



FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Progress in the implementation of the
Global Occupational Safety and Health
Strategy as adopted by the 91st Session
(2003) of the International Labour
Conference**

1. The International Labour Conference in June 2003 gave fresh impetus and direction to the global cause of occupational safety and health (OSH). It recognized the work done by the ILO and its constituents over many years, but resolved to promote greater international and national efforts to raising standards and reducing work-related accidents and disease worldwide. The ILC conclusions were widely circulated with a foreword by the Director-General, and are a reference point for the Programme and Budget proposals for 2006-07.
2. The ILC adopted a new global strategy for OSH, which aims to promote a more preventive approach to reducing work-related accidents and diseases through the wider promotion of a safety and health culture and better management of OSH at national and enterprise levels. The Strategy contains a structure for future action under five broad headings. Using the same structure, this progress report summarizes the activities that have been undertaken to date.

Promotion, awareness raising and advocacy

3. The ILC conclusions endorsed the establishment of an annual international safety and health event, the ILO World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April, which builds on the success of the Workers' Memorial Day instituted by the ICFTU in 2001. The first event was held in 2003. In 2004, field offices led the observance while headquarters focused on the preparation of supporting materials such as a technical report and fact sheets. Governments, employers and workers organized various kinds of events in over 110 countries, and ministers of labour and heads of employers' and workers' organizations showed considerable commitment to OSH, in publicizing the human cost of accidents and diseases at work.
4. National TV, radio and newspapers covered World Day activities across the globe and field offices reported at least 30 media reports on events, including front-page news articles. International broadcasting services, such as the BBC and CNN, also covered the

World Day in their global broadcasts. The Director-General referred to the World Day at the China Employment Forum on 28 April, underlining the importance of OSH as a key component of decent work, and a video message from him was also widely distributed and used at national events and by the media. This World Day for Safety and Health at Work was also used to launch new ILO-OSH publications, heightening the significance of the observance. In the Russian Federation, for example, a two-volume Russian OSH Encyclopaedia was launched by the Minister of Labour.

5. A number of activities also echoed the event's roots in Workers' Memorial Day. In Brazil, a minute's silence was observed at the beginning of all major league football matches held on 28 April.
6. Preparatory work has been carried out with the co-organizers of the XVIIth World Congress on Safety and Health at Work (September 2005, Orlando, US) and the Xth International Conference on Occupational Respiratory Diseases (April 2005, Beijing). These major meetings are expected to serve as forums for the exchange of technical and practical experience as well as placing OSH high on international and national agendas and attracting media attention.

Development of new instruments and related guidance

7. Progress has been made in the development of a new instrument establishing a promotional framework for OSH as called for by the ILC. In November 2003, the Governing Body decided to place this subject on the agenda of the 2005 ILC. Consequently, in July 2004, Report IV(1) "Promotional framework for occupational safety and health" was published (www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc93/reports.htm).
8. The ILC also called for the development of new instruments on ergonomics and machinery safety. Work on these subjects has started. A new study on ergonomics, for example, has been carried out in collaboration with the International Ergonomics Association. In 2002 when the International Labour Conference adopted the List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation (No. 194), the Office was requested to convene the first of the tripartite meetings of experts referred to in Paragraph 3 of the Recommendation as a matter of priority. This meeting would, inter alia, update the list of occupational diseases contained in the Annex to the Recommendation. Since then the Governing Body has been considering proposals for such a meeting, but in the meantime, scientific and technical developments over the last decade are being further examined to help in the identification and diagnosis of diseases due to work, and in collecting national lists of occupational diseases.
9. New guidance has been published on several topics, such as occupational radiation protection in mining and processing of raw materials (April 2004) and on ship-breaking in Asian countries and Turkey (October 2003). Other guidance has included working papers on smoking at work and on infectious and other communicable diseases, following a request from ASEAN countries for guidance on SARS.

Promotion of existing OSH instruments

10. The need to apply international OSH instruments and other standards in practice has been widely advocated. Between June 2003 and August 2004, 13 ratifications of OSH-related Conventions were registered, reflecting the efforts of constituents and the Office in previous years. The Government of Luxembourg recently informed the Office about its

intention to ratify 23 such Conventions following an ILO tripartite audit on OSH and Inspection Systems. Luxembourg will be hosting an international conference in March 2005 during its EU presidency to share its experience.

11. A number of OSH instruments have helped to guide the revision of national legislation, e.g., in Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. Technical assistance has been provided to member States where ratification of OSH-related Conventions is being seriously considered, as in China, Lebanon and Sri Lanka. In South Africa, the Government and employers' and workers' organizations have declared an "Occupational Health and Safety Accord" embracing the principles of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176). Other countries, such as Ethiopia, have drafted national OSH legislation to implement Convention No. 155 and other OSH-related Conventions that have been ratified. In Kyrgyzstan, a new OSH law was approved in July 2003. In the Republic of Moldova, a series of activities have been organized to improve OSH in agriculture as a follow-up to the ratification of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184).
12. Technical assistance was provided to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries for the revision and updating of the GCC's members' legislative decrees concerning OSH, and for the preparation of a technical guide on OSH in the oil and petrochemical industries. This guide is expected to be completed by the end of 2004. Kenya and Uganda are seeking to update their OSH legislation and draft texts have been prepared with the full participation of the social partners. In the United Republic of Tanzania, stakeholders met to discuss how the existing obstacles to the ratification of the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), could be overcome.

