the Office for the in-depth evaluation presented. She maintained that project performance, in relation to resource expenditure, had been very satisfactory. She hoped the current discussions on PPPs would facilitate more active participation by the private sector into OSH TC. She concluded by inviting everyone to the World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Seoul, Korea, from 29 June to 2 July 2008.
- 36.** The representative of the Government of Japan stated that OSH was an important part of the 14th Asian Regional Meeting in 2006 when the tripartite constituents committed to cooperating in the promotion of OSH. Japan funded the "ILO/Japan Regional Programme for Capacity Building of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in Agriculture" and assisted Viet Nam in successfully improving the safety and health of farmers. The ILO was now planning to launch a new OSH project funded by Japan, which would be implemented by the ILO and the World Health Organization in accordance with the "One UN" policy.
- 37.** The representative of the Government of India noted the change in emphasis from enforcement towards collaborative partnerships that brought increased knowledge, awareness and skills. He underlined the crucial factors for TC projects, including consultation on design, implementation, monitoring, and methods of mid-term evaluation, and encouragement of social dialogue at the local level. He gave an overview of India's commitment to OSH through its Constitution, legislation, plans for ratification of Convention No. 174 and a draft national policy on OSH.
- 38.** The representative of the Government of Nigeria commended the Office on the successful execution of OSH projects and supported the views of the Africa group that OSH was fundamental to the achievement of the Decent Work Agenda. She stated that OSH was a burning issue in emerging economies because of the tendency to create jobs at any cost, an unacceptable scenario. She called for technical support for developing countries to implement OSH management systems to ensure a preventive OSH culture.
- 39.** The representative of the Government of Mexico drew attention to a number of initiatives in his country to underline the importance given to OSH. A strategic planning process had started to reinforce the labour inspection system and technical cooperation activities were being defined. The Government had agreed to revise a draft law on safety in underground coal mines. Since January 2006 an interregional project on management of occupational safety and health in the Volkswagen (VW) supply chain was being carried out in Brazil,

Mexico and South Africa, financed by the Government of Germany and VW. A tripartite national consultative committee on safety and health at work had also been established.

40. The representative of the European Commission (EC) welcomed the document presented by the Office, the overview of SafeWork technical cooperation initiatives and the concluding remarks in paragraphs 48–52. He indicated that the EC was actively contributing to promoting decent work, of which OSH and labour inspection were important parts, and that the EC had become the largest single ILO donor since December 2007. Reference was made to the collaboration between the ILO and the EC on OSH issues and with the International Training Centre of the ILO. The follow-up to the 2006 EC Decent Work Communication included the promotion of ratification and application of up to date ILO Conventions on OSH and labour inspection by EU Member States.
41. Referring more specifically to TC issues, he declared that the EC was exploring further cooperation with ILO SafeWork on OSH and labour inspection, which could cover a number of initiatives, including the informal economy. He pointed out that EC programming was largely demand driven and it was therefore essential that assistance on OSH issues was requested by EC partner countries. He concluded by stating that OSH was part of the EU Lisbon strategy for jobs and growth and that ILO technical cooperation could play an important role in that context.
42. Responding to the deliberations, Dr Al-Tuwaijri thanked the Committee for the rich debate and support shown for OSH. Referring to specific comments and queries, she explained that Work Improvements in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) projects contributed to poverty reduction, hunger alleviation and gender equality by mobilizing farming families to link improvements in OSH with gains in productivity. Workers' and employers' organizations had been involved in all stages of most projects, from developing the proposals, through tripartite project steering committees, to working groups on specific issues. They were also, of course, the beneficiaries of specific capacity-building activities. When the Haiti project closed the tripartite steering committee was the only functioning tripartite committee in the country. As an indication of a project's impact, she said that the EU Senior Labour Inspectors Committee found the Bulgarian OSH and labour inspection services met the criteria for Bulgaria's admission to the EU. The Serbian project carried out surveys to ascertain the impact of project objectives.
43. Referring to the general areas of concern voiced by the Committee, Dr Al-Tuwaijri addressed the need for proper evaluation of projects in the present report. That was not an easy task based on what was available to work on and restrictions on the length of the report. However, the points raised on the need for in-depth analyses were well taken, and the starting point for the future was to have evaluations integrated as a matter of course in OSH project proposals. Another concern was that although OSH was acknowledged as important, and it was a matter of life and death and the ILO had a moral obligation to act, it was attracting little financial resources. In that respect, she affirmed that SafeWork would improve evaluation strategies, and called on constituents to ensure that OSH issues were included more prominently in the DWCPs and to promote resource mobilization for technical cooperation in OSH.

