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IOE.net

International Organisation of Employers

Welcome!

Editorial

**WELCOME TO THIS FIRST EDITION
OF IOE.net**

I have much pleasure in introducing this first edition of our new e-mail newsletter IOE.net. It has been developed as part of our reorganization of publications in order to provide our members with fast, accurate and relevant information on issues of importance to employers today. As part of this reorganization "The Free Employer" will no longer be produced. It is our hope that you find this material of benefit and we would welcome your feedback as to its contents and as to matters you would like information on in future editions. If you would like this material sent directly to others within your organization please do not hesitate to forward their e-mail details to us so that they can be included on our mailing list.

As an electronic transmission we have tried to keep it short and to the point. Members wishing to receive more complete information are requested to fax or e-mail us back and we will forward that detail to them. We would also appreciate hearing of any difficulties you encountered in receiving this material.

I trust you find IOE.net of use to you in your work.

Antonio Peñalosa
Secretary-General

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Contact:

If you have any suggestions or contribution to make, please send them to us by fax (4122) 798 88 62 or e-mail us at ioe@ioe-emp.org

<p>International Labour Organization</p>	
<p>The follow-up procedures for the Declaration were finalized at the November Governing Body meeting. With the appointment of the Committee of experts everything is now in place. Jean-Jacques Oechslin, former Chairman of the Executive Committee of the IOE, is a member of the Committee. The Annual Review will be discussed by the Governing Body next March. Its purpose is to review, on a yearly basis, the efforts made by members that have not yet ratified fundamental Conventions. Governments that are not members of the Governing Body will be able to participate in the debates on the Annual Review. The Global Report, which will be discussed during the second week of the ILO Conference in Plenary next June, will provide a global picture on the application of fundamental principles and rights at work. The Global Report should also help to assess the effectiveness of the assistance provided by the ILO in order to guide its future actions.</p> <p>The IOE will continue to monitor developments as it is clear to us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The follow-up mechanism is, and must be kept, a promotional tool for the application of fundamental principles and rights at work. • A clear distinction should be made between the follow-up mechanism and the ILO's supervisory machinery (Committee of Experts, Committee on Application of Standards, and the Committee on Freedom of Association). • It is of the utmost importance that the follow-up mechanism lives up to its expectations and delivers what has become one of the main goals of the Organization and targets assistance to those countries experiencing difficulties in applying the ILO's fundamental principles at work. 	<p>ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work</p>
<p>The questionnaire for the ILO's seventh survey on the effect given to the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy was sent by the ILO to national employer organizations worldwide on 3rd September last. Replies should reach the ILO by 29th February 2000. The IOE would appreciate receiving copies of replies submitted by employers' organizations, whether sent via their governments or directly to the ILO. For further information, contact Barbara Perkins at perkins@ioe-emp.org</p>	<p>Multinationals Questionnaire</p>

United Nations Agencies and other International Organizations News

The Secretary-General of the IOE and his senior advisers met with UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) to explore opportunities for co-operation and information sharing. Similar meetings have been held with representatives from UNEP (UN Environmental Programme), ITC (International Trade Centre), WHO (World Health Organization) and WTO (World Trade Organization). The activities of UN agencies and the IOE relationship with them will be a feature in future editions as more and more of their activities bring them into contact with the private sector.

UNCTAD

UNCTAD will be holding its tenth quadrennial Conference in Bangkok (Thailand) from 12 to 19 February 2000, addressing the broad theme of: *Applying the lessons of the past to make globalization an effective instrument for the development of all countries and of all people*. The Conference will engage in a stocktaking on multilateral strategies for development and seek to forge a new consensus among developed and developing countries about the necessary tools for development, as well as the appropriate internal and external environments. The IOE has been asked to participate in the preparation and organization of this event.

