Chapter II

International Labour Organization (ILO)

In 2004, the International Labour Organization (ILO) continued to promote social justice and economic stability and improve labour conditions. ILO’s strategic objectives were to promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work; create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income; enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection; and strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

In 2004, ILO membership increased to 178.

Meetings

The ninety-second session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) (Geneva, 1-17 June) adopted a new plan of action to ensure that migrant workers were covered by international labour standards, while benefiting from national labour and social laws. The plan called for the development of a non-binding multilateral framework for a rights-based approach to labour migration and the establishment of an ILO dialogue on migration, in partnership with international and multilateral organizations. ILC also adopted a new Recommendation on human resources development (see below) and a resolution on gender equality, pay equity, and maternity protection. The Conference made progress in forging new labour standards to improve the working conditions and safety of the world’s 35 million fishing sector workers, and considered the situation of workers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, forced labour in Myanmar, and rights at work in other countries.

As follow-up to the 1998 ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work [YUN 1998, p. 1375], the Director-General submitted to the Conference a global report entitled “Organizing for social justice”, which indicated that, despite continued threats to workers and employers seeking to organize, global respect for fundamental rights at work was improving.


International standards

During the year, ILO activities with regard to Conventions and Recommendations included standard-setting and the supervision and promotion of the application of standards. Supervisory bodies reviewed existing procedures and standard-setting policy, withdrawing outdated Recommendations.

In June, ILC adopted a new Recommendation on human resources development, focusing on education, training and lifelong learning.

Employment and development

ILO continued in 2004 to help constituents combat unemployment and poverty through the creation of employment opportunities and improvement of existing jobs. It provided advice and guidance on employment and labour market policies and on labour market information and statistical systems. Activities to promote employment included support to constituents to develop entrepreneurship through the creation of cooperatives and small and micro-enterprises.

Regarding human resources development, ILO emphasized the need for the adaptation of training policy and delivery to the rapidly changing skill requirements and special needs of vulnerable groups. It also responded to the needs of countries affected by conflict.

Field activities

In 2004, expenditure on technical cooperation programmes totalled $138.4 million, slightly more than the amount spent in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1508]. The leading fields of activity were: the standards and fundamental principles and rights at work sector, with 43.1 per cent ($59.6 million); followed by the employment sector, with 27.8 per cent ($38.5 million); the social protection sector, with 12.1 per cent ($16.7 million); and social dialogue, with 11 per cent ($15.3 million).

In terms of regional distribution, Africa accounted for 22.9 per cent of total expenditure ($31.7 million); Asia and the Pacific, 24.2 per cent ($33.5 million); Latin America and the Caribbean, 19.3 per cent ($26.7 million); Europe,
5.2 per cent ($7.2 million); and the Arab States, 1.5 per cent ($2.1 million). Interregional and global activities accounted for the greatest share, at 26.9 per cent ($37.2 million).

**Educational activities**

The Turin Centre and the International Institute for Labour Studies, both autonomous institutions within ILO, reported to the ILO Governing Body. The Centre continued to carry out training and related activities in a wide range of technical areas as an integral part of ILO technical cooperation activities. The Institute continued to conduct research, encouraged networking related to emerging labour policy issues, and acted as a catalyst for future ILO programme development. The Institute analysed the relationships between social exclusion, labour institutions and poverty, and explored the changing global organization of production and its social implications at the local level.

**Secretariat**

As at 31 December, ILO employed a total of 2,500 full-time staff, of whom 1,040 were in the Professional and higher categories and 1,460 were in the General Service category.

**Budget**


**NOTE:** For further information on ILO, see Report of the Director-General—ILO programme implementation, 2003-2004.

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