



Organización
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Report of the Americas Preparatory Meeting for the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour

Buenos Aires, February 22 & 23, 2017

ILO country office for Argentina

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Index

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
Report of the Americas Preparatory Meeting for the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour	6
Opening Ceremony	6
Panel 1: Eradication of Child Labour, Elimination of Forced Labour and Promotion of Education, Training and Creation of Youth Productive and Quality Employment within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.	8
Panel 2: Partners for Development. Horizontal, Regional and Subregional Alliances and Initiatives between Sectors to meet targets 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 and the Sustainable Development Goals.	10
Panel 3: From Oslo to Buenos Aires, 20 Years in the Global Fight against Child Labour	13
Workshop 1: Prevention and Sustained Eradication of Child Labour	14
Workshop 2: Elimination of Forced Labour and Human Trafficking. American Nations facing the challenges set by target 8.7	16
Workshop 3: Challenges in the Creation of Youth Employment. School-Work Transition. Experiences of the Countries in the Region.	18
Conclusions of the Workshops	19
Closing Ceremony	21
Annex	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 22 – 23, 2017 the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Argentina, hosted the Americas Preparatory Meeting for the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, attended by government representatives, employers and workers and international agencies committed to the topic.

In a framework of dialogue and cooperation, participants exchanged views, experiences and challenges in order to outline common regional guidelines with a view to the IV Conference to be held in November 2017. This report displays the diagnoses and main proposals submitted by each sector as well as the agreements reached by the representatives of the Americas.

The main conclusions and proposals drawn from the specific cross-sectoral workshops held during the meeting were:

On Child Labour

- The need to have specific budget items to fund various ministries' programs and policies;
- Promoting studies on the factors causing child labour, and strengthen the monitoring and assessment of the policies implemented;
- Using amounts collected from fines for offences against the Child Labour Prohibition and Protection of Adolescent Workers Law be used to fund the design and implementation of specific public policies; and
- Participants also emphasized the importance of inter-ministerial arrangements, increasing participation and the impact of the education and social development areas in the design and implementation of specific public policies.

On Forced Labour

- The need to have quality statistical data and strengthen the entities in charge of drafting national statistics was highlighted.
- The feasibility of social dialogue and tripartism was emphasized given the consensus between the government, employers and trade unions in such respect.

On the Creation of Youth Employment.

- Participants analysed universal access to free, mandatory, public and quality education, as well as retaining children and youths in the educational system;

- The importance of a proper transition from school to work, vocational training; and second chance programs for vulnerable youths.
- The need for accurate diagnoses leading to policy packages and actions, the identification of specific youth groups, sectors with higher unemployment, informalization, etc.
- The importance of strengthening follow-up mechanisms in order to guarantee boys, girls and adolescents' continuity in the education system.

Governments, employers and workers agreed on the importance of tripartite social dialogue, and the exchange of experiences and good practices, forging alliances as well as strengthening state capacities and, particularly, inspection mechanisms to accomplish sustainable solutions for the issues of child labour, forced labour and the creation of youth quality jobs for youth.

Likewise, agreement was reached on the potential and importance of the Americas' experiences in the fight against these issues. The preparatory meeting's closing remarks emphatically supported not only the region's potential but also the existing commitment to face the challenges involved in attaining the goals.

Report of the Americas Preparatory Meeting for the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour

Day 1 - February 22, 2017

Opening Ceremony

The following were present at the opening ceremony: Doctor Ernesto G. LEGUIZAMÓN, Chief of Staff, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security; Mrs. Geraldina GONZÁLEZ, ILO Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean; Mr. Octavio CARVAJAL BUSTAMANTE, Employers' spokesperson at the III Global Conference on Child Labour, focal point of The Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour Regional Initiative, Ambassador Gustavo Rodolfo ZLAUVINEN, Under secretary of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, and Mr. Laerte TEIXEIRA da COSTA, CSA-TUCA Secretary of Social Policy.

Government representatives pointed out that the Preparatory Meeting for the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour is framed within the international progress made to fight the problem. They highlighted the global Alliance against forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour (Alliance 8.7), The Hague 2010 Roadmap, the 2013 Brasilia Declaration and the 2014 Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour Regional Initiative.

They analysed the relevance of the preparatory meeting from a dual perspective. On one hand, strengthening the facilitation and cross-sectoral cooperation of all the stakeholders committed to sustained eradication of child labour, forced labour and the creation of quality youth employment. On the other, the consolidation of a common regional position through constructive dialogue and the exchange of local experiences.

Argentina officially welcomed the participants and expressed the government's concern for the situation of children throughout the Americas, underscoring its commitment to accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) especially in relation to targets 8.5 –“decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”; 8.6 –“Youth employment: substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training”; and 8.7 –“Eradicate forced labour and child labour: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and end child labour in all its forms.”

