

# IOE.NET

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS

REPRESENTING 146 NATIONAL EMPLOYER FEDERATIONS IN 139 COUNTRIES ACROSS THE WORLD

OCTOBER 2008



INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS

## Index

Editorial .....	1
IOE climate change paper.....	2
UNEP & UNFCCC.....	2
Launch of green jobs report.....	3
ASEM ministerial conference.....	3
European meeting members.....	4
Globalization & labour law.....	4
Ibero-American agenda: crisis.....	5
2nd Ibero-American round.....	5
Social dialogue: fair globalization..	5
Sectoral Activities 2010 - 2011.....	6
Social justice for fair globalization	6
Social Protection Paper.....	7
Business against child labour.....	8
Combating forced labour.....	8
Youth employment resource tool.....	8
Doing Business 2009 launched.....	9
ISO 26000 on Social Responsibility....	9
IOE/WHO Partnership.....	10
Staff movements.....	11
Fothcoming meetings.....	11

## Distribution

President .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Executive .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Directors .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board members .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal distribution .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library .....	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Confusion over “Decent Work”

The ILO has been successful in getting global recognition of its Decent Work Agenda, which tries to combine the four strategic objectives of the ILO - labour standards; employment; social protection; tripartism and social dialogue - into one singular concept.

Clearly implicit in this concept is the fact that decent work has no distinct measurable definition. It is an objective that must be considered within each national context and its economic and social realities. There is no single model of decent work.

Employers have always supported the underlying concepts of decent work. Employers worldwide try to realize these goals every day by:

- Championing efforts to create the national environments conducive to enterprise creation and development and employment growth;
- Promoting a greater emphasis on employment security as opposed to job security through a “protect-the-worker-not-the-job” approach;
- Seeking to ensure that labour codes are workable, effective and equitable and can be applied to all in the workplace;
- forcefully promoting respect for the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work – eliminating forced labour and child labour; ending discrimination and upholding respect for freedom of association;
- Championing sustainable social policies and social security systems that recognize the economic and social diversity;
- Promoting the creation of safe workplaces and a culture of safety at work;

From its inception, employers welcomed the Decent Work Agenda but maintained some concerns at the lack of emphasis placed on the second part of the equation – work – and the requisite enterprise creation efforts to generate it, following the discussion and resolution on sustainable enterprise approved in 2007.

But, from our point of view the Decent Work Agenda has become synonymous or interchangeable with the ILO which is a complex Organization that undertakes a broad range of important and different tasks. The Decent Work concept is but one, albeit a very important, policy goal of the Organization.

Another concern is the recent actions of the trade union movement, in collaboration with some other social NGOs, in launching a ‘Decent Work Day’ which was marked by protest action in countries around the world.

The clear message from this initiative is to directly equate the Decent Work Agenda with a trade union agenda. This is a misrepresentation. The Decent Work concept, as a tripartite policy goal of the ILO and its constituents, should not be monopolized by any one party for its own political agenda.

If the Decent Work Agenda is to be a useful vehicle to achieve shared aims then it needs full ownership from all ILO constituents and must be underpinned by strong technical programmes. Without these preconditions the danger is that “Decent Work” becomes merely empty rhetoric.

---

## IOE and Member Activities

### Climate Change

**IOE Climate Change Paper: the IOE has recently launched an Information Paper on Climate Change.**

The IOE, through a specially established working group, has recently launched an Information Paper on climate change. The Paper outlines the key employment and social policy issues arising from the ongoing discussion on climate change. The main objectives of the Paper are to;

- inform IOE members of recent developments in in-

ternational climate change policy, as a more visible and engaged role on this issue is envisaged, particularly over the next two years;

- offer background material on the political, scientific and economic developments relating to climate change;
- provide guidance on some of the related workplace and social issues; and

- describe the activities and positions taken by other business groups and alliances.

The Paper ensures there is a baseline of awareness across the membership and, with that, an ability to inform their member companies and effectively advocate to regulators the issues as they are of interest to business. The Paper is now available on the IOE website.

## UNEP and UNFCCC Accreditation

The IOE is now collaborating with the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The IOE is also involved in the preparation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 14) which will take place in Poland in December.

These new working relationships with both UNEP and UNFCCC are a clear recognition of the important contribution that the IOE can and is bringing to the policy debates in these institutions, in particular the importance that the IOE has emphasized to the employment and social impacts of climate change.

