



**PRESIDENT’S NEW YEAR MESSAGE**

**Editorial**

The end of the year is traditionally a time to take stock of events that have taken place – both for the good and for the worse – during the previous twelve months and to make firm resolutions for the year ahead.

2004 confirmed the menacing trend of public opinion and the numerous organizations that represent – or pretend to represent – it to exert ever-increasing pressure on the enterprise to make the latter not only the key and essential actor of economic progress and employment creation, but also of social justice and the defence of human rights.

There could be something quite pathetic in this appeal for the enterprise to take on responsibilities which are those of the State if it were to be sincerely embedded in confidence in the enterprise and support for it.

But what is happening is that, faced today with almost-universal recognition of the superiority of the economic and social model based on freedom and individual responsibility, society is desperately looking for someone to be accountable for the contradictions and difficulties it refuses to assume alone.

In sharing the roles among the various actors responsible for optimizing a model based on individual commitment and risk-taking, all put almost total onus on the enterprise, which is called upon both to be competitive and to ensure the protection of human rights.

The Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization clearly highlighted the superiority of the market economy and free trade model above all others. The Report is also to be credited for placing responsibility for success on all actors of society.

**INDEX**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

International Labour Organization ..... 3  
 IOE and Member Activities ..... 5  
 UN and other International Agencies ..... 7  
 Other News ..... 8  
 Publications ..... 9  
 Forthcoming Meetings ..... 10

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The multilateral institutions, States, representatives of civil society, employers and workers thus all have a responsibility, all have a duty to act in conformity with the basic values which underlie the exercise of freedom and responsibility. All are called upon to respect the rules of governance founded on transparency, integrity and competence.

For us, employers and businessmen, and for the organizations we represent and which are called upon daily to defend our positions, there is, in the consensus that emerged from the World Commission's Report, a fantastic opportunity. We would be for ever guilty if we do not grab this opportunity before indifference sets in again and, with it, the old approaches and the old confrontations.

It is now for the employers' organization to take the initiative of opening up debate with public opinion, to define its own responsibilities, its doctrine, its objectives, its strategy and to refuse to let itself get cornered into a defensive position.

Are we capable ?

This is the fundamental question we must ask ourselves now, as the year comes to an end. In any event, we must make sure that we are capable in 2005.

As a matter of urgency, we must make the employers' organization – starting with the IOE itself – an organization that is known, inspired and supported by the entire business community. Our credibility and our influence – not only within the ILO but, especially, vis-à-vis public opinion, the institutions and the States – depend on this.

We must place ourselves in the position of being the authentic voice of the enterprise. We can only do this through the action and militancy of our member federations, through their support and with their commitment alongside us.

To be recognized and listened to by all actors of society, to strengthen our visibility and our influence, and to define ourselves and our societal responsibilities – these are the objectives which our Management Board has fixed in scheduling a gathering of all IOE members in Geneva on 4 June 2005 for a special session of our General Council.

By being present in mass and firmly committed at this gathering, we will demonstrate our will to define ourselves the forms and limits of the role the enterprise can and must play in the collective battle for the defence and promotion of basic human rights.

*“Let us join the public debate and not let others decide for us what we should do”.*

Those are my wishes for the New Year.



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François Perigot  
President