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

44. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Tapiola, reported back on the 17th meeting of the IPEC International Steering Committee (ISC) that had taken place on 10 March 2008. The ISC would henceforth meet in March instead of November, as had been the case

earlier. He apologized for the late submission of the IPEC implementation report, which was due to the late availability of figures on finances and beneficiaries. Possibilities would be explored to provide the ISC with information in a different, more timely, manner. In the 15 years of its existence, IPEC had grown into a large technical cooperation programme. The latest global estimates on child labour showed a decline of 11 per cent in child labour, with a faster decline in hazardous child labour. The fastest progress had been in Latin America, which was the reason for the thematic debate in the ISC on conditional cash transfers (CCTs), which had become a widespread practice in that region. Brazil had now become a donor country, instead of only a recipient of IPEC activities. Both Conventions Nos 138 and 182 had received eight further ratifications during the biennium (2006–07) to reach 150 ratifications and 165 ratifications, respectively. Work continued towards strengthening cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, including new initiatives on training and the planning of joint action. There were now 23 time-bound programmes, some in their second phase. The Focus on Africa constituted a new special element of IPEC's work. He highlighted the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education for All, comprising all the major actors in the field of education, and for which the ILO provided the secretariat.

45. The ISC debate had been rich, with 23 speakers, including from both donor and beneficiary countries. There was general satisfaction with IPEC's work and the implementation report. There was broad support for the proposed strategic directions suggested in the report, such as IPEC's positioning as a leading centre of knowledge and expertise and leading technical cooperation programme on child labour, the promotion of national action and constituent-led advocacy, facilitating country-to-country technical cooperation, as well as the focus on the Global Action Plan and integration of work across the ILO. The emphasis on education and child labour was welcomed and linking education, poverty and social protection was seen as key to the strategy. There was support for IPEC's approach to promoting south-south cooperation (such as the recent Brazil example of support for Haiti and the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa), ensuring a "multiplier effect" far beyond the assistance IPEC itself could provide. The good experience in Sialkot, Pakistan, was mentioned as a model of how tripartite partners could be engaged and how child labour work could be extended to broader decent work concerns, such as freedom of association and social dialogue, labour inspection, local development and employment. The need for more examples of good practices and work by social partners was highlighted and the suggestion was made that it could be the subject of a thematic discussion. The integration of IPEC into the Office-wide programme of activities continued to be discussed. Since 2001, IPEC's work had been mainstreamed into the programme and budget, and was a key part of Sector 1. There was much interest in obtaining more information about how the impact of IPEC activities was measured. As to the question of why direct and indirect beneficiaries were no longer part of the programme and budget indicators, methodologically it was very difficult to measure that and, in the current structure of the ILO results-based management system, the emphasis was on reporting constituents' achievements. While beneficiaries were not performance indicators in the programme and budget, they were additional indicators for IPEC and would therefore continue to be collected. The results of impact assessments and tracer studies demonstrating longer term impact would be available soon. IPEC was also working on developing methods to more fully measure the involvement of employers and workers in its activities. Provisional indications for the year 2007 indicated that there was a doubling of the allocations made to employers and a 50 per cent increase in allocations to workers. In response to inquiries from the ISC, IPEC would make an analysis of the functioning of the national steering committees.
46. The subject of CCTs had been selected for the thematic discussion because they had been highlighted by the 2006 Global Report as a potentially contributing factor to the reduction of child labour. An introductory presentation on CCTs was provided by Mr Hamid



Tabatabai, senior economist in IPEC. A fascinating presentation was delivered by Dr N. Salvador Escobedo, National Coordinator of Mexico's CCT programme *Oportunidades*, who provided valuable insight into how CCTs can positively influence education and the elimination of child labour. Comments were provided thereafter by employers and workers – the latter of which also offered insights from the experience in Brazil. Through the presentation and the comments, the potential of CCTs to address the root causes of child labour was portrayed. It was indispensable to look at CCTs as part of comprehensive schemes, with appropriate national mechanisms for implementation and monitoring. IPEC needed to continue studying that subject in the context of orienting itself towards policy support. It was a theme that underlined the linkages between child labour and education, social protection and many other issues. That debate clearly needed to be followed up.