IOE Contact: [asherson@ioe-emp.org](mailto:asherson@ioe-emp.org)

## Launch of Green Jobs Report

**The IOE represented by Ronnie Goldberg, IOE Regional Vice-President and USCIB Executive Vice-President at the launch of the Green Jobs Report at the UN Headquarters in New York.**

A report on Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World was launched at the end of September at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The IOE was represented at the launch by Ronnie Goldberg, IOE Regional Vice-President and Executive Vice President, USCIB. Among other speakers were UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner, ILO Director-General, Juan Somavia, and Guy Ryder, General Secretary of the ITUC.

The Report, authored by the Worldwatch Institute and

Cornell University, was commissioned and funded by UNEP as part of the Green Jobs Initiative, a programme to mobilize governments, employers and workers to promote opportunity and equity, and to engage in dialogue on policies and programmes leading to a green economy.

The challenges of climate change require the collaboration of all parts of society and the engagement of business will be critical for workplaces and societies if they are to evolve to more efficient and sustainable lower carbon pathways.



While the Report recognizes the positive contributions that

can be made by employers practising environmental stewardship, increasing energy efficiency and responding to the challenges of greenhouse gas mitigation and climate adaptation, it takes a worryingly simplistic view of “green” and “non-green” employment.

The IOE, which has UNEP Accreditation and is a member of the Green Jobs Initiative, will continue to remain substantively engaged on this issue.

## ASEM Ministerial Conference

**The ASEM process is an informal, high-level dialogue process on political, economic and cultural matters between Europe and Asia.**

The ASEM is the main multicultural forum for EU-Asia dialogue, including in the area of employment and social policy and aims to strengthen the relationship and increase mutual understanding between the two regions.

At the end of June this year, the European Commission organized the first ASEM Social Partners Forum on “How to make globalization a success for all? Social partners contri-

butions to the ASEM process” in Brussels. In mid-October a follow-up to the inaugural ASEM social partners summit was organized in Bali, between Ministers from Asia and Europe and a delegation of social partners.



This process is in its infancy but it has potential as a platform for business in both regions to outline perspectives and concerns on a host of issues at Ministerial level. Additionally, it could provide European Ministers with a better insight into realities in this region which could assist with occasionally difficult issues such as trade preferences.

IOE Contact:  
[ocshlin@ioe-emp.org](mailto:ocshlin@ioe-emp.org)

## European members meeting

The European members meeting this year was hosted by the Norwegian Employers (NHO) and brought together 32 national federations in Oslo at the end of September.

This year's meeting tackled three thematic issues - female participation in the labour market; climate change; and human rights and business - with contributions from companies, academia, NGOs and research institutions.

The discussion on human rights and business took place in the presence of John Ruggie, the UN Special Representative, who was able to provide federations with an overview of where the debate currently is. Mr Ruggie also

gave an outline of how his recently-extended mandate (for three more years) is expected to evolve and how the framework he identified in his last Report can help move the issue forward. The framework is based on three principles: first, the State's duty to protect; second, the corporate responsibility to respect; and third, the need to access effective remedies.

Two final debates – one on the IOE's strategic response to members and one on the



future of the ILO – provided useful input into the current efforts to develop the IOE's **strategic framework for the period 2009-2014**. It is intended to present a first draft of this framework for consideration to the next meeting of the IOE Management Board in November.

All presentations and documents are now available on the IOE website.

IOE Contact:  
[oechshlin@ioe-emp.org](mailto:oechshlin@ioe-emp.org)

## Globalization and the future of labour law

The IOE, MEDEF; Lus Laboris and Baker & McKenzie will host a Global Conference in Paris at the end of November.

The IOE, in collaboration with the French Business Confederation (MEDEF) and two leading global industrial law practices, Ius Laboris and Baker & McKenzie, will host a Global Conference on Globalization and the Future of Labour Law in Paris on 24 and 25 November.

Highlights of the programme include the role of International Labour Standards in labour law, the interaction between soft and hard

law, how Trade Agreements impact labour law, the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and labour law, the Roles of Codes of Conduct and International Framework Agreements and the challenges facing employers in the global economy.

For further information contact [leon@ioe-emp.org](mailto:leon@ioe-emp.org)



# Financial crisis and sustainable enterprises on the agenda of ibero-american employers

**XIX Meeting of Ibero-American Employers' Organizations will be held in El Salvador on 26 - 28 October 2008.**

Convened by the IOE, twenty Presidents of Ibero-American Employers' Organizations are meeting in El Salvador, Central America, to discuss and define a regional strategy on the sustainability of the private sector as well as on the impact of the financial crisis in their economies. At the close of the discussion, a coordinated message will be

presented to the Heads of State of their countries who will be meeting in San Salvador during the following days.