<b>International Labour Organization</b>	
<p>The ILO Seventh European Regional Meeting, to be held in Budapest (14 to 18 February 2005), promises to be a high profile event, with a number of European Heads of State as well as other leading personalities participating. While the agenda for the meeting is heavy, it is also very topical with the following key themes: Good governance in the context of globalization; youth employment; migration; flexibility and job security; pensions; and ILO activities and technical issues in the region.</p> <p>As the procedure for the composition of tripartite delegations is the same as that for the International Labour Conference, European members are requested to contact their governments as soon as possible to secure their participation in this event. In this respect, a Credentials Committee will be established to deal with any difficulties concerning the composition of delegations. To prepare the Meeting, the IOE will organize a preparatory meeting on Monday 14 February 2005 from 15.00 to 17.30 hrs. The report (and additional information) are available at <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/geneva/regconf2005/index.htm">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/geneva/regconf2005/index.htm</a></p>	<p><b>European Regional Meeting</b></p>
<p>At the recent High Level Panel meeting of the Youth Employment Network (YEN) in Washington, the three core agencies of this initiative (the ILO, World Bank and UN) agreed to focus intensive efforts on ten lead countries and to proceed with <i>National Action Plans</i> on youth employment in each. While the IOE has been disappointed with this initiative to date, as little has been achieved tangibly (perhaps due to the lack of practical coordination between the three agencies) there are however some tentative signs of change in this regard. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Gary Rynhart</a>.</p>	<p><b>Youth Employment Network</b></p>
<p>A recent tripartite meeting on youth employment held in the ILO was ostensibly aimed to gather country-level policy experiences, but was in many practical ways a preparatory exercise for the forthcoming ILC debate next June. On the back of this meeting the IOE, with help from the ILO, is trying to establish a young entrepreneurs network (through member federations). It was clear from some of those attending the meeting that such networks exist – indeed some of those attending were directly involved in these networks. Additionally, the ILO is currently undertaking a research study on entrepreneurship for young people (e.g. examining barriers to entrepreneurship). If members would like to know more about either initiative they should contact <a href="#">Gary Rynhart</a></p>	<p><b>Youth Entrepreneurship</b></p>
<p>Within the follow-up to the Plan of Action adopted by the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour of the Organization of American States (OAS), the ILO is holding National Tripartite Seminars to review the correlation between regional integration, free trade and labour rights. The first of these seminars was held in Lima, Peru on 8 and 9 November. The next one will be held in Brasilia, Brazil on 6 and 7 December. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Andres Yuren</a></p>	<p><b>Regional Integration, Free Trade and Labour Rights: ILO-OAS</b></p>

<p>The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have issued a joint statement aimed at implementing strategies to achieve sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. The statement provides for the development of joint programmes and projects linking relief to social and economic development. With financial support from Italy, a joint ILO-UNHCR global programme for the socio-economic integration of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons was launched at the end of 2003. The programme focuses on strategies that bring together employment-intensive reconstruction, enterprise development, microfinance, skills development, women's economic empowerment, social protection, local economic development and capacity building. Projects in Angola, Eritrea, Mozambique, Serbia and Montenegro, Somalia, Southern Sudan and Uganda are currently being executed as a result of this joint initiative. The two agencies also plan to deploy experts to Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana and Northern Caucasus in the near future.</p>	<p>ILO and UNHCR Agreement</p>
<p>The ILO has warned Myanmar's Government that it is ready to revive sanctions, after concluding at the recent Governing Body that the military junta had shown little political will to stop forced labour. The ILO Governing Body took the step of recommending the measures - trade and other sanctions - in 2000 because of a lack of cooperation by Myanmar authorities in tackling rampant forced labour. Although the sanctions remain legally in force, the ILO adopted a wait-and-see approach after Myanmar allowed an ILO official into the country and agreed to discuss a plan of action against forced labour.</p> <p>The Governing Body has now decided to send a high-level delegation to evaluate the military junta's commitment to work with the international community on the issue. The mission will report back to the Governing Body at its next meeting in March 2005, which will then "draw the appropriate consequences". It will either return to the special measures which were taken against Myanmar in 2000, or go ahead with the plan of action against forced labour.</p>	<p>Myanmar</p>
<p>Two recent training courses run in the Turin Centre – one on child labour and the other on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) process – underline the value of this Centre for employers and the need for increased use to be made of it.</p> <p><i>Child Labour</i></p> <p>The first of these courses was an interregional workshop on <i>Child Labour in Commercial Agriculture and the Role of Employers' Organization</i> which was in effect a brainstorming exercise with employer representatives from eight IOE member federations. Part of the purpose of the workshop was to increase the knowledge and understanding of the role of employers in addressing child labour, especially the worst forms of child labour. The core objective of the workshop, however, was to provide participants with the project management skills required to carry out local technical cooperation programmes. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Sandy Gros-Louis</a>.</p>	<p>Turin Training Centre</p>