The employers' representative acknowledged the technical support provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO), endorsed the commitment to participate and

highlighted the need to identify common priorities and challenges. His presentation underscored the work done by focal points through the exchange of information and the points of view put forward by the groups, and noted the paramount importance of promoting international cooperation and integration mechanisms; he stated their social responsibility as well as the need to work with other players; called for the firm commitment of all stakeholders in setting policy actions focused on access to quality education and training, regulation of informal economy and social protection systems; and underscored the importance of seeking alliances and training resources linked to eradicating child labour. After highlighting the need to identify common priorities to move forward in close cooperation with the various sectors, he stated that by acknowledging the connections between the three issues -child labour, forced labour and quality youth employment- the core goal of these actions should focus on the eradication of child labour, dealing specifically with each issue.

The workers' representative pointed out that no form of child labour is acceptable and mentioned the importance of stakeholders' commitment to its eradication. He highlighted that States are responsible for: enforcing policies to promote decent work for adults, ensuring their labour and union rights; enhancing social protection, and guaranteeing free, inter-cultural, and quality public education at all levels. He stated that the incidence of child labour is lower in unionised environments.

He also reinforced the importance of having a comprehensive approach to this issue, connecting the promotion of human and sustainable development and the respect for democracy and human rights, with active redistribution of wealth policies. Lastly, he emphasized the importance of having the Conference agenda aligned with the core goal of discussing policies to prevent and eliminate child labour.

The ILO representative pointed to the important progress made in the region over the last few decades. She especially highlighted the efforts made by the different sectors in the national arena and international cooperation. She also stressed that these efforts resulted in the over 7.5 million children taken away from child labour in late years. However, she underlined the work that is pending: 168 million children worldwide are still working, 13 million of them in Latin America and the Caribbean.

SUMMARY

The region's potential to face the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda was unanimously recognized. The speakers agreed, through debate and social dialogue, to establish new alliances, exchange experiences and resort to creative innovation so as to draft an agenda leading to sustainable and sustained economic growth in order to meet the international regulatory framework and, especially, targets 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 of the SDG.

Panel 1: Eradication of Child Labour, Elimination of Forced Labour and Promotion of Education, Training and Creation of Youth Productive and Quality Employment within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

This panel convened Mrs. Beate ANDREES, Chief of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO; Mrs. Carla CABALLEROS, Executive Director of the Chamber of Agriculture, Guatemala; and Mrs. Susana SANTOMINGO, CSA/CSI Workers' Representative.

Moderator: National Accountant Ezequiel Sabor, Labour Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina.

*The government representative pointed out the importance of Intergovernmental work and reinforcing control, and underscored the progress made thanks to the new technologies. As an example, he mentioned the successful utilization of filming devices (drones) in the province of San Juan, Argentina, to uncover informal labour, and its potential use to detect child labour, and the *body cams* used by inspectors, which allow for further evidence gathering during the inspections. He also singled out the importance of dialogue and cooperation between the States to effectively combat this scourge.*

The ILO representative urged to turn the challenges of the regional context into opportunities, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. From a rights' perspective, she stated how strategies need to change in order to meet the 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 targets of the SDG and how the IV Conference should lead to that end. She highlighted the meeting as a gathering of key players in the fight against these problems, and praised the organization of the IV Conference in the region because of the experience the Americas have to offer the world on the eradication of child labour, forced labour and the creation of quality youth employment.

In this scenario, she mentioned Alliance 8.7, established to promote the exchange of knowledge and innovation, increase resources and accelerate progress.

Amongst the challenges to joint efforts, she mentioned demographic changes, migrations, increased xenophobia; conflicts and humanitarian crises; the proliferation of the worst forms of slavery; climate change, economic and fiscal crises faced by many countries, the hardships in establishing the rule of law in order to promote fundamental rights, and the expanding sexual exploitation of children through the use of the new communication technologies. She emphasized the need to turn these challenges into opportunities, promoting joint efforts and raising awareness, aiming at the delivery of

commitments and actions in such a way that in 2030 we can look back and assert that the IV Conference held in Argentina made a contribution to meeting the targets.

She stated that it is every child's right to attend school, just like every woman, man and minimum working age youth have the right to decent work. The situation was described in figures, mentioning the 168 million children still subjected to child labour around the world, of which 5.5 million are the victims of forced labour. She emphatically stated that no child should be robbed of their childhood; no woman or girl should be the victim of bonded labour, sexual exploitation or other; and added that no man or boy should be forced to work, and their right to finish school, get decent wages and ensure social security coverage should be protected.

