



2006 - Year in Review

The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean is pleased to introduce this bi-monthly e-newsletter which is aimed at sharing, on a more timely basis, news on ILO's work in the region as well as the latest workplace developments. This first issue is dedicated to a review of 2006 - a year of significant events and achievements for both the ILO and the Caribbean region. In January 2006, the CARICOM Single

Market and Economy was formally established. ILO's Decent Work Agenda - an agenda which calls for a development strategy that acknowledges the central role of work in people's lives - has now moved out of the realms of being an ILO vision to becoming a part of international, regional and national debates and agendas. In 2006, the United Nation's Economic and Social Council raised the concept of decent work to an even higher political level. And closer to home, a Decade for the Promotion of Decent Work was launched in May at the Sixteenth ILO American Regional Meeting, followed in October by the adoption of a Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action on Decent Work by ILO

Caribbean member States. With the necessary commitments and political will in place, the stage is now set for translating the concept of decent work into decisive action - more so that globalization, regional integration and other challenges are at our doorsteps. The ILO stands ready to assist its constituents in member States in advancing opportunities for their citizens to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Dr. Ana Teresa Romero
Director
ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean

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 180 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 and regional organizations such as CARICOM.

Member States:

Antigua and Barbuda, 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.

NewsLink is produced by the Information Unit of the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean. Please email all enquiries to ilocarib@ilocarib.org.tt

DECENT WORK

Decade for the Promotion of Decent Work launched for the Americas

A Decade for the Promotion of Decent Work was launched at the Sixteenth American Regional Meeting of the ILO held in Brasilia, Brazil, on 2-5 May 2006. Delegates agreed on the importance of Decent Work Country Programmes referred to in the "Agenda for the hemisphere" report and on the need to adapt policies to the specific circumstances of each country in order to promote sustainable social and economic development.

(<http://www.oitamericas2006.org>)

ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum adopts Declaration and Plan of Action for Decent Work

Ministers of Labour and other high-level representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations of the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean resolved to advance decent work priorities in their national development agendas at the ILO's Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum held in Barbados on October 10-12, 2006. The *Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing the Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean*



Delegates from Dominica at the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum in Barbados, including Senator the Honourable Charles Savarin (centre), Minister responsible for Labour, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Labour. Dominica's Prime Minister, Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit is the CARICOM Lead Head of Government for Labour.

was adopted by over 150 delegates. The three-day Forum examined measures in pursuit of the Decent Work Agenda - ensuring that economic growth and development are matched by action to generate more and better jobs, promote respect for rights, improve social protection, and promote social dialogue.

Representatives of the 13 Caribbean countries and 6 non-metropolitan territories also resolved to actively promote regional cooperation "in order to identify common needs, share good practices and develop strategies and programmes for advancing the Decent Work Agenda," in light of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Single Market and Economy, and commitments expressed in the 1997 Charter on Civil Society and the 1995 CARICOM Declaration on Labour and Industrial Relations Principles.

(Decent Work - cont'd)

In the lead up to the Forum, national tripartite consultations were held in all countries covered by the ILO and national employment reports were prepared under the supervision of Drs. Reynold Simons, Senior Specialist - Employment and Labour Market Policies, at the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean. The national employment reports provide baseline information on the economic, social and labour situation in each country which can now feed into the development of decent work country programmes. Reports have been completed for Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

(For more, please visit the Forum's website at <http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/oldwww/cef>)

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

CSME becomes a reality

The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) was formally established in January 2006, with six countries signing the Declaration: Jamaica, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Later in July, six OECS countries joined the original countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The CSME provides a framework for increased competitiveness of the region's goods and services by allowing for the free movement of CARICOM goods, services, people and capital throughout the region.

(<http://www.caricom.org>)

OECS employers focus on CSME

Former Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr. Kenny Anthony was the featured speaker at the opening ceremony of the ILO

COHSOD recommends Declaration and Plan of Action on Decent Work for CARICOM Heads meeting

CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development has recommended that the *Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing the Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean*, adopted by delegates of the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum held in Barbados on 10-12 October, 2006, be submitted for endorsement by the Conference of Heads of Government, scheduled to take place in the first half of 2007. Mary Read, Deputy Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean delivered the keynote address at the 15th Meeting of COHSOD and presented the Declaration and Plan of Action.

http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/pres200_06.jsp

symposium for employers' organizations of countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which was held on 6-7 February 2006 in Saint Lucia. The symposium focused on formulating positions and strategies for the employers' participation in the CSME. Dr. Len Ishmael, Director-General of the OECS and Dr. Ana Teresa Romero, Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean were guest presenters at the symposium.

CARICOM's COHSOD proposes "social floor" for the CSME

CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) has proposed that there be an Agreement on a CARICOM "social floor" made up of the eight

Trade Unionists benefit from distance learning

Trade union representatives from CARICOM Member States have been participating in a distance education course in information technology via the internet. This programme, run by the ILO's International Training Centre, Turin, is a pilot programme where new information technologies are not only the subject of learning but also the medium through which the course is conducted. The course aims to train trade unionists in new information technologies and lay a basis for training on how to create websites for labour organizations. Successful candidates will be certified at the end of training.



