



ILO adopts “Global Jobs Pact” aimed at creating jobs, protecting workers and stimulating economic recovery

Faced with the prospect of a prolonged global increase in unemployment, poverty and inequality and the

continuing collapse of enterprises, the International Labour Organization (ILO) on 19 June 2009 adopted a Global Jobs Pact. The Pact proposes a range of crisis-response measures that countries can adapt to their specific needs and situation. It urges measures to retain persons in employment, sustain enterprises and accelerate employment creation and jobs recovery combined with social protection systems, in particular for the most vulnerable, and

integrating gender concerns on all measures.

The Global Jobs Pact was adopted following strong support during a three-day ILO Global Jobs Summit by heads of state and government, including Prime Minister of Jamaica, Bruce Golding, vice-presidents and ministers of labour, worker and employer representatives and other leaders.

The Caribbean was represented by nine countries.

The Pact was adopted against a backdrop of a recent report by the ILO showing an unprecedented rise in unemployment globally and a persistence of very high levels of poverty. Mr. Somavia said the ILO estimated that even if an economic recovery were to begin to take hold this year or the next, a global jobs crisis could linger for six to eight years.

The central objective of the Pact is to shorten the period between growth recovery and employment recovery.

Promoting decent work for all

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations agency devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues.

The ILO works through its tripartite membership in 183 countries - governments, employers and workers, all of whom jointly shape its policies and programmes. ILO is the global body responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards.

The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, based in Trinidad and Tobago, serves 13 ILO member States and 8 non-metropolitan territories of the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Office works closely with United Nations agencies, including through five UN Country Teams, and regional organizations such as CARICOM.

Member States:

Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago

Non-metropolitan territories:

Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Turks and Caicos Islands.

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The Honourable Bruce Golding Prime Minister of Jamaica

Jamaica PM Bruce Golding addresses ILO Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis

“The plight in which the world’s economies currently find themselves require no less concerted and sustained a response. It is within this broader context that the lasting value of the Director-General’s proposal for a Jobs Pact must be seen. I have placed it in this broader context because while creating jobs is a social good, it is essentially an economic decision. If those jobs are to be meaningful and sustained, they require investment, workers need to be trained, enabling infrastructure needs to be in place and the appropriate technology needs to be applied. ...Labour market policies must be calibrated within the context of enlightened social dialogue to support this new thrust.”



PM Bruce Golding with Juan Somavia, ILO’s Director-General and the Jamaica delegation after delivering his presentation at the ILO Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis.

G8 support for ILO Global Jobs Pact

The Declaration of the G8 Summit held in early July has endorsed the ILO Global Jobs Pact, saying that it “...is relevant to respond to the crisis at worldwide level and advance the social dimension of globalisation (..) “Social and employment policies are a crucial pillar in the context of a new global framework.” The Declaration called on the ILO and other international organizations to enhance their cooperation and to improve coherence.

Highlights of the International Labour Conference 2009

This year the agenda of the International Labour Conference was modified at short notice to give focus to a discussion on the global financial and jobs crisis. A special ILO Summit on the Global Jobs Crisis was held on 15-17 June 2009 as part of the Conference. It offered a unique global platform, with over 3000 representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations present, to connect financial, economic and social policies around the people-centred theme of enterprises, jobs and decent work. A Committee of the Whole on Crisis Responses was established to discuss the employment and social consequences of the global economic and financial crisis, the outcome of which resulted in the adoption of the ILO Global Jobs Pact.

Discussions at the Conference also focused on a new instrument on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. A decision was taken to include an item on "HIV/AIDS and the world of work" in the agenda of the 2010 conference, with a view to the adoption of an ILO Recommendation.

Delegates of the Caribbean played key roles in the work on the Committees of the Conference, in particular the Committee of the Whole on Crisis Responses and the HIV/AIDS Committee. Countries represented at the Conference were The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Jamaica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia delivers his report "Tackling the global jobs crisis: Recovery through decent work policies" to the conference.



ILO's Director-General meets with Caribbean Government delegates.

Caribbean delegates at conference...

Professor Neville Ying, Jamaica's Government delegate, Member of the Drafting Committee, Committee of the Whole on Crisis Responses:

"As part of the Committee of the Whole on Crisis Responses and as a member of the Drafting Committee, I was able to ensure that the draft outcome document, "Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact," was sensitive to the special needs of the developing and vulnerable countries. Along with the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Sir Roy Trotman of Barbados, I was also able to put forward the conclusions of the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Conference on the Global Financial Crisis which was held in Jamaica earlier this year. All the principles contained in the conclusions of the Caribbean Conference were incorporated into the outcome document. The discussions were fruitful, highlighting the concerns of other countries in the midst of the crisis, from the perspectives of governments, employers and workers.