At the meeting, José Manuel Salazar, ILO Employment Executive Director, and Sylvia Solf, Head of the World Bank-IFC Doing Business Report, will introduce their research

and analysis of the environment in which enterprises in Latin America are currently operating and its impact on enterprise creation and investment.



## Second Ibero-American round for the social partners

**A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Madrid between fifty employer and trade union leaders.**

Under the leadership of the IOE and the Latin American-Spanish Trade Union Confederations, and with the support of the ILO and the Summit of Ibero-American Heads of State, the Second Round of Social Dialogue for Ibero-

American Social Partners was held in Madrid on 22-23 September last.

Fifty employer and trade union leaders signed a Memorandum of Understanding to frame an agenda for the future.

A Declaration was also adopted, setting the foundations for future dialogue in the region and the creation of the appropriate institutions to this end. The Memorandum and the Declaration will also be conveyed to the Summit of Heads of State in San Salvador.

## Social Dialogue on Fair Globalization: Growth with Equity

Under the above title, the Confederation of Indian Employers organized on 3 October a High-Level National Meeting with the active presence of the Indian Secretary of Labour, Mrs Sudda Pillai, the heads of the major trade unions in the country and the leading voices

of the Indian employer organizations.

IOE Secretary-General, Antonio Peñalosa, conveyed a special address to the meeting. At the end of the session, it was unanimously agreed that during the present financial and economic situation there was a

need to develop active political responses in order to draw benefit from globalization, not destructive protectionist responses.



# International Labour Organization

## Sectoral activities 2010 - 2011

### Sectoral activities for the 2010 - 2011 period: consultations between employers, unions and government.

Employers emerged satisfied from the recent consultations with their union and government counterparts on the set of priority sectoral activities for the 2010-2011 period.

The consultations took place through the eight sectoral advisory bodies that were established in 2007. The IOE, which coordinates the employer position in these consultations, relied on expertise from six separate sectoral associations representing the following sectors: Fishing; Food & Drink; Private Employment Agencies; Hotels & Restaurants; Railways; and Civil Aviation.

Employers have been taking a more proactive approach to sectoral activities and this was reflected in the decision

to submit – for the first time – five specific employer proposals. This decision was validated by the fact that four of the five proposals have been retained as priorities. These are:

1) The needs of mature/older workers in relation to changing work processes and the working environment in retail commerce arising from the introduction of advanced technologies (two proposals):

(a) Changing requirements for work organization/work environment for older workers in Commerce with regard to their physical abilities;

(b) E-Learning: More opportunities for updating and modernizing skills and competencies in the retail sector;

2) Using Private Employment Agencies to Promote Decent Work and Improve the Functioning of Labour Markets in Private Services Sectors;

3) New Developments and Challenges in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector and their impact on employment, human resources development and industrial relations.

Continued efforts will be required to ensure that these identified priorities are maintained on the final list that will be submitted to the March 2009 session of the Governing Body. As soon as decisions are made, information will be posted on the IOE website.

IOE Contact:

[dejardin@ioe-emp.org](mailto:dejardin@ioe-emp.org)

## ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization

### IOE Explanatory note on the Declaration.

The new ILO Declaration “Social justice for a fair globalization”, which was adopted unanimously at the 2008 International Labour Conference, has a large potential to help the Organization become more demand-driven and relevant to

its constituents’ needs.

The Declaration speaks both to the constituents of the ILO and to the ILO itself and it reaffirms the existing mandate and relevance of the ILO

within the context of globalization. Importantly, the new instrument calls on the ILO to adjust its working methods and structures to be more aware of and responsive to the needs of its members, avoiding one-size-fits-all solutions and giving better recognition of the social and economic

realities of member States. It calls on States to approach the ILO's strategic objectives and the Decent Work Agenda in a more consistent and coherent way, both at the national and international level.

The Declaration requires a refocusing of the ILO's assistance so as to be more relevant to the needs of its constituents, including the employers. It therefore requires employers' organizations to engage, at both the national and inter-

national level, in promoting a consistent vision of what the ILO should be doing for business.

By contributing at both these levels, employers' organizations have an opportunity to enhance their own policy advocacy with national governments as well as to leverage those needs more effectively within the ILO and elsewhere where labour and social policy debates are occurring, and to improve ILO responses to

these demands.

Employers' organizations need to be aware of the content and thrust of the Declaration. More detailed information and advice will follow in the form of an explanatory note.

IOE Contact:

[wilton@ioe-emp.org](mailto:wilton@ioe-emp.org)

## New IOE publications – now available !

- Climate Change - IOE Information Paper
- ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization
- Social Security for All: A Framework for Action
- Youth Employment Toolkit

## Social Protection Paper

### New IOE Publication on Social Security

The Secretariat has just published an information paper on social security 'Social Security for All: A Framework for Action' which is now available on the IOE website. This paper has been developed in light of current ILO efforts to re-examine its strategy to provide 'social security for all' – in particular its normative role.