The Workers' representative pointed out the importance of allocating budgets to public policies, for actions to be actually carried out. She drew attention to the fact that the Americas preparatory meeting provides an opportunity to set the groundwork of guidelines to be drafted at the IV Conference so that every country can launch specific measures to fight the issues at hand. She expressed her concern for the macroeconomic models expanding in the region and the trade unions' decision to double their efforts to face such context.

Social justice was reclaimed as a goal that involves and benefits every sector, and the States were tasked with the responsibility of enforcing structural public policies that guarantee rights, and creating mechanisms to comply with conventions. She said that including the issues of forced labour and quality youth employment in the Conference should not water down the agenda against child labour. She underscored the importance of specific *in situ* actions, aligned with the agreements attained and ratified at the highest international level. She praised operational decentralization under a unified rationale. Decent work was considered the overarching framework to combat child labour.

She highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach to foster sustainable development, social justice, redistribution of wealth and the focus on rights. Finally, she emphasized the defence of migrants as well as avoiding the stigmatization of social groups in search of decent work.

The workers' representative agreed that the causes of child labour are multiple and require a specific approach per issue, which means, assessing and dealing with each area independently. She pointed to employment as the silver bullet against poverty, taking ILO agreements as the goal in the fight against child labour. She discussed the experience of Guatemala with chronic child malnutrition, since every second child is undernourished.

She also commended the employers' commitment on these issues, working alongside the government and other organisations, and agreeing upon a policy package on human rights and businesses, the first in Latin America. She also underscored the prevention against child labour, noting the role of education and the need for consistent public

policies. She highlighted the importance of aligning the agendas of United Nations' agencies to strengthen actions, and praised the ILO for such alignment.

In order to accomplish sustained eradication, she mentioned investments that should be promoted along with training areas, the enhancement of social actors and the improvement of IT systems. On this last issue, she mentioned that, on certain occasions the red and black lists are made up with weak information but on others they contain solid data. Therefore, she underscored the need to review the information sources, and in her capacity as the employers' representative she offered to supply the right information.

SUMMARY

The speakers on this panel agreed on the importance of tripartite dialogue, and the exchange of lessons learned and good practices to reach sustained solutions to child labour, forced labour and creation of quality youth employment. Emphasis was placed on education as a key tool.

Panel 2: Partners for Development. Horizontal, Regional and Sub-regional Alliances and Cooperation Initiatives between Sectors to meet targets 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Participating in this panel were: Mr. Martín ABELES, Director of the ECLAC office, Buenos Aires; Mr. Ricardo CORDERO, Regional Expert in Labour Mobility/Migration and Development, IOM; Mrs. Cecilia LLAMBI, Senior Executive, Social Development Projects Department, Southern Region, CAF - Development Bank of Latin America; and Mrs. María Claudia CAMACHO, Chief, Labour and Employment Section, Department of Human Development, Education and Employment, Organization of American States, OAS.

Moderator: Dr. Esteban ESEVERRI, Director, Financial Planning of Employment and Vocational Training Programmes Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina

The representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach to the issue at hand that encompasses the types of existing productive structures. He committed to presenting at the IV Conference a document that will empirically describe the link between child

labour and inequality. Likewise, he announced the elaboration, together with the ILO, of a statistical model that will allow for more accurate predictions of territories that are more likely to have child labour. The model, under the working title of “predictive model on child labour”, was announced as a new and powerful tool against this scourge.

The representative for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) pointed that migrants are the most vulnerable to child labour and forced labour. According to the ILO, there are currently 150 million migrant workers, of which 11 million are domestic workers. The IOM considers migratory irregularities to be one of the main causes of labour exploitation. The presentation mentioned positive experiences, amongst them, alliances and cooperation initiatives carried out by the Ibero-American Social Security Organization (OISS), IOM and ILO in advancing towards the eradication of child labour and the creation of decent work in the Pacific Alliance countries (Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru).

In relation to target 8.6, he put on the spotlight the Joint Programme for Job Promotion, the Youth Entrepreneurial efforts and the Management of International Migrant Workers, along with their institutional effects and impact on the issues at stake. With regards to target 8.7, he described two initiatives, the first on the IOM work with the MERCOSUR network to help women suffering from international human trafficking, strengthening the integration between nations, and raising awareness on trafficking, not only of women in sexual exploitation networks but also for forced labour; and the cooperation with national governments to formulate a protocol against labour exploitation and trafficking. The second initiative was developed at the Colombian government’s request to the IOM, which thanks to the partnering of various sectors managed to bring back six thousand child-soldiers to a normal life.

The closing remarks underscored the importance of further raising awareness on these issues among decision-makers at all levels. He also underlined the relevance of systematic training, particularly in the technical sector, and the need to seek funding for these activities.