Two principles from this Committee are of significant value for CARICOM countries :

1. The need for policy coherence and a synchronized and integrated assistance programme from International Financial Institutions and countries such as those in the G8 and G20 group.
2. The need for Special Assistance to developing countries for them to deal effectively during this crisis with economic, social and environmental problems."

Caribbean support - Labour Minister Parnel Charles of Jamaica congratulates Minister Rennie Dumas of Trinidad and Tobago after his presentation to the Conference. Looking on are Carston Simmons, Permanent Secretary, Barbados and Harcourt Brown, Labour Commissioner, Bahamas.



Honourable Rennie Dumas, Labour Minister of Trinidad and Tobago addresses the Conference.



Trinidad and Tobago tripartite delegation



Sir Roy Trotman, Vice-Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body and Worker delegate from Barbados.



Bahamas tripartite delegation

**Caribbean countries respond to global jobs crisis
- measures adopted in line with Decent Work Agenda**

Caribbean countries are adopting various mitigation measures in response to the global economic and jobs crisis. Based on preliminary reports, in most cases, measures are being undertaken in line with the Decent Work Agenda, a development strategy in which job creation, employment, training and social protection are central to sustainable development, and anchored by respect for rights at work and social dialogue.



One significant trend in the response to the crisis has been an increase in tripartite meetings and in some cases the institutionalizing of social dialogue. In Jamaica, a multi-sectoral committee that includes

Government, trade unions and employers has been established to develop strategies on job retention and job creation. In the same vein, a Social and Economic Council was established by law in Suriname to advise Government on economic and social issues. It too has tripartite representation. In terms of other strategies, the Bahamas has announced the implementation of a national skills training and retraining programme, targeting workers who have been laid off. Similarly, the Labour Ministry in Suriname is now in the process of establishing a skills development centre with assistance from the HEART Trust/

NTA in Jamaica. The transfer of call centre activities to Suriname by Dutch-speaking enterprises in the Netherlands and Belgium is opening up opportunities in the information and communications technology sector.

Another noteworthy trend has been the move to establish or explore the development of unemployment relief funds and schemes, similar to that which exists in Barbados, the only Caribbean country to have such a scheme. The Bahamas established its scheme in April and it is being administered through the National Insurance Board. Other countries pursuing the development of unemployment relief funds or schemes include Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and St. Kitts and Nevis.

The crisis has given impetus to the review of labour laws. Plans are under way in Belize and Suriname, with Suriname intending to introduce new laws e.g. on minimum wages.

EMPLOYERS' ACTIVITIES

Caribbean national employers' organizations better equipped to service its members

Following the success of the first ever Caribbean Academy for the Management of Employers' Organizations (CAMEO) in 2007, the International Labour Organization once again offered its CAMEO capacity-building programme to executive members of national employers' organizations in the region from 29 June 2009 to 3 July 2009 in Kingston, Jamaica.

The course was a collaborative effort of the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, the ILO International Training Centre based in Turin, Italy, the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities, and the Mona School of Business of the University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica.

The CAMEO training programme is specifically targeted to employers' organizations, and covers themes such as the business operating environment, strategy and governance, industrial relations, personal development and leadership, revenue generation, and public relations and marketing. It aims to enhance the operations of national employers'

organizations for improved service, relevance and sustainability, taking into account the present socio-economic environment.

Twenty-two participants, including chief executive officers, directors and specialized staff, attended the course, representing 20 employers' organizations from 19 Caribbean countries, including Haiti. Facilitators and resource persons were drawn from the International Organization for Employers, Confederation of British Industries, ILO



Graduates and resource persons of the ILO's CAMEO training programme held in Kingston, Jamaica.

Subregional Office for the Caribbean, and the Mona School of Business. The programme was co-ordinated by Luesette Howell, Senior Specialist for Employers' Activities based at the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean.

Anguilla Chamber of Commerce hosts business development seminar

The development of small and medium enterprises (SME) was the focus of a one-day business development seminar organized by the Anguilla Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACOCI) on 5 May 2009. The seminar aimed to review the progress made and challenges faced by SMEs and the assistance that the ACOCI can provide to SMEs. Participating at the invitation of the ACOCI, were Luesette Howell, Senior Specialist for Employers' Activities and Nabeel Goheer, Specialist for Enterprise Development and Job Creation of the ILO, who introduced ILO's SME development products and tools - Know About Business, Start and Improve Your Business and the Enabling Environment training package.