Following a review in 2001, six Conventions on social security are considered to be up-to-date. However, all six of these up-to-date social security Conventions are poorly ratified, in spite of intensive efforts to promote them. Based on evidence to date (and pre-

sented in the most recent ILO publications) the IOE believes that a normative route is clearly not one that will achieve the shared goal of maximizing social security coverage.

The IOE has been a strong supporter of the ILO's efforts to promote increased coverage of social security, and in particular its "Global Campaign". But the IOE strongly believes that these goals will only be achieved by a focus on practical 'bottom-up' solutions and not through normative approaches.

The paper outlines a number of concrete proposals from an employers' perspective, and

in particular calls for a major re-launch of the 'Global Campaign' in 2009.

We would welcome the support of member federations in sharing the document with your respective governments, so that when the matter is discussed at the forthcoming Governing Body in November they are already well briefed on the employer understanding of the issue. Government support is essential to direct this discussion to a satisfactory conclusion.

IOE Contact:

[ocshlin@ioe-emp.org](mailto:ocshlin@ioe-emp.org)

## Business against child labour: tools for action

**Business leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean met to discuss efforts to tackle child labour.**



Business leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean met in early October in Buenos Aires to discuss efforts to tackle child labour; exchange good business practices; and to showcase success stories of companies pro-

moting the eradication of child labour. A range of initiatives from specific companies and sectors were presented, along with their results, challenges encountered and future strategies.

The conference also saw the launch of the Spanish version of the IOE/ACTEMP Guides for Employers on Eliminating Child Labour. The three guides

have been designed to help businesses and their organizations understand and take action against child labour. They provide ideas, guidance and examples for the prevention of child labour, the withdrawal of children from work and the protection of young workers from hazardous conditions.

IOE Contact:

[leon@ioe-emp.org](mailto:leon@ioe-emp.org)

## Combating Forced Labour: a Handbook for Employers

Forced labour is an issue that the business community has become increasingly engaged with, as complex supply chain arrangements can unwittingly expose an enterprise to such unlawful and unethical practices. Likewise, through the activities of non-governmental organizations, lobby groups, the media and others,

the public in general is more aware of this practice.

The IOE and the ILO have been working in close collaboration on this issue for some time and the ILO, with technical assistance from the IOE Secretariat, has developed a practical Handbook to enable business and its organizations identify and prevent situations

of forced labour. The Handbook will be available at the end of October. In the forthcoming months a number of joint IOE-ILO activities are planned to increase awareness within the business community of this important issue.

IOE Contact:

[leon@ioe-emp.org](mailto:leon@ioe-emp.org)

## Youth Employment resource tool for employers

The ILO and the IOE have developed a resource tool on youth employment specifically for employers. The tool provides an overview of youth employment challenges and the role of the private sector in promoting access of young people to work as well as a compendium of useful resources. Forty case studies have been systematically organized by topic (policy making and advocacy, skills development and training and self-employment and entrepreneurship) and by country. They include a detailed description and contact details of the relevant organizations. The tool kit is available in a CD Rom format, and is also be accessible through the IOE website.

IOE Contact: [rynhart@ioe-emp.org](mailto:rynhart@ioe-emp.org)

# UN and other International Organizations

## Doing Business 2009 launched

The World Bank's 2009 "Doing Business" (DB) Report was launched earlier last month. These Reports are now in their fifth year and track reforms aimed at simplifying business regulations, strengthening property rights, opening up access to credit and enforcing contracts.

For the fifth year in a row Eastern Europe and Central Asia led the world in Doing Business reforms. Economies in Africa implemented more Doing Business reforms in 2007/08 than in any previous year covered and three of the top 10 reformers are African: Senegal, Burkina Faso and Botswana. Singapore continues to rank at the top on the ease of doing business, followed by New Zealand, the

United States and Hong Kong (China).

The section of the reports dealing with labour issues – the



"Employing Workers Index" (the EWI) – continues to cause the trade union movement concerns, and they (along with the ILO) have again called for the EWI to be dropped or re-designed.

While the EWI is not perfect and could be refined further, it nevertheless needs to

be stressed that the DB reports have, like any other tools available to policymakers – such as the World Competitiveness Reports – limitations in what they can achieve. They are principally designed as one tool (amongst many) to assist policymakers in arriving at decisions appropriate for their national situation. Considering that labour markets are the least reformed of all the areas covered by DB Reports, the hysteria by unions and the ILO seems a little overplayed.