The representative for the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) presented the education agenda initiative as it relates to target 8.5 of skills training for the population. On that issue, she stated that despite a higher rate of schooling, there are still major deficits and inequality, mainly in secondary education throughout Latin America. The socio-economic status was pointed as the most relevant indicator, even more so than the differences noted between rural and urban areas. It was pointed out that 29% of children dropping out of school do so for reasons relating to the education system, which illustrates the need to improve these institutions, making the transition from school to work more efficient.

The guiding axes proposed by the CAF were: access –i.e. to increase the number of children starting early education and ensuring that students finish middle education-, quality -the need to enhance it, emphasizing equality-, and suitability -the proposal

involves improving the correlation between training and the skill-set required by the labour market. It was also pointed out that actions should be geared to improve the infrastructure; favour strategies to promote demand; support comprehensive approaches to skills development; enhance professional training for teachers and principals; and facilitate reading skills.

Finally, to enhance suitability, emphasis was placed on school curricula, labour competencies certification, and the promotion of internships to help bridge the transition from school to work. She reiterated that CAF makes available all of its tools and instruments to the countries to help solve these issues.

The representative of the Organization of American States (OAS) shared the experience of the Inter-American Network for Labour Administration (RIAL) as a tool coordinated by the organisation, and considered to be a privileged means to contribute to the regional action initiatives with the SDG as a goal. The network was created to enhance human and institutional capabilities in labour ministries, installing cooperation as a tool to strengthen the institutions. It is a mechanism to integrate and disseminate experiences and good practices, facilitate and improve the labour ministries' performance throughout the member countries.

RIAL has helped in streamlining reforms and improving regulatory frameworks, for ministries to develop new programmes and deliver better services. These were mentioned by way of examples: the assessment report guide on child labour and its worst forms in Guatemala, developed after RIAL's cooperation in Ecuador; adapting and implementing good practices from Ecuador to Guatemala; and secondly, the employment service in Panama, which got significant contribution from Argentina, with results showing specific improvements for the beneficiaries. The RIAL multiplier effect was also mentioned as one of its core strengths along with optimizing dialogue, international cooperation and increasing inter-sectoral solidarity. In terms of child labour, they highlighted the hemispheric workshop conducted in Costa Rica in 2013, that convened 24 labour ministries and other international agencies. Likewise, they commended the 7 bilateral cooperation actions on the subject.

SUMMARY

There was agreement on the importance of international cooperation, highlighting the special role of the organisations devoted to such issue, sharing the views on how they promote dialogue and understanding, transfer knowledge, and facilitate learning. The willingness to exchange, and the need to have proper and relevant information were also underscored, while new statistical tools were announced that will streamline public policies to identify and solve such issues. They agreed that there are a number of positive and valuable experiences from which to draw many lessons to be subsequently replicated in other countries.

Panel 3: From Oslo to Buenos Aires, 20 Years in the Global Fight against Child Labour

Participants were: Mr. Simon STEYNE, Senior Adviser on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, ILO; Mrs. Viviana DOVAL, Global March against Child Labour representative; Mrs. Elena MONTOBBIO, representative of the Technical Secretariat of the Regional Initiative for a Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, ILO, and Mrs. Florence BAUER, UNICEF representative to Argentina.

Moderator: Lic. Fausto SPIGA, *President, National Commission on the Elimination of Child Labour* Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina

The ILO representative, from a rights perspective, reviewed the history of the fight against child labour under the umbrella of international law. The Oslo meeting was considered a breaking point because it was there that several key actors concluded that the progress in ratifying Convention 138 required a stronger push. The 1997 Global March was organized with this end in mind, and the need for a new framework agreement was reiterated. Convention 182 was the fastest convention ratified on the issue. This fact was considered a sign of strong political will and commitment from every stakeholder involved in the fight against child labour. He also stated that the challenges faced vis-à-vis child labour are mounting because discrimination, and even social exclusion, have grown and therefore a comprehensive approach is important as human rights and labour laws intertwine with the fundamental principles and rights at work.

He highlighted the significant strides made in the past 20 years, especially from 2000 to date, when the same comparative statistics have been used. They emphasized the reduction of 22 million child workers between 2000 and 2004 and a downturn between 2004 and 2008. In the 2008 – 2012 period, and despite the crisis, there was a noteworthy increase in the reduction of child labour, 47 million. This was thanks to the investments made in education and social security by several member countries, which would explain the higher reduction of child labour in that period.

He also underscored the importance of using the term “eradication” of child labour rather than “elimination”. The panel briefly explained that their approval stemmed from the etymology of the term, which allows for a true reflection of the deep political will to uproot the scourge of child labour. Likewise, it described the need to work not only on the supply but also on the demand side of child labour.