<p><i>Employers' Organizations and the PRSPs</i></p> <p>The second workshop was part of a larger pilot programme developed by ACT/EMP for six employers' organizations to enable them to play a more effective role in their national PRSP. In terms of development strategies the PRSPs have been called '<i>the only game in town</i>' – in that respect employers' organizations have an important contribution to make. The project is specifically focused in the area of policy and regulatory environment for SMEs. The utilization of tools from the IOE-ILO Toolkit for Employers' Organizations (due to be completed June 2005) is envisaged as an important component of this process. At the recent ILO Governing Body, the ILO was asked to increase its involvement in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) process – currently it is only engaged in 16 (out of 54) national PRSP processes. IOE Contact <a href="#">Gary Rynhart</a></p>	<p>→ <a href="#">Turin Training Centre</a></p>
<p>The impact of new technologies on the media, culture and graphical sector was the main focus of a tripartite meeting entitled the <i>Future of work and quality in the information society : media, culture and graphical sector</i>. The key discussion during this meeting was on an international code of practice establishing adequate safety conditions for the employment of child performers in the entertainment industry. Additionally, the ILO was mandated to undertake increased efforts in developing the effectiveness of social dialogue in the sector, in particular in developing and transition economy countries.</p> <p>The report prepared by the ILO as a basis for the discussion can be downloaded from <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmmcgs04/tmmcgs-r.pdf">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmmcgs04/tmmcgs-r.pdf</a>, while the note on the proceedings, containing the report of the meeting as well as the conclusions, will be posted on <a href="http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/">http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/</a> after the March 2005 session of the ILO Governing Body. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Jean Dejardin</a></p>	<p><a href="#">The Information Society</a></p>
<p><b><a href="#">IOE and Member Activities</a></b></p>	
<p>The IOE, with the support of the Costa Rican employers' organization UCCAEP, recently hosted this year's meeting of Ibero-American Presidents of employers' organizations in San José. The key area for debate and reflection at the meeting concerned transformations and changes in political systems and their impact on the Latin American business community. The Presidents adopted a Statement which sent a message from the business community to the <b>Summit of Ibero-American Heads of State</b>. The central message of the statement was the need for the development of national employment policies conducive to enterprise creation and development. The statement also fixed the regional priorities for the coming years around the following three main topics: (i) promotion of democratic values; (ii) economic growth and integration; and (iii) employment and education as key elements for development (the "Agenda for Democracy and Development"). IOE Contact: <a href="#">Andres Yuren</a></p>	<p><a href="#">XV Meeting of Ibero-American Presidents of Employers' Organizations</a></p>

