

Remarks by the ILO Regional Director for Africa
Official lunch offered by Mr. Parks Tau, Mayor of Johannesburg
11 October 2011

- Honorable Minister Mildred Oliphant,
- Dear Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body, Mr. Greg Vines,
- Honorable Ministers,
- Dear friends,
- Mr. Mayor, thank you so much for the honor and privilege of hosting us to a sumptuous lunch for the heads of delegation to the 12th ILO African Regional Meeting. The ILO Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, has asked me to convey his deepest regrets for not being able to attend due to prior commitments and to represent him on this occasion.
- South Africa holds a particular place in the ILO because of our own long engagement against the apartheid regime, in support of the struggle of the South African people.
- Your own history – the courage and self-sacrifice - is a great inspiration to others.
- Mr. Mayor, you were on that journey for justice. And through you, today, we salute all South African men and women whose life symbolizes values that our organization strives to make real: social justice, dignity and dialogue.
- And your invitation reminds us of the commitment of your country to the values of the ILO.
- We are grateful to be in your city – and the Province of Gauteng.
- The memories of the wonderfully organized FIFA 2010 World Cup are still fresh in our minds.
- As ILO, we are glad to bring Africa’s tripartite constituents to Johannesburg – to debate the one single most important challenge – providing productive and decent employment for our people.

- Local authorities connect with people. People demand services. They need jobs – hence the importance of driving the decent work agenda down from a national policy debate down into the provincial and local government levels.
- With your youthful energy, dynamism and professionalism, we look forward to a Johannesburg on the move – with decent jobs.