Involving the private sector more closely in UNCTAD's work, in a practical way, will be high on the agenda of the Organization's 188 member States. ***For further information contact:*** Awni Behnam, Secretary of the Conference, e-mail: awni-behnam@unctad.org

At the 1999 World Economic Forum UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan proposed a Global Compact with business demonstrating good global citizenship wherever it operates. He challenged business leaders to embrace and enact nine principles derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the ILO on fundamental principles and rights at work, from the Copenhagen Summit and from the Rio Declaration of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit) covering Human Rights, Labour and the Environment.

**The Global
Compact**

To be sustainable globalization must be accompanied by the effective promotion and protection of human rights, labour standards and the environment. A clear demonstration that basic and broadly popular social values are being advanced as part and parcel of the globalization process will help ensure that markets remain open. The IOE supports the principles and approach of the Global Compact.

<p>To this end, at the invitation of IOE President Ashraf Tabani, the Director General of the ILO will be writing to the President of each of our member federations seeking support for this initiative and to provide examples of how business can play its part. All member organizations have been advised by Ashraf Tabani of this forthcoming correspondence.</p> <p>For more information on the Global Compact and what steps business can take, visit the UN website: http://www.un.org/partners/business</p>	
<p>At the Copenhagen Social Summit in 1995, heads of State from 117 countries pledged to implement ten commitments to alleviate poverty, promote employment and ensure social integration.</p> <p>The UN has regarded progress towards the achievement of these goals to have been "uneven". The Geneva 2000 special UN session from 26-30 June will evaluate implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration. Among the further actions and initiatives to be considered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of principles of socio-economic policy for responding to financial crises; • Preparation of guidelines on the social responsibilities of business; • Adoption of a global target for poverty eradication of halving the number of people living in absolute poverty by the year 2015; • Establishment, strengthening and improvement in management of national social protection systems; • Mandating preparation of a global action programme for full employment in an integrating world; • Refocusing macroeconomic policies so that goals and priorities become central and are sought simultaneously with economic priorities; • Strengthening procedures and institutions for social dialogue by, among other actions, encouraging growth of civil society organizations and guaranteeing freedom of association; • Strengthening gender mainstreaming and promoting gender equality nationally and internationally; • Mandating preparation of a new global plan of action to achieve access to education for all by 2015; • Mandating preparation of a global plan of action to achieve access to basic health services for all by 2015; 	<p>"Geneva 2000" UN General Assembly Special Session</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening support for activities to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS; • Preparation of guidelines for policies aiming to collect sufficient revenue to pay for national social services, social protection and other social policies in the context of globalization; • Identification of effective forms of international co-operation and co-ordination of taxation policy between countries so as to contain tax competition; • Further initiatives to substantially reduce the debts of the heavily indebted low income countries; • Reversing the current decline in ODA (Official Development Assistance) and efforts to reach the agreed international targets for such assistance; • Standardization of development indicators. <p>A number of the above points will be of concern to employers. Members should consider the implications of this meeting for "business" and ensure their views are made known to their Government.</p> <p><i>For further information on Geneva 2000</i> contact: Division for Social Policy Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, e-mail desktop@un.org</p> <p>As with the Copenhagen Summit, the IOE and ICC will prepare a joint statement for presentation at the meeting. We believe a strong employer voice will be important at this event and would therefore encourage employers to participate by seeking to be part of their national delegation to the Conference.</p> <p>The IOE and ICC will again host a joint parallel event for business to consider issues arising from the agenda. Details on the specific topic, date and venue will follow.</p>	
<p><i>Business Guide to the World Trading System:</i> This publication has just been issued by ITC and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Targeted primarily to the business world, the <i>Guide</i> explains business implications for international trade of the legal framework of the World Trade Organization. The book is a successor to a previous publication, <i>Business Guide to the Uruguay Round</i>, incorporating the latest developments in the evolving international trade framework.</p> <p>The <i>Guide</i> has three features which make it unique. First, it describes the WTO Agreements from a business perspective, using simple language and highlighting business implications. Second, it reviews the six cutting-edge trade topics which</p>	<p>ITC Business Guide to the World Trading System</p>

