

# Seeking Peace by Cultivating Justice

## A photographic history of the ILO

<sup>1</sup> The original version of this photo essay, prepared by Jaci Eisenberg in consultation with the ILO Historical Archives, is available at [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org). This reduction for *World of Work* was edited by Victoria Mortimer. All photos in the essay are from the ILO Historical Photo Archives or the ILO Department of Communication unless otherwise noted.



*The Commission on International Labour Legislation meeting during the Paris Peace Conference, February-March 1919. This Commission was responsible for the drafting of the ILO Constitution, which was later embedded in the Treaty of Versailles*

**A**s the ILO celebrates its 90th anniversary, *World of Work* looks back at its creation and history through photographs of key events, from its inception after the First World War in the effort to create a fairer and more stable society, up to its modern position as a central part of the United Nations system and its continuing quest for social justice and decent work for all. Illustrating the wide-reaching and varied work of the ILO, these images chart some of the major challenges the Organization has faced, and show how it has adapted and evolved over the years

to remain relevant and influential throughout massive social and technological shifts.<sup>1</sup>

Born in the aftermath of the First World War, the International Labour Organization was created as a means of establishing universal peace through social justice. The Commission on International Labour Legislation, shown in the photograph, was composed of two representatives from each of the five great powers of the time (United States, British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan), along with representatives from Belgium, Cuba, Poland and Czechoslovakia.



*ILO Assistant Director Harold Butler and Director Albert Thomas enjoy a moment of rest in front of the first ILO building, La Châtelaine, in Pregny, Switzerland, 1920. This building now houses the Headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross*

Article 392 of the Treaty of Versailles states: “The International Labour Office shall be established at the seat of the League of Nations as part of the organization of the League.” Geneva, already selected as the seat of the League, was therefore also the seat of the International Labour Office.

The Constitution addresses the principles and goals of the proposed labour organization, conditions of membership, and the regulatory and oversight organs. “The basic structure is simple,” wrote David Morse, the longest-serving Director-General of the ILO (1948-1972). “The members of the ILO are sovereign States; they meet at least once a year at a Conference, to which each member is entitled to send a tripartite delegation consisting of four delegates, two representing the government, the other two representing, respectively, the employers and the workers of the country. A Gov-

erning Body has general responsibility for coordinating the activities of the organization into an overall programme which can be adjusted to take account of changing needs and priorities. Third, there is an International Labour Office, with a permanent international staff, headed by a Director-General.

“Simple as this structure is, it includes several innovations which were startling in 1919, and which remain unique today. In particular, the ILO provides for the representatives of management and labour a status equal to that of representatives of governments. In the Conference and in the Governing Body, employers’ and workers’ delegates sit side by side with government delegates and enjoy equal rights. Unique in this respect among international organizations, the ILO has owed its vigour and vitality, and a large measure of its success, to the balanced cooperation of governments, management, and labour in developing its policies and programmes.”



*Delegates in a plenary sitting of the First Session of the International Labour Conference, Washington DC, 1919*



*ILO staff at the First Session of the International Labour Conference, 1919*

In plenary sessions and committee meetings at the annual International Labour Conference, delegates discuss problems facing the world of work. The delegates can adopt Conventions and Recommendations (to be afterwards ratified by member States and brought into national legislation) on these issues, and elect the members of the Governing Body. At the First Session of the Conference in Washington, DC from 29 October to 29 November 1919, 40 countries and territories were

represented. The Conference adopted the first ILO Convention, the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention (No. 1) on the 8-hour day and 48-hour working week.

The French request for the establishment of an International Labour Conference with maritime issues at its core led to the calling of the Second Session of the International Labour Conference in 1920 (see photo report on pages 48-54), focused on maritime issues, and after this Maritime Sessions of the International Labour Conference were called as the need arose.