<p>The Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development will continue next year to financially support the IOE network of experts in labour law from South Eastern European employers' organizations, with activities focused around three pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the accession to the European Union, especially Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania;</li> <li>• the dissemination of handbooks for employers explaining national labour codes;</li> <li>• the continuation of twinning programmes (Moldova/Romania; Croatia/Montenegro).</li> </ul> <p>The regional meeting of experts will be held next September, followed by a joint meeting between the IOE and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) network of experts. The main issues to be discussed among the social partners will be health and safety at work as well as the continuation of discussions on the resolution of labour disputes. All other European members are welcomed to participate in these events. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Eric Oechslin</a></p>	<p><b>Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe</b></p>
<p>In the current climate the damage a campaign waged by an NGO against a multinational can be considerable – it can take just one slip-up for a global brand to come under serious pressure. The truth of course in these cases can be dispensable and the fear of a backlash has cowed many companies into trying to keep their heads as low as possible. So how much of an impact can such activism have on companies and their brands? Quite a bit it seems. A recent global survey on consumer attitudes by the Harvard Business Review found that one person in ten would not buy global brands if given a choice. The anti-globals represent more potential sales than markets the size of Germany or the United Kingdom. The expectation is that consumers do not care or expect, lets call them ‘non-brand’ companies, to care for the environment or to have high labour standards. But for the big global brands it is different – it is expected.</p> <p>Increasingly, major companies are looking to international organizations to provide some cover and the ILO is often an obvious place to start. However, in order to identify any potential pitfalls, if companies are looking to work with the ILO then they should first discuss their intentions with the national employers’ organization and subsequently with the IOE and ACT/EMP. Simple and clear guidance to companies at the start of a process can often save headaches later. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Brent Wilton</a></p>	<p><b>The ILO and companies</b></p>
<p><i>Vietnam and Azerbaijan welcomed into IOE membership</i></p> <p>At its meeting on November 12, the Management Board provisionally welcomed the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers’) Organizations of Azerbaijan (ASK) into IOE membership. With these admissions – which will be put before the General Council at its 2005 meeting for formal endorsement – IOE membership today stands at 139 federations in 134 countries.</p> <p><i>Corporate Social Responsibility high on Management Board agenda</i></p> <p>The Management Board focussed much of its debates on the issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR) – notably drawing up an IOE strategy on CSR in the ILO as well as examining on-going CSR-related issues in the UN High</p>	<p><b>IOE Management Board News</b></p>

<p>Commission for Human Rights, ISO, the Global Compact and elsewhere. Given the growing importance of CSR throughout the world, the IOE General Council will be invited, at its annual meeting on 30 May next, to adopt an IOE Position Paper drawn up by the Board on <i>“The Responsibilities of Business”</i>. Moreover, the Board decided to convene a special session of the IOE General Council on the morning of Saturday 4 June 2005 to discuss the issue in greater depth.</p> <p><b><i>Ashraf Tabani co-opted to the Board</i></b></p> <p>Also at its November meeting, the Management Board endorsed the proposal put forward by President François Perigot to co-opt Ashraf Tabani, President of the Employers’ Federation of Pakistan, to the Management Board in his capacity as former IOE President.</p>	<p>→ <i>IOE Management Board News</i></p>
<p>The IOE member in Guinea, the CPG, is in the process of incorporating into its membership foreign-owned businesses from America, Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa with operations in Guinea and will change the name of the organization to <i>Conseil National du Patronat Guinéen “CNP-GUINEE”</i>. They can be contacted at: <a href="mailto:cnp-guinee@netcourrier.com">cnp-guinee@netcourrier.com</a></p>	<p><b>Guinean Employers</b></p>
<p>The SADC Business Forum was launched on Friday 26 November 2004 in Johannesburg. The forum is a grouping of Regional Business Organisations who will act as an apex dialogue partner of SADC- the sub-regional economic grouping for Southern Africa. The forum will address common issues affecting all business organizations in the region.</p>	<p><b>SADC Business Forum launched</b></p>
<p><b>UN and Other International Agencies</b></p>	
<p>The High Commissioner for Human Rights is expected to submit her report <i>“The responsibility of transnational corporations and related business enterprises with regard to human rights”</i> to the next session of the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights (UNHCHR) in March/April 2005. The process to date has been problematic for business and the IOE has been very active in raising awareness of the business concerns. In this respect, the IOE organized a high-level meeting to emphasize the business perspective on its role in relation to human rights to senior officials of the UNHCHR and also (separately) to a number of the government members of the UNHCHR (see IOE website for formal Statement). The IOE also raised these same concerns at a ‘consultative’ meeting to consider the High Commissioner’s Report, organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in cooperation with the Global Compact Office (GCO) also in Geneva. IOE Contact: <a href="#">Sandy Gros-Louis</a></p>	<p><b>Business and Human Rights</b></p>