<p>have been included in WTO's work programme for study and analysis: trade and environment; trade and investment; trade and competition policy; transparency in government procurement; trade facilitation; and electronic commerce. Third, it is the only description of the WTO Agreements from a business angle which has been reviewed and approved by the WTO Secretariat.</p> <p>The <i>Guide</i> is addressed primarily to business enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises; industries and associations of industry and trade; and teaching, training and research institutions directly or indirectly associated with foreign trade.</p> <p>For more information contact: <i>S. Meitzel, ITC Senior Training Officer, at: tel.: 41 22 730 0296; fax: 41 22 733 4439; e-mail: meitzel@intracen.org or N. Domeisen, Senior Public Information Officer, at: tel. 41 22 730 0370; fax: 41 22 733 4439; e-mail: domeisen@intracen.org.</i> This news release is also available on ITC's Internet site at http://www.intracen.org</p> <p>To order a copy: The <i>Guide</i> is free of charge in limited quantities to trade-related organizations and firms in least developed countries, and to government officials in all countries. It is available for sale to developing countries for \$20.00 and developed countries for \$65.00. French and Spanish versions of the publication will soon be available.</p> <p>The <i>Guide</i> can be obtained through the United Nations sales and distribution network, the WTO bookshop (Geneva) , the Commonwealth Secretariat (London) or ITC.</p>	
<p>The 135 country members of the WTO will meet in Seattle this week for the Ministerial Meeting. At the time of writing, members are yet to agree on an agenda for the talks. However, most commentators are not ruling out the possibility of an 11th hour compromise.</p> <p>One concern is that, if the talks break up in disarray, many NGOs will claim a victory in their campaign against the WTO.</p> <p>The issue for the IOE and its members concerns the suggestion that the WTO add labour rights to its agenda. This approach was rejected categorically by the IOE in its statement sent to all WTO member states. The United States has made the proposal for a series of joint WTO/ILO working groups on trade and labour related issues, whilst the European Union has made a proposal for a joint WTO/ILO standing working Forum on trade, globalization and labour issues. The</p>	<p>WTO Ministerial Meeting in Seattle</p>

<p>Forum would include governments, employers, trade unions and other relevant organizations and would prepare for a ministerial level meeting to take place no later than 2001. The European Union has stated that it is against the setting up of a working party purely in the WTO, believing that the ILO must remain the organization with primary responsibility for labour standards internationally. The IOE sees no purpose to be gained from involving the WTO in labour or social issues, which properly is the mandate of the ILO. Since 1996 the ILO, supported by business, has been active in taking this mandate further. We believe the ILO should continue this progress based on consensus support from governments, employers and workers.</p> <p>At this stage, given the uncertainty over the talks, it is not clear if either of these two proposals will command any wider support. However, it is clear that developing countries remain opposed to any discussion of trade and labour related issues outside the ILO.</p>	
<p>IOE Activities</p>	
<p>The Secretariat is pleased to announce that Deborah France has been appointed Deputy Secretary-General of the IOE. Deborah joined the IOE in May 1999 after a number of years with the Confederation of British Industry, where she represented United Kingdom employer interests in the ILO as a member of the Governing Body.</p>	<p>New Appointment</p>
<p>Antonio Peñalosa will participate at the Ninth ILO African Regional Meeting to take place in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) from 7 to 11 December. The Report of the Director-General on ILO activities in Africa will serve as a basis for discussion at the Meeting. In this respect, the more important points of the tentative agenda are: "Decent work and protection for all in Africa", "In-Focus Programme on Child Labour", "Programme Jobs for Africa", "ILO Platform on HIV/AIDS in Africa" and the "In-Focus Programme on Strengthening Social Dialogue."</p>	<p>Africa</p>
<p>On 13 and 14 December 1999, IOE President, Ashraf Tabani and European Vice President, Erik Hoff, will be speakers at the International Symposium on Strategies to Combat Youth Unemployment and Marginalization, to be held in Geneva.</p> <p>The purpose of the meeting is to analyse strategies developed for these issues and to promote consensus on the type of action to be undertaken to achieve the objectives, to identify possible follow-up action by the ILO and its constituents and to examine ways to combat gender discrimination.</p>	<p>Youth Unemployment</p>