47. The Employer spokesperson welcomed the IPEC implementation report, which contained a five-year vision that the Employers could support as an interim stage towards the full elimination of child labour. They would have appreciated some quantitative figures indicating progress towards the 2016 goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour. The report contained good examples of cooperation with employers, but more information on the allocations made to employers' organizations in IPEC activities should have been included. They supported the focus on education in the report.
48. The Worker spokesperson welcomed the comprehensive report. The Workers urged large, important countries to urgently ratify Conventions Nos 138 and 182. Ratification in itself was not enough, and IPEC should assist implementation of the Conventions through its technical assistance programme. The Workers welcomed the focus on child labour of the forthcoming International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). They agreed with the observations made in the Global Report and the implementation report that governments should be the driving force in the fight against child labour. Child labour had to be at the centre of the national development agenda. Funding for IPEC's work continued to be a challenge and the Workers called upon donor countries to provide long-term funding. They supported the vision that IPEC should be a centre of knowledge, which would require the strengthening of research and data collection capabilities. They also supported country-to-country technical assistance to achieve a multiplier effect, as well as integration into the DWCPs and increased work with the social partners. As projects themselves were insufficient to eliminate child labour, IPEC's focus should shift to policy support. IPEC should adopt in that respect an "industrial relations approach" in collaboration with ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, DIALOGUE, etc. The Workers supported the emphasis placed on education and the theme of the forthcoming World Day against Child Labour (WDACL). They also supported the Focus on Africa, but Asia should not be forgotten. The training of new staff on tripartism and social dialogue should be strengthened.
49. Mr Steyne, in his capacity as Worker spokesperson at the ISC, welcomed the strong linkage made between Conventions Nos 138 and 182 in the implementation report, and the integration of gender concerns. While there was consensus on the emphasis on education, the ILO had to make sure that its vision of universal compulsory education up to the minimum working age was also adopted by other international actors. He suggested that the next thematic debate would be on the proposed new industrial relations approach. He also called for a stocktaking international conference. He reiterated the Worker spokesperson's call for enhanced ratification of Conventions Nos 138 and 182. While the Workers welcomed the upcoming ICLS, it should in no way reinterpret the Conventions. He agreed that the subject of CCTs warranted further study. He called for more stable funding for staffing resources within IPEC.
50. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, thanked IPEC and donor countries for their support. He said better results could be achieved if there was more coordination between national coordinators and the IPEC

national steering committees. He called in particular for continued efforts to combat child trafficking in the region.

51. The representative of the Government of the Netherlands drew attention to the jointly identified approach under the ILO–Netherlands Cooperation Programme (INCP), which favoured an integrated approach to decent work, rather than a rigid thematic division. As such, the INCP was close to unearmarked core funding for the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda, including child labour. The Netherlands strongly supported the harmonization of donor efforts and the “One UN” initiative, and the INCP was part of that effort. He noted that the financial tables in the IPEC implementation report did not reflect support for child labour provided by his country under the INCP, which could give a wrong impression. He hoped that in the future support under the INCP could be better reflected in IPEC and other reports.
52. The representative of the Government of India reiterated his Government’s commitment to fighting child labour, which was enshrined in the Constitution and national legislation. Success in eliminating child labour depended on key factors such as social reforms and economic growth. India had an incremental approach to child labour, focusing initially on hazardous child labour. He enumerated a number of initiatives taken at the national level, including projects undertaken with IPEC. As to ratification of the Conventions, the Government was ascertaining its position, but in principle it was positively inclined towards such ratification in due course.
53. The representative of the Government of Nigeria noted that IPEC’s activities in the country had terminated some years previously, but that its impact ensured the continued integration of child labour into the national development agenda. Nigeria would welcome further cooperation with IPEC.
54. Mr Ahmad (Worker member) thanked IPEC and the donors, and supported the statement made by the Worker spokesperson. He stressed the importance of building the capacity of the social partners. He supported the theme for the WDACL 2008. He also underlined the importance of the “One UN” initiative. He referred to the positive experience of the joint efforts in Sialkot in 2007 and underlined the importance of documenting and exchanging good practices.
55. The representative of the Government of Brazil said that Brazil had become a donor country, allowing it to share its experience and knowledge with Haiti and the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. He noted the importance of social dialogue in raising awareness about child labour and mobilizing key actors. The elimination of child labour was one of the priorities of the Brazilian Decent Work Agenda. He pointed out that the elimination of child labour was a shared commitment among all neighbouring countries and the exchange of information and experiences had become strategic.
56. The representative of the Government of the Philippines recognized the leading role played by employers in the fight against child labour in the Philippines. Thanks to IPEC, capacity for action against child labour and for data collection had been strengthened. The Government looked forward to further collaboration.
57. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Tapiola, thanked all participants in the discussion. Regarding quantitative data on progress towards the 2016 target, the next Global Report on child labour would provide new information. More information would be provided on allocations by IPEC to workers’ and employers’ organizations, but it should be borne in mind that they might not reflect the full spectrum of their involvement in IPEC’s work. As to the possible organization of a stocktaking conference, the funding modalities, and its intended outcome and format, would need to be studied. Concerning the