<p>At the launch of the International Year of Microfinance and Microcredit in Nairobi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) called for the strengthening of Micro Financing Institutions (MFIs) in Africa, affirming that this would help provide access to credit, savings, insurance, transfer of remittances and other financial services to the poor. MFIs would also help in the promotion of micro and small enterprises and thus accelerate their graduation to higher levels. The Francophone summit held recently in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) also launched an ambitious programme for the promotion of micro credits. Tools to access micro finance will also form part of the IOE-ILO SME Toolkit for employers' organizations. IOE Contact: <a href="mailto:muia@ioe-emp.org">muia@ioe-emp.org</a></p>	<p>The International Year of Microfinance and Microcredit</p>
<p><b>Other News</b></p>	
<p>From 5 to 10 December, the ICFTU will be meeting in Japan at its four-yearly congress. As is usual, the ICFTU Secretariat has developed a discussion paper that will be debated through various plenary sittings over the five days, culminating in a resolution as to how the ICFTU will proceed.</p> <p>The text is entitled “Globalizing Solidarity” and looks to reshape the way in which the international trade union movement addresses current issues. It calls for a re-examination of its internal structures, how it functions and the nature of international trade unionism itself.</p> <p>In looking at itself it recognizes that, unless the ICFTU is firmly rooted in the concerns of its membership both nationally and regionally, it has little chance of attaining the goals it sets for itself. It therefore looks to establish new mechanisms to link itself to national concerns and to use those to shape its international response, thereby “globalizing solidarity”. Other interesting aspects of the paper include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merging with the World Congress of Labour.</li> <li>• Targeting global policy coherence as a key means for unions to influence and reshape globalization.</li> <li>• Social dialogue with international employers' organizations in order to further the aims of the union movement.</li> <li>• How to respond to the international relocation of work (i.e. outsourcing).</li> <li>• Building better means for trade unions in MNE home countries to assist unions in host countries. This could include targeting a number of MNEs for global organizing campaigns as well as means to hold MNEs from particular countries which operate in a specific country accountable for their operating standards. This could include EPZs.</li> <li>• Looking to use the leverage offered by multinational investors in China to assist in the development of independent trade unions.</li> <li>• Key focus to remain on Women and Youth.</li> <li>• Developing better synergy of work plans with their regional bodies and better means of identifying common priorities with the global unions.</li> </ul> <p>Some of this is food for thought for employers' organizations in terms of their own policy development and will be helpful in the understanding of ICFTU positions, both within the ILO and elsewhere. For further information: <a href="http://www.icftu.org/focus.asp?Issue=congress2004&amp;Language=EN">http://www.icftu.org/focus.asp?Issue=congress2004&amp;Language=EN</a></p>	<p>ICFTU World Congress</p>

<p>A non-legally binding framework agreement on work-related stress has been signed by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE), the European Association of Craft and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME) and the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP). The agreement, which focuses on work-related stress only, recognizes that stress is not a disease but that prolonged exposure to it may reduce effectiveness at work and may cause ill health. The objective of the agreement is to provide employers and workers with a framework to identify and prevent or manage problems of work-related stress. For the full text of the agreement contact <a href="#">Barbara Perkins</a></p>	<p>European social partners sign agreement on work-related stress</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The European Commission has 'urged' businesses to disclose full details of executive pay packages and to give shareholders more say in how pay levels are decided. The recommendation is not legally binding: <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/index_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/index_en.htm</a></li> <li>• Nearly four out five large businesses have begun new social responsibility initiatives in the last two years according to a survey by Hill and Knowlton: <a href="http://www.hillandknowlton.com">www.hillandknowlton.com</a></li> <li>• Four of the world's largest coffee companies have signed an agreement to improve the industry's social and environmental standards: <a href="http://www.sustainable-coffee.net">www.sustainable-coffee.net</a></li> <li>• Work has begun on a set of social reporting standards for civil society organizations. <a href="http://www.accountability.org.uk/uploadstore/cms/docs/access_intro.pdf">http://www.accountability.org.uk/uploadstore/cms/docs/access_intro.pdf</a></li> <li>• The World Bank's private lending arm is re-evaluating proposed changes to its social and environmental policies in the coming period: <a href="http://www.ifc.org/policyreview">www.ifc.org/policyreview</a></li> <li>• An organization called Free Enterprise Education Institute, which argues that CSR initiatives are damaging to business, has established a website to promote its ideas: <a href="http://www.csrwatch.com">www.csrwatch.com</a></li> <li>• Proctor and Gamble (P&amp;G) have developed a product that purifies water for poor consumers and in doing so have won a business award for their contribution to the Millennium Development Goals. In developing a 'sales product' this company has effectively addressed a serious problem that governments and NGOs have struggled with for years: <a href="http://www.pg.com/sr">www.pg.com/sr</a></li> </ul>	<p>CSR Update</p>
<p>Claude Bébéar (ex-president of the AXA French insurance company) made public last Tuesday 30 November 2004 his proposals against discrimination in employment, putting forward the idea that the CVs of job seekers should be presented in an anonymous manner, without indicating nationality, age or sex and without a photograph of the candidate. By chance, that same day the French National Audit Office also published a Report criticizing France's integration policies. Publication of this report also coincided with the date on which the national Senate (Congress) started reviewing a new law initiative to create a new public entity, the "High Authority Against Discrimination" (HALDE in French).</p>	<p>New anti-discrimination measures being proposed for job seekers in France</p>