OECS Employers' symposium in February 2006. Seated at the Head Table are (right to left): Dr. Kenny Anthony, former Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr. Ana Teresa Romero, Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean and Dr. Len Ishmael, Director-General, OECS.

fundamental ILO Conventions as well as the ILO Conventions on labour migration. This recommendation was made at the 15th Meeting of the COHSOD held in Guyana in October.

(http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/pres200_06.jsp)

LABOUR STANDARDS



Caribbean Government delegates with ILO's Director-General Juan Somavia (centre)

New Maritime Labour Convention adopted

A new Maritime Labour Convention was adopted in February at the 94th International Labour Conference (Maritime). The ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, consolidates and updates more than 65 international labour standards related to seafarers adopted over the last 80 years.

Ratifications of ILO Conventions in 2006

The ILO congratulates the Bahamas, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname for the ratification of the following ILO Conventions in 2006:

Bahamas - No. 185 - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (revised) - 14/12/06

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines - No. 138 - Minimum Age Convention - 25/7/06

95th Session of the International Labour Conference

Caribbean delegates attended the ILO's 95th annual Conference in June where they participated in discussions, which led to the adoption of a new Promotional Framework Convention on Occupational Safety and Health and accompanying Recommendation, as well as an international labour Recommendation on the Employment Relationship.

(<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/reim/ilc>)

Suriname - No. 181 - Private Employment Agencies Convention - 12/4/06

No. 182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour - 12/4/06

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines now brings the total number of Caribbean countries that have ratified all eight of the ILO's fundamental Conventions to eleven, out of a total of thirteen.



Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary (Ag.) in the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, and Dr. Ana Teresa Romero, Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean sign the Memorandum of Understanding to formally launch the HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme in Trinidad and Tobago.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programmes launched in Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, on 8 August 2006, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Labour Organization, Subregional Office for the Caribbean to implement an HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme. A similar agreement was signed between the ILO and the Government of Suriname on 6 December 2006. These programmes will accelerate and expand the countries' workplace response to HIV/AIDS through interventions at the enterprise level.

The United States Department of Labor is funding the project in Trinidad and Tobago, which is managed by Mrs. Carol-Ann Senah, while the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is funding the project in Suriname.

Sustainability Plan on HIV/AIDS developed as Belize HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme comes to a close

A sustainability plan has been developed by the tripartite partners and other stakeholders in Belize to guide the continuity and expansion of Belize's workplace response to HIV/AIDS. The plan was developed as part of the closing process of the ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme. The Programme partnered with eighteen enterprises to develop HIV/AIDS workplace policies and programmes. It also collaborated with the National AIDS Commission to organize countrywide consultations on a National HIV/AIDS Policy and a National HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy, both of which were endorsed by the Belize Cabinet in 2005. Belize was the first of five Caribbean countries to have implemented the ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS Workplace Education Programme. Other projects in Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago are now benefiting from Belize's experience.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

JEF receives Swedish funding

The Jamaica Employers' Federation was the recipient of funding valued at US\$40,000 to facilitate its programme activities under the Jamaica Youth Employment Network (JYEN) for the year 2006-2007 from the Swedish International Development Agency. Jamaica was one of eight countries which were the recipients of this funding under the "Good Governance in the Labour Market and Youth

Employment Project for employers' organizations." The JYEN was launched in September 2005, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Jamaica Employers' Federation, the Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

The Jamaica Employers' Federation co-ordinates the work of the JYEN. The

Youth Employment Network is a collaborative effort of the United Nations, World Bank and the International Labour Organization to address the global challenge of youth employment, one of the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

New project on the harmonization of labour legislation

A new Canadian-funded project on the harmonization of labour legislation was initiated in December 2006. This project seeks to evaluate the extent to which national legislation in the areas of termination of employment, occupational safety and health, recognition, registration and status of worker and employer organizations, and equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in employment, are compliant with CARICOM model legislation developed earlier with the assistance of the ILO. The project will be implemented in close collaboration with the CARICOM CSME Secretariat.

(http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/oldwww/projects/labour_legislation)



Schoolchildren march around the Queen's Park Savannah in Trinidad and Tobago with representatives of the Ministry of Labour and ILO to commemorate World Day against Child Labour on June 12, 2006

child labour in indigenous communities, were held as the project wound up its activities. The project was launched in 2001 with funding from the Canadian Government. It has completed rapid assessment studies on child labour in six countries, raised awareness of child labour, mobilized the social partners and other stakeholders through National Steering Committees on Child Labour, and has prevented and withdrawn children from the worst forms of child labour through its action programmes in Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Plans are in the pipeline for the development of a new project on tackling child labour through education, following national consultations in Guyana and Jamaica. ILO salutes the Canadian Government for having funded this project and Leslie Bowrin, for his astute management of the project.

