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AFTER A 2002 REPORT commissioned by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) discovered that children in Barbados are involved in prostitution and pornography, Barbados has been dealing with it at a national level.

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Minister of Labour Rawle Eastmond speaking at the joint opening ceremony of the Labour Inspectors Workshop and Strategic Planning and Impact Framework Workshop, said the Dunn Report which investigated the worst forms of child labour in Barbados, led to the formation of a National Child Labour Steering Committee. The committee established two years ago pulled together social agencies, key ministries and departments, church, NGOs and UNICEF.

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They have produced a document outlining the status of legislation in Barbados and the ILO conventions on child labour.

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It is hoped this will become an educational programme within the next financial year.

"The committee is now in the process of developing a list of hazardous work for children in Barbados," said Eastmond.

He added that the committee was also helping his ministry to fulfil its decent

work programme.

The minister lauded the work of the ILO in ensuring that

certain inequities in the world of work were removed.

He highlighted the Minimum Age Convention, ratified in 1973, which defined the minimum age of admission to employment.

"It places on ratifying states the obligation to fix a minimum age and defines a range of minimum ages below which no child should be required to work," said Eastmond.

Leslie Bowrin, project manager with the **ILO**/Canadian International Development Agency(CIDA) who was also part of the workshop, said that while most countries in the region had pieces of legislation to protect children, they were now working on some instruments to help the labour inspectorate.

Samuel Goolsarran senior specialist with the **ILO** Caribbean office said Barbados was a model for social dialogue and they were working together to eradicate all relevant sectors of child labour and encourage a positive programme.

He noted that when childhood was denied, and education neglected, the country's long-term production was put at risk.

He said once a well-trained inspectorate was created, then the problems associated with child labour could be combated. (WB)