<p>Mr. Bébéar's report, entitled "Enterprises at the service of France" (des entreprises aux couleurs de la France) was sent on Monday to the French Prime Minister. The Report does not propose any legislative measure - change or amendment of current laws - nor the establishment of positive-discrimination policies. It does propose however that, in order to prevent prejudices, future job seekers would apply for jobs in an anonymous manner by not putting any personal information in their CVs, a measure that is commonly used in the Anglo-Saxon world.</p>	<p>→ <i>New anti-discrimination measures being proposed for job seekers in France</i></p>
<p><b>Publications</b></p>	
<p>Developing countries will enjoy an average growth rate this year of 6.1 percent, the highest in three decades, according to the recent World Bank's 2005 Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report entitled <i>Trade, Regionalism and Development</i>. A key reason for this growth cited in the report has been the expansion of regional trade agreements.</p>	<p><b>World Bank Report</b></p>
<p>This publication examines how trade unions can advocate issues related to workers' rights at the international level – for example in their contacts with international organizations such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The guide also considers the relationship between trade unions and multinational enterprises, including a chapter on the social responsibilities of business. <a href="http://www.icftu.org/pubs/globalization/">http://www.icftu.org/pubs/globalization/</a></p>	<p><b>ICFTU launches trade union guide to globalization</b></p>
<p><b>Forthcoming Meetings</b></p>	
<p>10-12 January</p>	<p>→ ILO Tripartite Meeting on Employment, Social Dialogue, Rights at Work and Industrial Relations in Transport Equipment Manufacture (Geneva)</p>
<p>19-21 January</p>	<p>→ ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Code of Good Drafting Practices (Geneva)</p>
<p>24-28 January</p>	<p>→ ILO Meeting of Experts to Develop Guidelines for Labour Inspection in Forestry (Geneva)</p>
<p>31 January</p>	<p>→ WTO Informal Business Advisory Body (Geneva)</p>
<p>1-9 February</p>	<p>→ ILO Meeting of Experts to Develop a Revised Code of Practice on Safety and Health in the Iron and Steel Industry (Geneva)</p>
<p>14-18 February</p>	<p>→ Seventh ILO European Regional Meeting (Budapest, Hungary)</p>
<p>18-19 February</p>	<p>→ ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE) Board of Directors (Jogyakarta, Indonesia)</p>
<p>3-24 March</p>	<p>→ ILO Governing Body (Geneva)</p>
<p>18-19 March</p>	<p>→ IOE Management Board</p>
<p>19-21 April</p>	<p>→ ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts to Develop Joint ILO/WHO Guidelines on Health Services and HIV/AIDS (Geneva)</p>