The representative of the Global March spoke to the importance of the movement, born as an agreement in 1997 and launched as a physical march in January 1998, crossing 107 countries. The march shed light and raised awareness on the issue. She also stated the Global March influenced the inclusion of target 8.7 as a key part of the SDG. Under this framework, they acknowledged the strides made, albeit recognizing there is

still a lot of work ahead and emphasizing the importance of approaching the issue in a comprehensive manner and the need for the countries in the region to take the elimination of child labour as a key part of a broader social policy package, i.e. making this target a concrete part of policy planning in every country.

The representative of the Regional Initiative (RI) reviewed the history of the fight against child labour from 1997 to date, establishing four stages: the first, until 2002, which tried to set up action with vision, with pilot experiences and national programmes. A second stage from 2007 to 2010, when projects were translated into concrete policies and plans became strategies to fight child labour. A third consolidation stage extended from 2011 to 2014 and implanted the issue in the public administration. However, due to the progress achieved in the past few years, governments lowered their guard, which accounts for the stagnation of progress on the eradication of the problem. Finally, in the last stage, from 2015 to 2025, sustainability is expected and thus target 8.7 of the SDG will be met. In addition to highlighting the work done and attaching special value to the RI as an underlying structure, raising awareness on the necessary efforts to tackle future work was the goal. To this effect, if goals are to be met, the need was voiced to remove 24 thousand children a week from child labour, for which everyone's efforts are required.

The UNICEF representative discussed the importance of paying thorough attention to statistics due to the significant differences between areas, for instance urban and rural. She also noted the need to continue collecting data to overcome the difficulty of setting effective public policy packages without them. She underscored that vulnerable populations are usually not impacted by just one issue but are rather affected by converging problems.

SUMMARY

The panel highlighted the progress made in the fight to eradicate child labour over the past twenty years, at global, regional and local country levels, saluting the work of different sectors, the efforts of international organisations, civil society organisations and countries. They stated that despite these efforts, the challenge of eradicating child labour still stands.

Day 2 - February 23, 2017

Workshop 1: Prevention and Sustained Eradication of Child Labour

Speakers were: Mrs. Elena MONTORBIO, Regional Initiative (RI) ; Mrs. Susana SANTOMINGO – Focal Point South Cone Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CGT in Argentina); Mrs. Marisol LINERO BLANCO, Employer Focal Point at the RI,

National Council of Private Enterprise, CONEP; and Mr. Andrés ESPEJO, Consultant, ECLAC, Chile

Moderator: Dr. Silvia KUTSCHER, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina

The RI representative described the context in which said platform was created. The Regional Initiative was the region's answer to the stagnation in the reduction of child labour and the necessity to adjust the intervention model and multiply the efforts to attain the SDG. The RI was highlighted as a powerful and novel space: a tripartite cooperation platform, led by 27 countries and capitalizing on the region's experience, which enjoys the south - south cooperation and promotes public-private alliances for the eradication of Child Labour.

Eight accelerating factors to eradicate the problem were considered: policy decentralization, work with indigenous and African descent peoples, education as a key player, value chains, youth employment, agriculture, the link between child labour and migrations, and new technologies. The links between target 8.7 and other SDG were mentioned, pointing out to their interdependence, as an example it was noted that it is impossible to meet the health or education goals without meeting those related to child labour. Participants underscored the need to make greater efforts towards prevention, and include child labour in education and social security as a cross-cutting priority.

The Workers' representative highlighted dialogue and the positive attitude of all sectors but also warned that a significant portion of the progress made was reinforced by progressive policies and governments in the region, a situation that has decidedly changed in recent years. She pointed out that governments are responsible for promoting multi-sectoral public policies, and highlighted the importance of having, by the end of the Global Conference, a package of policies and actions, that includes funding, and assessment and monitoring tools. She also emphasized the value of the Regional Initiative as a tool to facilitate actions on social dialogue.

The Employers' representative mentioned the commitment taken on by the sector, and the importance of joint action. She particularly highlighted its participation in the RI, and made available all the good practices gathered throughout the years.

In that respect they mentioned *inter alia*, public-private alliances, platforms on child labour, human rights and businesses guidelines, Social Footprint certification, and the Business Network against Child Labour.

The ECLAC representative presented the previously mentioned "Predictive model on Child Labour." This tool, developed jointly with the ILO, aims at identifying areas with a higher likelihood of having child labour. This tool involves the innovative use of available statistics. He explained the model has been implemented twice; the first one was a pilot run in Dominican Republic and the second, a validation run in Brazil. The tool is used in

three steps, firstly, taking the statistics on the context-related and macroeconomic factors defining child labour; institutional and public policy indicators as well as individual and family determining factors like gender, place of the child in the family, etc. The second step involves estimating a **logic model** from which to extract the likelihood of child labour on a regional basis. Finally, country census data are used to be more accurate, breaking down the regions by municipality, canton, etc.