observation by the Netherlands, the Office strove to recognize the contributions of each donor. A way had to be found to accurately reflect the effects of integrated contribution.

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

58. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Maninat, reminded the Committee of the developments of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia. He informed the Committee that the report of the ILO high-level mission that had taken place in November 2007 would be presented to the Governing Body as part of the Director-General's Report and that he was reporting only on the technical cooperation aspects. Mr Maninat provided some details on the various projects that had been initiated since November 2007, and on the progress made to date. In particular he indicated that work had been carried out in the framework of the project aimed at promoting the ILO fundamental standards, with a budget of US\$3.25 million, monitored by a tripartite committee. He further mentioned two projects, one on employment generation for women heads of families and another on employment generation for youth in vulnerable situations, each with a budget of US\$583,000. The activities at the local level would be further strengthened with another project on strengthening capacities to develop local economies, with a budget of US\$583,000. All those projects would have tripartite steering committees.
59. He pointed out that other important topic areas related to labour relations, standards, wages and labour conditions were being addressed in subcommittees as part of the Tripartite Agreement. The Special Committee for the Handling of Conflicts was also actively participating in the above framework of action, as were other tripartite bodies.
60. The Employer Vice-Chairperson was supportive of the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement and noted the progress made. At his request, Mr Echaverriá Saldarriaga spoke on behalf of the Employers' group. He expressed satisfaction with the report and added some supplementary information. He drew the attention of the Committee to the protection of the rights of trade unionists and workers, which had received more funding and more rapid action. He urged for an end to the deaths of trade unionists. He informed the Committee about the National Concertation Committee that operated at national and regional levels, and underscored its recent meetings with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and international agencies. He remarked on the preparation of draft legislation that responded to the requests of the ILO to modify the policy framework for cooperatives, the right to strike, social protection, arbitration and registration of trade unions, among other issues. He underlined the problem of conflict in Colombia, and the assistance provided by the ILO. He listed enduring problems of funds for labour inspection, the problems of young persons, especially young women who were victims of violence, and 40,000 youths who had been displaced. He stressed the importance of support for, and strengthening the capacity of, mayors. He noted that the Government of Sweden and Swedish employers had provided support for a bipartite – workers' and employers' – activity to strengthen social dialogue. He also mentioned that there was greater personal and investment security and that the 7 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) growth and increased foreign direct investment in 2007 pointed to increased freedom for entrepreneurs and businesses. He concluded that greater political participation, less violence and more peace were still required to strengthen democracy and the economy.
61. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Yacob, would have liked to have had more details in the report to judge the progress of the projects, notably on budgets, social partner involvement and specific progress achieved. She asserted that international pressure had

been beneficial and should continue, but noted that, whereas there had been 80 sentences passed against perpetrators of crimes against trade unionists, a number of the trials had occurred with the perpetrator in absentia. She expressed concern about the fact that in the previous few days two members of teachers' unions and one member of a banking union had been killed, and a second member of a banking union had been shot and injured. The banking union members had been participating in a strike at a bank that had been videotaped by security guards. She stressed that that flouted the right to freedom of association, and noted that 2,800 trade unionists had been murdered in the previous few years, 80 of them in 2007. She expressed the Workers' grave concern, pointing out that labour inspection, collective bargaining and trade unions were all still very weak, and noting that only 60,000 employees out of a total of 18 million were covered by the collective bargaining agreements, a very small proportion of the total labour force of Colombia. She called for more commitment to Conventions Nos 87 and 98 by governments and employers. She added that the report noted that ILO staff in Bogotá had attended many meetings, but questioned the outcomes of such meetings and whether they had contributed to the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement. She noted that the ILO Office should be strengthened on a more permanent basis, possibly by a specialist on social dialogue, and she stressed that pressure must continue to be exerted on Colombia, insisting that the killings must stop and that the country must respect trade union rights.