*The Third Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 1921*



*The 12th Session of the Governing Body, Rome, Italy, 4-7 April 1922. In the foreground is Léon Jouhaux, French Worker member of the Governing Body for 35 years (1919-1954)*

Equally as important as the annual session of the International Labour Conference is the Governing Body of the ILO, a tripartite council elected by the Conference. The Governing Body is charged with overseeing the work of the International Labour Office, which entails everything from commissioning special committees to examining the expenditures of the ILO. At its inception, the Governing Body was composed of 12 Govern-

ment members, 6 Employer members, and 6 Worker members. Today the Governing Body has expanded to 28 Government members, 14 Employer members, and 14 Worker members, reflecting the increased membership of the ILO. Since the inception of the ILO, States of Chief Industrial Importance are automatically included among the Government members of the Governing Body.



*The three keys representing tripartism*

The three keys represent the tripartite nature of the ILO, referring to the collaboration between governments, employers, and workers in the creation of international labour legislation that is an integral founding principle of the organization. Tripartism, originally an idea formulated by the British delegation to the Commission on Inter-

national Labour Legislation, allowed the ILO to tackle the issues “most real to most people the world over”. These three symbolic keys were used at the inauguration ceremony of the new ILO building on 6 June 1926. Over 60 enterprises and sculptors were hired to build and adorn the new Office.



*The first building constructed especially for the ILO, designed by Georges Epitoux of Lausanne, Switzerland. Located at Rue de Lausanne, Geneva, it was in use from 1926 to 1974; it would later become the headquarters of GATT and the WTO (view from the current-day Place Albert Thomas)*



*Inauguration of the ILO building*



*The ILO library, 13 March 1967*

As the permanent secretariat of the Organization the International Labour Office regularly produces reports, often published in multiple languages, for use by member States and the social partners (employers, workers) of the ILO, along with researchers and the general public. In addition to publishing reports on labour, Article 396 of the Treaty of Versailles requires the International Labour Office as part of its mandate to collect and

distribute “information on all subjects relating to the international adjustment of conditions of industrial life and labour”. The ILO also publishes a record of proceedings of the annual International Labour Conference and thrice-yearly Governing Body meetings, as well as the *International Labour Review*, a journal dedicated to issues faced in the world of work.



*ILO Correspondents at the Fourth Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, June 1922*

During the 1920s the ILO began to install a number of Correspondents in areas of high activity to help facilitate operations worldwide. The functions of the Correspondents in the early years were to communicate with local labour ministries and employers’ and workers’ organizations;

answer local requests for information; organize visits; sell publications; and keep the Geneva headquarters updated about the current status of labour issues in their area. Nowadays the scope of Field Officers and National Correspondents has expanded, and offices are spread over the globe.

*Maurice Denis' La Dignité du Travail (The Dignity of Work)*

The ILO's early years were fruitful, with Conventions and Recommendations of great importance being adopted by the International Labour Conference and ratified by member States. In appreciation of the work performed by the ILO, a number of gifts have been bestowed on it. One such gift is Maurice Denis' mural "The Dignity of Work", which depicts Christ speaking to modern-day workers at the Nazareth workshop and was given to the ILO by the International

Confederation of Christian Trade Unions. Designed to integrate into the structure of the building, this 6x3 metre mural was painted at Denis' home and brought to Geneva to be stretched over the wall and arches in the Centre William Rappard (which now houses the WTO). After being hidden for decades, the mural was rediscovered in 2007 by a group of ILO and WTO volunteers and art enthusiasts, and is now proudly on display once more.



*ILO Director Albert Thomas with workers' children in Ogre, Latvia. "A class which takes care of its children is already a class conscious of its destiny," he said.*

Albert Thomas, first Director of the ILO, frequently visited member States to discuss labour policy at the highest levels: with Heads of State and government representatives, with employers' organizations and with trade union leaders. In

1927 during a two-month official mission to Scandinavia and the Baltic States he also visited a children's holiday home in Latvia where children of Riga's workers could spend some time in the countryside.



*ILO staff at the opening session of the First Labour Conference of American States, 1936*

The First Labour Conference of American States opened in Santiago, Chile, on 2 January 1936 after the Chilean Government extended the offer of hosting a regional conference. In attendance were 21 American member States of the ILO, as well as Costa Rica (represented by

observers). An overwhelming success, the Regional Conference passed resolutions relating to the founding principles of social insurance, issues of employment and unemployment, and requested research to be undertaken by the Office on immigration and the problems of Native Americans.