SUMMARY

The panel praised the relevance and power of the “Predictive Model.” They explained its estimates are almost fully accurate, and its use allows to further disaggregate the territories, down to the municipal level. The tool will contribute to a more efficient and smart use of public resources, making use of the funds wherever they are most needed.

Workshop 2: Elimination of Forced Labour and Human Trafficking. American Nations facing the challenges set by target 8.7

Speakers were: Mr. José María RAMIREZ MACHADO, Senior Programme and Operations Officer for the Americas, Fundamental Rights and Principles at Work, ILO; Mr. Brian FINNEGAN, Workers’ representative South Cone Trade Union Confederation of the Americas; Mrs. Amelia ESPEJO, Adviser, IOE; Mr. Rorix NUÑES MORALES, Director of the Office of International Technical Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Labour Market Development, Republic of Panama.

Moderator: Dr. María Laura FERRANTE, Responsible for the detection of human trafficking during inspections, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina

The ILO representative pointed out that despite forced labour and child labour being two separate crimes, they converge in many aspects. A person working from childhood has a greater likelihood of falling victim to a trafficking network as an adult. Likewise, the children of adults who are victims of forced labour are more likely to fall into child labour. He also highlighted that solutions may converge, since some good practices developed for child labour may be used against forced labour and vice versa. Along those lines, he spoke of the need to have a more comprehensive approach to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda. He confirmed there is no sustained or sustainable economic growth without decent work and, on that same token, without economic growth there cannot be decent work, concluding that in order to meet the goals a holistic approach is required.

At the core of decent work is the respect for fundamental principles and human rights. He highlighted the fundamental as well as specific conventions in place, and the need to move forward in pending ratifications and their application.

He emphasized the benefits for workers and employers from the elimination of forced labour: those committing the crime of human trafficking are also bringing misery to workers, defrauding the State and incurring in unfair competition to other employers. He reminded that vulnerability is enhanced when migrant workers are involved.

The workers' representative underscored the right to free association as an indispensable right for decent work to exist. To this effect, he emphasized the need to ban layoffs linked to unionisation. In addition to defending rights, he urged to innovate trying to strengthen and create new ways to defeat forced labour. He stated the importance of the migration issue in the discussions on forced labour since at least 44% of the workers subjected to forced labour are migrants. He emphasized the relevance of approaching and acting on child labour in the global supply chains in order to attain significant impact. Several illustrative examples were provided of forced labour, migration and child labour in Colombia, Argentina, Mexico and the U.S. He also discussed the importance of binding agreements related to supply chains. The speaker highlighted the importance of ratifying and implementing the ILO international standards, both specific and fundamental Conventions, on governance and technical, which once implemented will help eliminate child labour.

The employers' representative expressed that even if the issues tackled do converge, they should be approached individually and then gradually integrated.

Strengthening inspections was discussed as well along with the tripartite consultation with social partners. She stated the importance of educating vulnerable groups on their rights as a means of prevention and protection. She also underscored the importance of granting these groups actual access to justice and legal remedies.

Panama's government representative discussed the ratification of ILO Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention in his country, through the alignment of the existing legal framework to the international proposal, and their foreign policy that respects fundamental rights similarly to Argentina. He commended the fight against these new forms of slavery, underscoring Panama's commitment to tripartite consultation. He stated that in order to eradicate forced labour coordination is needed with law enforcement and the ministries of security, education, and migration among others.

SUMMARY

The presentations concurred on the importance of inter-ministerial cooperation, to strengthen government inspections and build inter-sectoral agreements to further the fight against child labour. They underscored the need to approach each issue according to its specific components, albeit from a comprehensive perspective.

Workshop 3: Challenges to the Creation of Youth Employment. School-Work Transition. Experiences of the Countries in the Region.

Speakers: Mr. Guillermo DEMA, Regional Expert on Youth Employment and Child Labour, ILO Americas; Mrs. Juliana MANRIQUE, National Entrepreneurs Association of Colombia. Education, ANDI; Mrs. Ligia Inés ALZATE, Director of the Department for the Youth and Eradication of Child Labour, Single Confederation of Workers (CUT) – Colombia / CSA; and Mr. Kevin WILLCUTTS Deputy Director, Office of Child Labour, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking, Bureau of International Labour Affairs, U.S. Department of Labour (US/DOL).