The IOE will work with the Bank in promoting the DB Reports at regional events in Eastern European, Latin American and Asia over the next three months.

IOE Contact:  
[rynhart@ioe-emp.org](mailto:rynhart@ioe-emp.org)

## ISO 26000 : Guidance standard on Social Responsibility

To date the work on the development of a guidance standard on Social Responsibility has been developed through work with a number of stakeholder experts, including the IOE itself, who have participated in the various Working Group plenary meetings.

The development of the standard is now entering a new phase, one where it is driven by inputs from national ISO committees. These national committees will determine the national consensus comments

that will be submitted on the "Committee Draft". Strong participation by employers in these national meetings will be required to ensure that the comments submitted are balanced and reflect business concerns.

The intention is for the "Committee Draft" to be distributed on **15 December 2008** with a deadline for national committee comments of **13 March 2009**. Once these comments have been compiled and reviewed by the Drafting

Committee, a further plenary meeting of the Working Group will be held in Quebec City Canada from 16 to 22 May 2009 to take forward the text. The target date for the publication of the final standard is the third quarter of 2010.

It is therefore extremely important for IOE members to participate directly in their national ISO committee discussions on this standard.

IOE Contact:  
[wilton@ioe-emp.org](mailto:wilton@ioe-emp.org)

# IOE /WHO Partnership on Promotion of Workers' Health

## IOE: a key partner in the implementation of WHO Strategic Plan

Reflective of its growing partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), the IOE was asked to participate at the WHO European Regional Member States meeting at the end of September in Helsinki. The ILO and the European Union were also represented at the meeting and presented their recent strategic initiatives in the area of health and safety at work.

The WHO in recent years has focused efforts in particular on "workers' health". The World Health Assembly endorsed the WHO Global Plan of Action for Workers' Health 2008-2017 last year in Geneva. The WHO Global Plan of Action has five main objectives:

1. To devise and implement policy instruments on workers' health.

2. To protect and promote health at the workplace.

3. To improve the performance and access to occupational health services.

4. To provide and communicate evidence for action and practice.

5. To incorporate workers' health into other policies.

This Global Plan of Action was the main focus of the Helsinki meeting, where the Plan was endorsed by representatives of health Ministries and occupational health and safety agencies.

A key element of the Plan of Action is partnership building. The WHO sees employers, and particularly the IOE, as a key

partner in the implementation of this strategic Plan.

In order to join efforts and implement action plans developed during the Helsinki meeting, a steering committee composed of the WHO, ILO, IOE, ITUC and the EU will now be established.

IOE Contact:

[asherson@ioe-emp.org](mailto:asherson@ioe-emp.org)



*WHO Regional Member States Meeting, Helsinki, September 2008*

# Other

## IOE Staff Movements

The Secretariat is currently undergoing some changes. Janet Asherson is the most recent addition to the staff. Janet has previously had a long and distinguished career with the Confederation of British Industry as a specialist in Occupational Health and Safety. Janet will be responsible for the OSH portfolio, a growing area of work within the Secretariat, and climate change, also an area of considerable current activity.

But perhaps the biggest change is the departure of

Barbara Perkins who has been a loyal and integral part of the IOE Secretariat for 39 years! Barbara first joined the Organisation in its early days in Geneva, the Secretariat had recently re-located from Brussels three years earlier. She has been a consistent rock of support for the Organisation during several periods of change. Indeed it will be difficult for many of us to imagine the Organisation without her; her calm steady presence has been reassuring, in particular during the debates at the Management Board and General Council.



*Barbara Perkins*

We wish Barbara a happy and well deserved retirement!

## Major forthcoming meetings

23 - 24 October	IOE Global Industrial Relations Network	Madrid
27 - 28 October	Meeting of Presidents of Ibero-American Employers' Organizations	San Salvador
6 - 21 November	303 <sup>rd</sup> Session of the ILO Governing Body	Geneva
14 - 15 November	IOE Management Board	Geneva
24-25 November	Global Dialogue Forum on Vocational Education and Skills Development for Commerce Workers	Geneva
24 November - 5 December	Symposium on Globalization and the Future of Labour Law	Paris
9 - 11 February	Building Partnerships for Sustainable Enterprise Development in Africa	Johannesburg
9 - 13 February	8 <sup>th</sup> ILO European Regional Meeting	Lisbon
17 - 18 February	Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in Local Government Procurement for Infrastructure Provision	Geneva
5 - 27 March	304 <sup>th</sup> Session of the ILO Governing Body	Geneva