*Delegation of the United States of America to the 20th Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, June 1936. Front row, second from left: John G. Winant, Government delegate, who became Director of the ILO in 1939*

The Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles had been born out of US President Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" speech. But the US Senate's failure to ratify the Treaty of Versailles meant that the United States was not a member of the League of Nations and consequently not of the ILO. The onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s created increased interest in the United States about public works and social pro-

grammes. The ILO continued to encourage the United States to participate in its activities. The appointment of Frances Perkins as Secretary of Labor under President Roosevelt brought the United States closer to membership, and on 19 June 1934 the United States, despite not being a member of the League of Nations, opted to join the ILO by virtue of Congressional Resolution SJ 131, ultimately signed by President Roosevelt.



*Women delegates at the 20th Session of the International Labour Conference, 1936*





*A group of ILO officials and their spouses waiting to board ship, Lisbon, Portugal, September 1940 (From the private collection of Carol Riegelman Lubin)*

In 1939 an Emergency Committee was formed that would replace the Governing Body if war broke out. The Swiss Federal Council had introduced a measure whereby international organizations would only be given 24 hours to leave Switzerland in case of armed conflict.

After plans to move to France became untenable, the Canadian government agreed to host the

organization at McGill University in Montreal. Staff deemed essential for the chief activities of the ILO were transferred, completing a five-day car-and-train voyage through France, to Lisbon in Portugal, where they waited one month before being able to sail for their new working centre in Montreal.



*Osvald Stein (third from right) and other ILO officials on mission in Chile, July 1942*

Despite the difficulties brought about by the war, the Office managed to perform its normal duties. The move also gave the ILO the opportunity to focus on the Latin American region, where the scope of technical cooperation programmes would soon grow to be an integral part of the ILO's operations. A mission of officials to Chile in mid-

1942 helped to reorganize the Chilean Social Insurance Scheme and to prepare for the American Conference on Social Security to be held in Santiago later that year. The officials also visited Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay in an endeavour to improve labour statistics.



*ILO Director Edward J. Phelan speaking at the Meeting of Social Security Experts and Social Security Plan authors, Montreal, July 1943*

During these years the ILO was in certain instances even able to innovate: a four-day consultation in July 1943 convened social security

experts with the goal of creating an international social security charter, focusing particularly on income maintenance and health care.



*ILO Director Edward J. Phelan signing the Declaration of Philadelphia at the White House, Washington DC, on 17 May 1944. Seated, left to right: US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Walter Nash, E. J. Phelan. Standing, left to right: US Secretary of State Cordell Hull, US Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, ILO Assistant Director Lindsay Rodgers*

A task (and duty) that proved difficult under the spectre of the war was holding the general Conferences of its member States, but two wartime Conferences were achieved. The first, a special Conference with no normal powers, was held in New York and Washington, DC in 1941. The second, the 26th Session of the International Labour Conference, was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in spring 1944.

On the agenda at the Philadelphia Conference was workers' compensation and social policies in colonial territories, along with the pressing issue of post-war reconstruction. The ILO reaffirmed its

founding principles in the Declaration of Philadelphia, which highlights that labour is not a commodity, freedom of association is necessary for sustained progress, and poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere. These principles were to be ensured through full employment, vocational training, just wages, collective bargaining, social security, measures ensuring occupational health, and maternity protection. These concepts were extraordinarily progressive as they were to be applied to free and dependent people alike; they were "a matter of concern to the whole civilized world".

*Delegates to the 4th meeting of the Building, Civil Engineering and Public Works Committee, October-November 1953, visit the construction site of the Grand Dixence Hydroelectric Dam in Valais, Switzerland*

Industrial Committees, where employers and workers can come together to discuss problems and advances in different industrial sectors, are a notion dating from the 91st Session of the Governing Body in December 1943. However, it was not until January 1945 that they were finally approved in the following domains: inland transport, coal

mines, iron and steel, metal trades, textiles, petroleum, and building trades (including public works). Later on, committees were added for the chemical industry, plantations, and salaried employees. Tripartite in nature, the Industrial Committees quickly became part of the integral fabric of the ILO's activities.