(For more, please visit www.ilocarib.org.tt/childlabour)

Regional Child Labour Project wraps up

Governments of six countries now have a blueprint to guide the process of strengthening legal frameworks to better prevent child labour. The ILO Regional Child Labour Project has produced a series of legislative reviews for six countries-Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, including a comparative review. A regional meeting to identify strategies for the future as well as a follow-up national meeting in Suriname (with Guyana and Belize) on



Logo of the child labour promotional campaign

ILO and YTEPP host small business training of trainers workshop

Soon small business trainees of the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP Ltd) in Trinidad and Tobago will benefit from ILO's Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Programme. In December, ILO collaborated with YTEPP Ltd. to host a six-day Train-the-Trainers workshop on the SIYB programme, facilitated by Karl-Oskar Olming, ILO's SIYB Master Trainer. The ILO's SIYB programme is a management training programme with a focus on starting and improving small businesses as a strategy for creating more and better employment. It consists of its own trainers' guide, workbooks, assessment tools and an interactive game which allows participants to simulate a business.



Karl-Oskar Olming, ILO's SIYB Master Trainer addresses participants at the opening of the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business Training Programme for small business trainers. Sitting to his left are Christo Cave, Director, Entrepreneurial Development and Support Services, YTEPP Ltd. and Mary Read, Deputy Director, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean

contracted by PANCAP. ILO also served as a presenter at some of these sessions. The CTC has since developed a model Caribbean Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS which was presented at the 15th Meeting of CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development in October 2006.

In 2007, the CTC will focus on enterprise level programmes to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on the workplace and workforce. Drawing on its expertise and experience in implementing HIV/AIDS workplace interventions, the ILO will provide assistance to the CTC in the development of an appropriate strategy for these enterprise level programmes. ILO is a co-sponsor of UNAIDS with a mandate for HIV/AIDS and world of work and has been implementing HIV/AIDS Workplace Education programmes, funded by the US Department of Labor, in 23 countries, including five countries of the Caribbean, namely Belize, Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work provides the framework for action in the workplace.

ILO support for PANCAP's Caribbean Tripartite Council

The ILO is an advisory member of the Caribbean Tripartite Council that is implementing the world of work component of the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP), funded by the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.



Established at the February 2001 Meeting of CARICOM Heads of State, PANCAP is a regional network of key stakeholders - governments; international and regional agencies, including the ILO; employers' and workers' organizations; and non-governmental organizations

- that aims to scale up the response to HIV/AIDS in the region.

The Caribbean Tripartite Council (CTC), established in September 2005 by PANCAP to implement its workplace response, comprises the Caribbean Employers' Confederation, the Caribbean Congress of Labour, governments represented by the CARICOM Secretariat and the Caribbean Regional Network of People Living with HIV (CRN+), with ILO as an adviser. Madhuri Supersad, ILO's Focal Point on HIV/AIDS at the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean represents the ILO on the CTC. In 2006, ILO provided advice and guidance on the development of training programmes which were delivered by consultants

ILO recognizes new Global Trade Union

A new global trade union, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was launched on 1 November 2006. It was founded by trade unions affiliated to the now dissolved International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and World Confederation of Labour (WCL) joined by a number of other national trade union organizations.

ILO/UNESCO HIV/AIDS workplace policy for the education sector

An HIV/AIDS workplace policy for the education sector in the Caribbean is now available. The policy is the result of a joint ILO/UNESCO collaboration which began in 2005. The policy was reviewed and modified by representatives of Ministries of Education and Labour, teacher trade unions and national AIDS Councils/Commissions from five Caribbean countries during a tripartite workshop held in Jamaica in September 2005. Copies of the policy have been distributed to all Ministries of Education in the CARICOM countries. CARICOM's Council for Human and Social Development has recommended the adoption of the policy by all Ministries of Education.

ILO part of Regional Task Force on Child Rights and Protection

The ILO is now a member of the newly-established Regional Task Force on Child Rights and Protection, spearheaded by the CARICOM Secretariat and UNICEF. The first meeting was convened in Trinidad and Tobago at which the ILO presented its work on child labour in selected Caribbean countries.

ILO Caribbean Publications 2006

An HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy for the Education Sector in the Caribbean

Authors: ILO and UNESCO, 2006



Industrial Relations in the Caribbean - Issues and Perspectives

Editor: Samuel J. Goolsarran, 2006.

The System of Labour Administration in Suriname

Author: Glenn Piroe, 2006



A Comparative Review of Child Labour Laws in the Caribbean - A Guide to Legislative Reform

Author: Clive Pegus

ILO Regional Child Labour Project, 2006

Responding to Globalization: A Decent Work Agenda for the Caribbean in the context of regional integration

Author: ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, 2006.

(The full text of these publications and a catalogue of publications produced by the ILO Subregional Office are available online in the digital library of the website of the ILO Subregional Office: www.ilocarib.org.tt.)

Produced by the Information Unit, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, P.O. Box 1201, 6 Stanmore Avenue, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Tel. (868) 623-7704/7178 Fax (868) 627-8978 Email: ilocarib@ilocarib.org.tt Website: www.ilocarib.org.tt

Editor: Roma Wong Sang. Photographs courtesy: Luesette Howell and Marcel Crozet (ILO), Keith Matthews (Trinidad Guardian), Government Information Service - Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, and YTEPP Ltd.