Moderator: Dr. Manuel MERA, National Director of Labour Policies, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina

The ILO representative said that part of the information raising optimism about the eradication of the problem is somewhat outdated and, given the current financial woes looming over the region, the forecast is not as encouraging. In light of this information, he stated that child labour may actually be rising in the region, on account of the economic slow-down (from 6.6% to 8.1% from 2015 to 2016) affecting mostly women and youths). In addition to unemployment, the panel pointed to informal employment as a contributing factor to the problem. Likewise, they underscored the importance of quality education, particularly at high school level, the transition from school to work, and the history of decent work, to stop the cycle of poverty and exclusion a boy or girl is sentenced to when they are subjected to child labour. The success stories are not the consequence of one-size-fits-all solutions, but the combination of strategies and lines of action, and successful policies and practices such as attempting to increase the demand for labour; boosting youth employability, intermediation, fiscal incentives to youth hiring, and others. The need for innovation was underscored. The National Learning Network, in which Costa Rica, Kenya and Argentina participate, was mentioned as a positive experience.

The Government representative (US/DOL) highlighted the importance of technical cooperation in the fight against child labour. He pointed out that children should develop their skills and learn in order to have access to decent jobs as adults, emphasizing the need to prioritize quality high school education. He mentioned Latin America is leading in a number of areas in the fight against child labour, especially in terms of good practices that are later replicated in other regions. A successful training project in Jordan was mentioned, which helped half of its participants to have access to decent work despite being a population at risk; a programme developed in El Salvador and Honduras working with youths at risk because of gangs and crime, that built

vocational training centres in their neighbourhoods; the training project in Peruvian rural communities; and a project deployed in Paraguay focusing on girls, helping them expand their opportunities and choices by preventing the distance to school from being an unsurmountable obstacle for later access to quality employment.

The Workers' representative criticized the neo-liberal economic model as one of the causes of child labour, and reported persecution against free association in several companies, where workers seeking to associate are dismissed. This paves the way for informal labour to keep expanding and making child labour more likely. They urged for a comprehensive reform of the rural sector in Colombia, considering the country context requires to seek peace without turning its back on social justice. These statements came together with strong emphasis on the importance of the fight for gender equality. The importance of quality education was also highlighted.

The Employers' representative reiterated the present complex global economic context, underscoring the importance of developing the human capital to return to the path of sustained and sustainable economic growth. She revisited the proposals of incentives to businesses, fiscal incentives and governments' support in paying the salaries of youths transitioning from school to work. She recommended education to be more aligned with the private sector demands. The importance of creating global networks to mitigate the imbalance between labour demand and supply, sharing good practices, and strengthening the link between the public and private sectors was highlighted.

SUMMARY

The speakers agreed on the challenges posed by the current financial hardships affecting the region that impact mainly on quality job creation for youths. Good practices were shared and the importance of technical cooperation and innovation; also the need to provide quality education to youths.

Workshops Conclusions

The moderators of the workshops drafted a summary of the subjects discussed and agreements reached in the debate and exchange forums.

The *first workshop*¹ resorted to three triggers to fuel the debate: a) How to secure funding for programmes and services aimed at reducing child labour and protecting legal working age adolescents, in order to guarantee care for children, youths and their families?; b) How to more efficiently link ministries of Social Development and Education in the implementation of policies and strategies to reduce child labour and

¹ See annex.

protect legal youth work?; and c) What should the role of civil society be in order to effectively contribute to reducing child labour and protecting legal youth work?

To answer the first question, specific budget allocations for various ministries, employers' and workers' sector, and a general budget increase were proposed. Commissioning studies to determine the causal effects of child labour in order to correctly direct resources, and to assess policies and their impact was recommended. Likewise, increasing budgets for work inspections, awareness programmes and education, as well as securing funding from global partners were recommended. Local laws were urged to mandate that the amounts collected from fines for offences against the Child Labour Prohibition and Protection of Adolescent Workers Law be used to fund the design and implementation of related public policies.

To answer the second question, promoting the creation of inter-ministerial panels or committees supported by national tripartism to design public policies to deal with these issues was suggested. Likewise, the need to build inter-ministerial agreements, especially in Education, Health, Social Development and Labour, among others was emphasized. The importance of giving the education and social development areas more participation in the design and implementation of specific public policy packages and in ensuring universal access to free, mandatory and quality public education as well as retaining boys, girls and adolescents in the education system was underlined. Also, including subjects related to decent work and child labour in every school curriculum, at all levels was proposed.

In terms of the role of civil society, the importance of acknowledging its potential to eradicate child labour and protect adolescents' legal work was pinpointed. The capacity to organize and provide technical and financial aid for awareness raising actions was noted. Likewise, the importance of promoting good practices in enterprises and their links to civil society was underscored. Finally, it was concluded that corporate social responsibility should lead to actions aimed at preventing child labour and protecting adolescent workers throughout the production process.

The *second workshop* reached the following conclusions:

The questions were: 1) what tools are available to collect reliable statistical data to measure the problem (of forced labour) and help design actions? 2) How feasible is it to coordinate tripartite actions to efficiently face the issue, and whether there are good practices to be shared on this topic?