*P. J. Nehru addressing the Preparatory Asian Regional Conference, New Delhi, October-November 1947*



*First African Regional Conference, Lagos, Nigeria, 1960*

The success of the First Labour Conference of American States in 1936 encouraged the ILO to gradually introduce Regional Conferences. Focused on one area of the world, these Regional Conferences permit intensive examination of

issues of regional interest and relevance. The first Regional Conference in Asia was held at New Delhi in 1947; in 1955 the first in Europe was held in Geneva; and in 1960 the first in Africa was held at Lagos.

*ILO Director-General David A. Morse accompanies Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at the Fourth Asian Labour Conference, 13 November 1957, in New Delhi, India*

At the Fourth Asian Labour Conference in New Delhi from 13-25 November 1957, Indian Prime Minister Nehru gave the opening speech, remarking that "in a true world everybody should labour and everybody should be a producer and a consumer. However, as things are, you have tried to

deal with them in a cooperative manner and I do not think there is any other satisfactory way of dealing with them." Specific issues treated at the Conference included handicraft industries and the conditions of work of sharecroppers.



*Miguel Ximenez, an engineer agronomist, at the Andean Programme's "Chimborazo project" in Riobamba, Ecuador in 1957, with the village leader of Nitiluisa, Pedro Celestino Paucar. Here they are discussing a poor crop of barley, and options for improvement*

The ILO Technical Assistance Programme began in 1949, followed in 1950 by the United Nations Enlarged Programme of Technical Assistance. The ILO's technical cooperation and capacity-building programmes, now in their 60th year, are offered to countries on all continents and at all stages of economic development and help to build bridges between the Organization's standard-setting role and the people. An extensive network of offices throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America,

Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East provides technical guidance on policy issues, and assistance in the design and implementation of development programmes. The projects are implemented through close cooperation between recipient countries, donors, and the ILO, which maintains a network of area and regional offices worldwide. In the last decade, an average of some US\$130 million has been spent annually on technical cooperation projects.





*A. S. Tchistayakov, permanent representative of the USSR to the European Office of the United Nations, deposits instruments of ratification for 18 ILO Conventions on 10 August 1956. In attendance, ILO Director-General David A. Morse (with pen in mid-air)*

In some instances, multiple Conventions are ratified at the same time as a result of new membership, or a withdrawal from and subsequent readmission to the ILO. This was the case with

regard to the USSR: having become a member State of the ILO in 1934 it withdrew in 1940, becoming a member again after the Second World War on 26 April 1956.



*The first study course held by the International Institute for Labour Studies, September 1962*

In 1960 the ILO launched the International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS), a think-tank for advanced research in labour issues. The IILS carries out research, debates, policy forums, and publications, and has a yearly internship programme held in Geneva just before the annual International

Labour Conference. The internship course aims to aid the participants in promoting active labour policy in their respective countries. The Institute also hosts the ILO Century Project, which explores the history of ILO ideas, methods and achievements.



*A Turin Centre training course, February 1969. A multilingual instructor explains the operation of a modern automatic lathe, run on an electro-pneumatic system, of the type used in making components for the automobile industry*

The International Training Centre for the ILO was established in 1964. The idea for the centre began in 1961, when the ILO cooperated in the planning of an International Labour Exhibition in Turin which had as a theme “human labour as a determining factor in economic and social progress”. When the exhibition ended, the Italian Government allowed the main pavilion of the

labour exhibition to be converted into an international centre for advanced technical training, for those who did not have such training available in their home countries. The Turin Centre provides advanced vocational training and serves as a focal point for high-level in-service training (see article on page 39-43).



*Workers in Brazil*

Employment has always been a major ILO concern and became a central goal of the development strategy promoted by the UN system from the 1960s on. In 1969 ILO Director-General David

Morse launched the World Employment Programme (WEP), which built a substantial programme of research and action aimed at increasing employment, particularly in developing countries.



*ILO Director-General David A. Morse receives the 1969 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the ILO from Aase Lionaes, Chairman of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, in the Aula of the University of Oslo, on 10 December 1969*

In 1969, on the 50th anniversary of its foundation, the ILO received the Nobel Peace Prize for its promotion of social justice and peace among nations, a quality exemplified even in a document contained in the cornerstone of the ILO building: “Si vis pacem, cole justitiam” – If you seek peace, cultivate justice.