- 62.** The Worker spokesperson (Mr Simon Steyne) added that he had recently met with members of Colombia's trade unions to discuss the situation there. The trade unions had indicated that, while social dialogue was discussed at the national level, it was not applied in practice. Only 60,000 workers were covered by collective agreements, most of whom were municipal workers in Bogotá and Valle de Cauca. He felt that that did not indicate mature industrial relations, rather that the continued use of labour cooperatives and solidarity pacts promoted paternalism. The true measure of Colombia's progress in social dialogue would be greater collective bargaining in the public and private sectors. It would therefore be worthwhile to consider employing a social dialogue specialist for the ILO Bogotá team.
- 63.** Colombian trade unions continued to condemn all forms of violence and kidnapping by all parties. Finally, the speaker recalled his meeting in December 2007 with Leonidas Gómez Rozo, a national leader of the National Union of Bank Employees (UNEB) and member of the CUT's National Education Team, and his colleagues to discuss the results of the dispute with the HSBC bank. They had expressed their concern about private security guards taking pictures of trade union actions during the dispute. He stated that Mr Gómez Rozo could no longer testify about that issue, as he had regretfully been killed the previous week.
- 64.** The representative of the Government of Colombia, Ambassador Clemencia Forero Ucros, mentioned that the spirit of the Agreement and the determination of the three signatory parties to pursue its implementation had been observed by the high-level mission in November 2007.
- 65.** She pointed out that the Government of Colombia had assigned US\$4 million for the implementation of the DWCP, through the implementation of four subprojects. She stated that the first subproject supported the strengthening of social dialogue, fundamental rights at work and labour inspection. The second one would implement employment-generation programmes for poor women at the national level. The third subproject would focus on technical business training for 2,000 displaced young people, whereas the fourth one would concentrate on capacity building for the promotion of local economic development. She highlighted that three coordinators had been appointed, and that the activities for those projects had been programmed in a tripartite meeting.

66. With regard to the fight against impunity, and within the framework of the Tripartite Agreement, the representative of the Government of Colombia noted that a special sub-unit had been created to deal with cases of violence against trade unionists. She underlined the efforts of that unit, which had led to 36 guilty sentences in 2007, in contrast to the 11 guilty sentences per year in 2005 and 2006, and only one guilty sentence between 1991 and 2001.
67. The representative of the Government of Colombia announced that, regarding wage and labour policies, a subcommission had been set up for cases outside Bogotá. She underlined the work carried out by the Inter-institutional Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Workers' Human Rights against cases of impunity and violations of unionist freedom rights.
68. Responding to the debate, a representative of the Director-General, Mr Maninat, assured the Committee that the Office would provide more detailed information in future reports, and noted that, since the publication of the last report, projects amounting to more than US\$1.3 million had been presented to donors to support work on the Tripartite Agreement. He also mentioned that he had reported only on the technical cooperation aspects.
69. He pointed out that he had referred to the projects that had been agreed by the constituency to strengthen the Tripartite Agreement and that were finally operative. The meetings he had mentioned were those of tripartite bodies that had resumed their work under the impulse of the Tripartite Agreement and the support of the ILO. Both the initiation of the projects and the resumption of work by the tripartite bodies had been indicated as priorities by the signatories of the Tripartite Agreement.
70. He deeply regretted the killing of a trade unionist, and indicated that that and other topics were going to be discussed when the report of the high-level mission was submitted to the Governing Body.
71. The labour situation still needed improvement, in social dialogue and freedom of association, but some advancement had been made thanks to the Tripartite Agreement.

## V. Other questions

72. There being no issue under that agenda item, the Chairperson closed the meeting, informing the Committee that, in accordance with the standard procedures, the report of the meeting would be approved on its behalf by the Officers of the Committee. They would also agree on the agenda for the meeting of the November session of the Committee.

Geneva, 13 March 2008.

*Point for decision:* Paragraph 28.