



International Labour Conference 2010
Side Event
“The Social Protection Floor Initiative”



Geneva, 16 June 2010

Mr. Assane Diop, Executive Director of the Social Protection Sector of the ILO, is pleased to invite to a “Side Event” at the occasion of the 99th International Labour Conference (2010) organized by the ILO Social Security Department on the Social Protection Floor Initiative. The side event will take place at the Palais des Nations, Room VII, on 16 June, from 13:30 to 14:30. It will also be announced in the Daily Bulletin of the 99th ILC.

The side event aims to reinforce the promotion, among ILO constituents and donor countries, of the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I), which was adopted by the Chief Executive Board (CEB) of the United Nations in April 2009 and subsequently integrated as a key element of the “Global Jobs Pact”, adopted at the 98th session of the International Labour Conference (2009). The ILO and the WHO have been assigned as the lead agencies for this Initiative.

Background

The Social Protection Floor Initiative aims to promote nationally defined strategies that provide a minimum level of access to essential services and income security for all. To support constituents in strengthening their social protection mechanisms, the Initiative has launched activities at the global, regional and country levels. In this regard, UN agencies are already closely collaborating in a number of countries, supporting the Governments in their efforts to build national social protection floors. Among these are Argentina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, India, Maldives, Mozambique, and Thailand, and discussions are under way in many other countries, which have expressed their interest in the Initiative.

As ILO constituents are aware, the social protection floor was also integrated as a key element of the “Global Jobs Pact”, adopted at the 98th session of the International Labour Conference (2009), and endorsed by Heads of State and Government, Vice-Presidents and Ministers of Labour, worker and employer representatives and other leaders. The Global Jobs Pact recognizes that sustainable social protection systems can prevent increased poverty, address social hardship, while also helping to stabilize the economy and maintain and promote employability, and it recommends countries to give, among others,

consideration to building adequate social protection for all drawing on a basic social protection floor¹, consisting of

- a. *Services*: geographical and financial access to essential services (such as water and sanitation, health, and education).
- b. *Transfers*: a basic set of essential social transfers, in cash and in kind, paid to the poor and vulnerable to provide a minimum income security and access to essential services, including health care.

The ILO is already promoting the social transfer component of the social floor, i.e. a basic set of essential social guarantees realized through transfers in cash and in kind that could ensure:

- universal access to essential health services;
- income (or subsistence) security for all children through child benefits;
- income support combined with employment guarantees through public works programmes for the working-age poor who cannot earn sufficient income on the labour market;
- income security through basic tax-financed pensions for the old, the disabled and those who have lost the main breadwinner in a family.

Objective

The main objective of the side event is the advocacy of the social protection floor. As a follow-up to the Global Jobs Pact and the UN CEB Social Protection Floor Initiative, the side event aims at promoting the social protection floor by explaining the concept and informing constituents about recent developments at the global, regional and national levels.

The event will demonstrate through highest level country presentations the feasibility of implementing one or more components of the floor, highlighting the key factors of their success as well as their positive impact on national social and economic development. In addition, the side event will raise awareness amongst the donor countries about the importance of the social protection floor as a key element in national efforts to fight poverty and achieve progress in reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, the side event aims at facilitating exchange amongst constituents concerning the social protection floor as one of the fundamental pillars of a concrete strategy for the extension of social security, expected to be at the core of the policy debate of the Discussion on the Recurrent Item on Social Security at the ILC 2011. It will thereby serve as an important step in the preparation for the ILC.

¹ *Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*, ILC, 98th session, Geneva, 19 June 2009, para. 12