*ILO Director-General C. Wilfred Jenks and the President of Cameroon, El Hadj Ahmadou Ahidjo, lay the cornerstone of the African Regional Centre for Labour Administration, seat of an ILO area office in Yaoundé, Cameroon, 28 July 1971*

When the ILO was founded in 1919 the only independent States on the African continent were Ethiopia, Liberia, and the Union of South Africa. However, with the post-Second World War wave of decolonization the ILO needed to recognize the new responsibilities these changes placed upon it

and to evolve appropriate new techniques and machinery. The opening of the first African Field Office at Lagos, Nigeria in January 1959 was one such step, later followed by other offices, such as that in Yaoundé, Cameroon.



*The jurists of the 42nd Session of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Geneva, 16-29 March 1972*

In addition to formulating international labour standards, the ILO needs to be able to verify that this legislation, once ratified by member States, is appropriately applied. A system was instituted in 1926 whereby, every year, governments of member States submit reports to the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions (later the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations) enumerating the steps they have taken, in law and in practice, to

implement these Conventions and to oversee their success. The Committee, a group of eminent jurists appointed by the Governing Body, then reviews these reports, producing a list of observations and direct requests based on the report contents. The observations are included in the Committee's yearly report, whereas the direct requests are communicated to the governments concerned. Today 20 jurists sit on the Committee.



*The current ILO headquarters, opened in 1974 in Grand Saconnex, Geneva*

In the 1960s the ILO lakeside building became too small, so it was decided to sell it and build a new, larger headquarters on Route des Morillons in Grand Saconnex. Three architects (Eugène Beau-

doin, Alberto Camenzind, and Pier Luigi Nervi) participated in the conceptualization of the building, which cost 146,203,099 Swiss francs to build.



*Lech Walesa (Workers' delegate, Poland) of trade union Solidarity at a plenary sitting of the 67th Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 3-24 June 1981*

At the 67th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1981, Polish Workers' delegate Lech Walesa (of the trade union Solidarity, and later the President of Poland) gave a speech championing workers' self-management, social justice, and trade union independence. His appearance caused a stir because only the year before he had led a strike in the Gdansk shipyard that helped force the Polish authorities to sign the Gdansk Agreements, giving workers the right to organize in free and independent trade unions. However, the proclamation of martial law in Poland in December 1981 ended the open existence of trade unions, including Solidarity which by then had 10 million members.

In June 1982 the Worker delegates of France and Norway filed a complaint against Poland for non-compliance with ILO Conventions they had ratified regarding freedom of association and the right to organize. A Commission of Inquiry was formed to investigate and its report found Poland in violation of various Conventions. It suggested that the Polish Government and trade unions work together to resolve the problems, but Poland gave official notice of its withdrawal from the ILO, a measure that was, however, later revoked. The Polish workers' dream of an independent, self-governing trade union was finally realized in 1989 when Solidarity regained its legal status.







*On 15 June 1982 Pope John Paul II visited the 68th Session of the International Labour Conference, accompanied by ILO Director-General Francis Blanchard. Behind them is the Director of Cabinet, Jean-François Treméaud*

Dignitaries and Heads of State are invited to address the annual International Labour Conference, where they speak about recent developments in the world of work in their countries and in the world. In 1982 the Conference was graced with the

presence of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, a particularly appropriate speaker given his early life as a manual worker, and his desire to promote the dignity of labour, as noted in his encyclical *Laborem exercens*.



*Director-General of the ILO Michel Hansenne and Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the African National Congress, in discussion during the 77th Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, June 1990*

On 8 June 1990, in one of his first visits to an international organization following his release from prison, Nelson Mandela addressed the 77th Session of the International Labour Conference. He saluted the ILO for its “enormous contribution” to the struggle for democracy and the promotion of democratic principles, going on to say that the actions of the ILO “are important elements in the common efforts of all humanity to isolate and by

this means destroy the system of apartheid.”

In June 2007, Mandela was the joint recipient of the ILO’s first annual Decent Work Research Prize. He recalled his 1990 speech, and said the ILO continued to “promote the values we share, the rights we all must respect and the ideal that progress is only possible through genuine dialogue”.