<p>From 7 to 9 December, IOE Executive Vice-President Rolf Thüsing has been invited to address an ILO meeting for the Asian region in Cambodia. The purpose of the meeting is to familiarize participants with the follow-up to the Declaration, including the preparation of Annual and Global reports as well as the availability of the ILO assistance and promotion activities; to examine the ILO In-focus programmes on Promoting the Declaration and on Progressive elimination of child labour, promoting development; and to promote better understanding of the rights and obligations under the ILO Constitution and the Declaration.</p>	<p>ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work</p>
<p>From 13 to 17 December, A <i>Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Health in the Fishing Industry</i> will be held in Geneva. The purpose of this meeting is to exchange views on Safety and Health issues; to assess work done by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/ILO/International Maritime Organization (IMO) Working Group and separate work done by the ILO and the FAO; to adopt conclusions which identify follow-up activities; and review ILO standards adopted specifically for fishermen, including those Conventions concerning seafarers which may also be applicable to fishermen and which were adopted by the ILO Maritime Conferences in 1987 and 1996 where no fishing industry representatives were present.</p> <p>Fifty-four experts will participate in this meeting, of which eighteen are employers' representatives.</p>	<p>Fishing Industry Sectoral meeting</p>
<p>IOE Members</p>	
<p>In an attempt to modernize Sweden's labour legislation, the Swedish Employers' Confederation has proposed a far reaching rewrite of its law to provide a more logical and easy to understand framework based on individual contracts. Members wishing to have further information concerning this initiative should contact by e-mail saf@saf.se</p>	<p>SAF Employers' Confederation</p>
<p>The Confederation of British Industry has appointed Digby Jones, currently Vice Chairman of Corporate Finance at KPMG, to succeed Adair Turner as its Director General from 1 January 2000 for a five year term.</p>	<p>CBI United Kingdom</p>
<p>At the IOE Management Board Meeting on 13th November the following organizations were provisionally admitted into IOE membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eritrean Employers' Federation (EEF) • The Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) • The Federation of Enterprises of Congo (FEC), Dem. Rep. of the Congo • Union of Albanian Business Organizations (UABO) 	<p>New Members</p>

<p>Mel Lambert from the United Kingdom has been nominated as titular member of the Employers' Group of the ILO Governing Body. This nomination will be submitted to the next session of the International Labour Conference, in June 2000, for confirmation.</p>	<p>New GB Member</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Other matters</p>	
<p>Hundreds of web surfers, academics, trade unionists, NGO activists and journalists are taking part in the first "on line" debate on "trade unionism in the 21st century". Launched last month by Juan Somavía, Director General of the ILO, and Bill Jordan, General Secretary of the ICFTU, the exercise will continue for a year, with new "guest speakers" each month presenting a particular aspect of the subject and responding to cyber-questions. Questions can be asked in English, French or Spanish. To sign up see: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/130inst/research/network/index.htm</p>	<p>Union News "On Line" debate</p>
<p>The President of the European Commission recently warned European leaders of the "ticking time bomb" surrounding future pension payments. In his speech he alerted members to the reality that in 25 years Europe will have to find the money to pay for 113 million retirees. By 2030, 25% of the population in the five largest European Union countries will be over 65. According to the OECD, France will pay 9.7% of GDP on pensions by 2010, rising to 14.3% by 2040.</p> <p>In Germany, the figure will be 18.5% by 2035 as 36% of its people will then be aged over 60, the highest proportion in the European Union. With the integration of the European Union, unfunded pension debt in some countries has become a problem for all European Union nations.</p>	<p>Pensions set to squeeze European budgets</p>