New Caribbean employer member appointed on ILO Governing Body

Welzijn Ferdinand of Suriname has been appointed the new Caribbean employer representative on the ILO Governing Body. Other Caribbean members on the ILO Governing Body are Barbados (Government) and Sir Roy Trotman (Workers). Sir Roy Trotman is also the Vice-Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body.



Cross border collaboration in technical and vocational training: Jamaica's Heart Trust/NTA and Colombia's SENA host regional TVET conference



Representatives of National Training Agencies and other technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions from across the region met in March 2009 in Jamaica for a regional TVET conference sponsored by the National Learning Service of Colombia (SENA) and the HEART Trust/NTA of Jamaica. The conference explored several TVET issues and was an opportunity to learn from the experiences and good practices of SENA, which was established in 1957 through a joint initiative of the trade unions, business and the Catholic Church with support from the ILO.

Mrs. Martha Pacheco, Director, ILO's Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR), based in Uruguay, was one of the guest speakers at the opening ceremony of the conference. A special presentation on the importance of TVET to economic development was delivered by Dr. Hassan Ndahi, Senior Specialist, Skills and Employability,

ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean. The opening session was followed by a workshop facilitated by SENA.

Common issues that emerged in the conference included TVET financing, entrepreneurship and job creation, shortage of TVET teachers/trainers, information and communication technology training and management of TVET/policy development.

The conference was preceded by the Caribbean Association of National Training Agency (CANTA) Meeting and

the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between SENA and HEART Trust/NTA. The MOU is one of the outcomes of the Seventh Bilateral Agreement between Jamaica and Colombia. It aims to strengthen TVET in Jamaica by facilitating the transfer of knowledge in the areas of language training, Regional TVET Qualifications Framework, the use of technology for training and the methodologies used for the delivery of entrepreneurial programmes.



New UNESCO-UNEVOC handbook on TVET

International Handbook of Education for the Changing World of Work: Bridging Academic and Vocational Learning
General editors: Rupert Maclean and David N. Wilson

This six-volume handbook is a compilation of articles covering the latest developments and practices in technical and vocational education and training. It is the first of its kind, bringing together educational researchers, policymakers and practitioners from all parts of the world. It will assist those involved in TVET at any level and help bridge the gap between vocational and academic education. It was produced by UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education, based in Germany.

Suriname begins consultations on establishing minimum wage

The Ministry of Labour, Environment and Technology in Suriname is leading the consultative process for the development of a minimum wage for Suriname. On 24-25 March 2009, the ILO Subregional Office, in collaboration with the Ministry and the Inter-American Development Bank, conducted a tripartite seminar on minimum wage setting. The aim of the seminar was two-fold: to provide participants with key information on wage distribution in Suriname and options for wage setting

as well as to allow for an exchange of views on the establishment of a minimum wage among key stakeholders. An occupational wage survey, completed in November 2008, informed the discussions on wage distribution in Suriname. ILO resource persons at the seminar were Reynold Simons, Senior Specialist, Employment and Labour Market Policies and Andrés Marinaki, Senior Specialist on Labour Market Policies and Labour Market Institutions of the ILO Office in Santiago,

Chile. As a follow-up to the seminar, the Tripartite Committee on Minimum Wages formulated its recommendations and presented them to the Minister for action.

Antigua and Barbuda commemorates ILO's 90th anniversary with focus on labour issues



The Department of Labour, under the auspices of the Ministry of National Security and Labour, Antigua and Barbuda, held a successful week of activities to commemorate the ILO's 90th anniversary from 21-23 June 2009. Two major events - a Youth

Forum, and an Employers' and Employees' Forum, along with various media events were used as opportunities to promote ILO issues and highlight the ILO's work in the country. Geir Myrstad, Special Adviser - Technical Assistance (Workers' Activities) of the ILO Subregional Office represented the ILO at the various fora.

ILO VACANCIES

Please visit the ILO webpage at <http://erecruit.ilo.org>

for a list of current ILO vacancies throughout the world. Qualified candidates from under-represented ILO Caribbean member States are encouraged to apply: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Upcoming...

ILO Hemispheric Tripartite Conference on the Maritime Labour Convention 7-10 September 2009, Barbados