The need to have reliable statistical data since the available information usually stems from court cases, ignoring undetected cases, underscoring along those lines the need to strengthen the national statistics agencies was noted. Positive experiences in collecting statistics and court data, which introduce the issue in census and specific polling were shared.

On the second question, it was concluded that tripartite organization is feasible through consensus between government, employers and trade unions. There was agreement that this is something worth accomplishing, particularly because of the potential that commissions and committees bring to the effort.

The conclusions of the *third workshop* were listed in ten bullet points: 1) Associating specific policies with other macroeconomic policies. Without employment there cannot be quality youth employment; 2) Need to accurately diagnose the situation in order to define measures and actions, identify specific youth groups, sectors with higher unemployment, informal sectors, etc.; 3) Importance of seamlessly transitioning from school to work; 4) Importance of having spaces to exchange regional experiences since they allow to learn from mistakes and replicate successes; 5) Relevance of social dialogue, and the importance of policy packages stemming from consensus, including the opinions of adolescents; 6) Vocational training and second chance programmes are especially important for the most vulnerable youths, allowing them to re-enter the education system and improve their perspectives; 7) Soft skills are key in the current globalised world, and developing them is imperative to secure a good education for our youths; 8) There is a need to turn education and training into a two-way street, since skills are developed at both school and work; 9) Even if they are not considered silver bullets, self-employment and entrepreneurial projects should be promoted; 10) Finally, importance of monitoring mechanisms, considering that school insertion and reinsertion policies are insufficient to ensure that every boy, girl and adolescent stays in school.

Closing Ceremony

Participants: Dr. Esteban ESEVERRI, Director, Financial Planning of Employment and Vocational Training Programmes, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Argentina and Mrs. Gerardina GONZÁLEZ, ILO Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

At the closing ceremony, *the ILO representative* underlined the need to meet the targets, pointing out that the future of work in the region should be free of child labour. Likewise, a mention was made of the organization's contributions and innovative proposals to the subject area, aiming to eradicate child labour, ensure quality youth employment and eliminate forced labour. Along these lines, she emphasized the fact that policy packages need to be integrated and comprehensive while acknowledging there are no one-size-fits-all solutions for these scourges, and the impact of the economic deceleration on them. She also mentioned that the continental meeting falls under the umbrella of a number of preparatory meetings taking place in the rest of the regions. Adding to them are consultations to assess suggestions from civil society organisations and making them available to the tripartite groups. She especially thanked the attendance of representatives, international agencies and entities as well as the Argentine government for hosting the meeting while emphatically stating that by

adopting the 2030 Agenda, humanity acknowledged our generation's potential to eradicate poverty, eradicate child labour by 2025 and eradicate forced labour by 2030.

Following, *the representative of the Ministry of Labour* thanked the participants on behalf of the Argentine government. He commended the ILO leadership in tackling these issues through tripartite dialogue. Finally, he thanked the various actors that had helped materialise the regional meeting.

ANNEX

Workshop 1: Prevention and Sustained Eradication of Child Labour

1) How to secure funding for programmes and services aimed at reducing child labour and protecting legal adolescent work, that guarantee direct care for boys, girls, adolescents and their families?

- Having specific budget items at different government levels and for the various ministries, as well as in the employers' and workers' sectors.
- Promoting studies to identify the factors leading to child labour in order to properly allocate resources.
- Assessing the impact of policy packages to secure and/or redirect funding.
- Increasing allocations to reinforce work inspections, awareness and education programmes.
- Securing funding from international partners.
- Urging local laws to mandate that the amounts collected from fines for offences against the Child Labour Prohibition and Protection of Adolescent Workers Law be used to fund the design and implementation of specific public policies.

2) How can we facilitate a more efficient interaction between the social development and education ministries in implementing the policy packages and strategies to reduce child labour and protect legal adolescent work?

- Promoting the creation of inter-ministerial committees or panels supported by national tripartism to design policy packages to prevent and eradicate child labour and protect legal adolescent work.
- Promoting inter-ministerial agreements (education, health, social development, labour, etc.) and ensuring their enforcement.
- Guaranteeing universal access to free, mandatory, public, and quality education, as well as retaining children and youths in the education system.
- Including subjects on decent work, child labour and legal adolescent work in the mandatory curriculum at all education levels.

3) *What should the role of civil society be to efficiently contribute to reduce child labour and protect legal adolescent work in the region?*

- Acknowledging its potential to eradicate child labour and protect legal adolescent work.
- Enhancing the capacities of Civil Society Organisations through technical and financial assistance to raise awareness in the society.
- Promoting the dissemination of good business practices in order to attract new actors from the employers' sector to work for the effective prevention and eradication of child labour and the protection of legal adolescent workers.
- Facilitating corporate social responsibility leading to actions to prevent child labour and protect legal adolescent work throughout the production process.