*Former soccer ball sewers in a school that is part of an ILO Field Project in Sialkot, Pakistan, 2005*

Since its inception, the ILO has been involved in formulating international labour standards to protect children and young adults. In 1992 it launched the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) to intensively

target this widespread scourge, seeking change through education, monitoring, labour inspection, and time-bound measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.



*A plenary sitting of the 86th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 1998 welcomes the Global Marchers against Child Labour*

In June 1998 the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work established a social floor for the global economy. The Declaration calls on member States to promote fundamental ILO Conventions on freedom of association and

collective bargaining, the elimination of forced labour, the abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination regarding employment and occupation.



*Presentation of the Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, London, 24 February 2004. From left to right: Benjamin William Mkapa (President of the United Republic of Tanzania), Tarja Halonen (President of Finland) and Juan Somavia (ILO Director-General)*

The Decent Work Agenda, which sums up the ILO’s goals and guides its action, received important support from the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. This independent Commission, established in 2002 by the ILO to examine how to increase access to the benefits of globalization and to ensure that globalization contributes in achieving social goals, was chaired by two sitting Presidents: President Benjamin

William Mkapa of Tanzania and President Tarja Halonen of Finland. Its report, released in 2004, identified 57 measures to promote a fair globalization, and argued that decent work should be a global goal, integrated into both national and international action. The report was widely circulated, and was influential both in national policy formulation and in global debates.

*Closing sitting of the 94th Session (Maritime) of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 23 February 2006. From left to right: Ian Newton (Clerk of the Conference); Jean-Marc Schindler (Government delegate – France, President of the Conference); ILO Director-General Juan Somavia; and Brian Orrell (Seafarers' delegate from the United Kingdom)*

Since 1976 a Maritime Session has been convened approximately once every ten years. The 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in 2006 took as its aim the unprecedented task of adopting a comprehensive International Labour Convention to consolidate almost all ILO maritime labour Conventions and

Recommendations currently in force – over 60 texts – and set out the conditions for decent work in the increasingly globalized maritime sector. The Convention will come into force 12 months after the date on which there have been registered ratifications by at least 30 Members with a total share in the world gross tonnage of ships of 33 per cent.



*ILO staff commemorate World AIDS Day in 2006*

With the appearance of HIV/AIDS in the early 1980s, workplaces worldwide were faced with a new challenge. Affecting labour and productivity, and threatening the livelihoods of many workers and those who depend on them – families, communities and enterprises – HIV/AIDS is a prominent workplace issue. The ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work has developed a Code of Practice with strong key principles, chief

among them prevention, education, non-discrimination of workers on the basis of their real or perceived HIV status, and the rule stipulating that a job applicant or employee's HIV/AIDS status is confidential and will not engender prejudice. After the acceptance of the Code of Practice in 2001, the ILO joined the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).



*International Women's Day 2008. Rupa Manel Silva, Founder of the Women's Bank of Sri Lanka and 2007 Laureate of the WWSF Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life*

Gender equality is a central element of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda. The ILO Gender Bureau, currently engaged in a campaign to raise the visibility of gender issues, strives to ensure that women are empowered economically and receive equal treatment in labour markets and equal access to decent work. The annual International Women's

Day provides a forum for discussion and improvements, and hosts important and inspirational women speakers. The year 2009 will see the 10th anniversary of the ILO's gender equality action plan and a general discussion at the International Labour Conference on "Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work".



*Edwin Salamin Jaén, President of the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference, and ILO Director-General Juan Somavia, at the adoption of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice and Fair Globalization, 10 June 2008*

A landmark Declaration designed to strengthen the ILO's capacity to promote its Decent Work Agenda and forge an effective response to the growing challenges of globalization was adopted by acclamation of member States, workers and employers attending the 97th International Labour Conference in June 2008. The Declaration marks the most important renewal of the Organization since the adoption of the historic Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944. It stresses the fundamental principles of freedom of association and the right

to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced labour, the effective abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation as the Organization's bedrock principles, underscoring the particular significance of these rights as enabling conditions for the realization of the ILO's four strategic objectives: employment, social protection, social dialogue and tripartism, and fundamental principles and rights at work. An agenda to take the ILO well into its second century.