OSH management systems

13. The ILC conclusions emphasized the promotion and implementation of a systems approach to the management of OSH, using the guidance provided by the ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (ILO-OSH 2001). Promotion and dissemination of ILO-OSH 2001 continues with the guidelines now available in 21 languages (Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, English, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese). SafeWork has expanded its web site to include the translated versions for downloading as well as providing links to other sites.
14. The Office collaborated with the Japanese Government and its Industrial Safety and Health Association in a major national campaign to promote ILO-OSH 2001 and national guidelines, following which a number of high-profile Japanese companies adopted OSH management systems based on these documents. In China, the State Administration of Work Safety has promoted its national guidelines on OSH management systems, based on ILO-OSH 2001, and 4,000 enterprises have been certified, while 47,000 internal and external auditors have been registered so far. In several countries, such as France and Malaysia, national standards organizations have been fully involved in promoting ILO-OSH 2001, either as national standards or otherwise. National adoption of ILO-OSH 2001 is being discussed in other countries, including Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Technical assistance and cooperation

National OSH policy and programmes

15. The ILC 2003 endorsed the importance of launching national OSH programmes by the highest government authorities, for example by Heads of State or parliaments, to help place OSH at the top of national agendas. The Office has been working closely with member States in creating tripartite consensus towards the formulation of national OSH programmes as well as the eventual development of the programmes for continual improvements in national OSH mechanisms and performance. Initial steps have included advisory discussions with constituents and the development of national OSH profiles documenting national OSH systems and circumstances as the basis for the identification of priorities.
16. National OSH policies and programmes have been agreed upon and adopted in many countries, and tripartite groups have been established to help discuss and formulate sector-specific measures. For example, tripartite national construction safety committees have been set up both in Argentina and Colombia with the purpose of discussing and formulating the respective national policies and programmes for that sector. The Office has also been actively supporting initiatives in some countries for developing national policies and programmes, while in others, it has been working closely with governments to establish national tripartite advisory bodies for OSH.
17. As part of efforts to strengthen national and regional OSH programmes in Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, a tripartite workshop was held in collaboration with the WHO in order to harmonize OSH strategy and to set a common OSH agenda. National OSH profiles have been developed in many countries, such as China, Egypt, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen, while national OSH profiles are being prepared in others.

Decent work programmes

18. In order to ensure that national OSH issues are addressed at the policy level, the Office has promoted the inclusion of OSH issues in the national plans of action for decent work or decent work country programmes in several countries, such as Bangladesh, Guatemala, India, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama and Sri Lanka. In Ethiopia, the Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development programme (a product of the Work Improvements in Small Enterprises package – WISE) was adapted and translated as part of the country's decent work programme in the informal agricultural sector. In Morocco, an OSH component including a practical training element was introduced into the decent work pilot programme for the textile-garment sector.

Technical cooperation projects

19. Two construction OSH projects are under way. The first, with funding from the Republic of Korea, focuses on small construction sites in Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam. The second, funded by Spain, covers MERCOSUR countries and Chile and aims to promote tripartite discussion and the formulation of national policies and programmes.

20. In the agriculture sector, a project was launched in Viet Nam with funding from Japan to support the elaboration of a national OSH programme and to promote practical safety measures at local level.
21. Other projects have focused on the need to have prevention-oriented and technically competent labour inspectorates. For example, in Costa Rica, a project on strengthening of the labour inspectorate on OSH matters was launched recently with funding from Canada. Training of labour inspectors continued within the framework of ILO/German projects on labour inspection in Bulgaria and Viet Nam, and more than 200 labour inspectors and other professionals were trained on OSH matters in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
22. The ILO and its partners also launched a US-funded project aimed at developing a prevention-oriented and technically competent labour inspection service in Serbia and Montenegro, and a German-funded project linking the UN Global Compact and safety and health. The latter is being undertaken in partnership with the Volkswagen corporation and its suppliers in Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, and aims to strengthen the capacity of labour inspectorates and to develop mechanisms to improve OSH as an integral part of corporate social responsibility.
23. Collaborative efforts on the elimination of hazardous child labour have continued at international and national levels. Assistance has been given to countries in the preparation of lists of hazardous work, in developing training manuals on combating hazardous child labour and in setting up OSH monitoring units in several countries. A pilot project on OSH for the informal sector in Honduras is being implemented within the framework of a national programme on the extension of social security coverage.
24. The development and implementation of SOLVE, a training programme addressing psychosocial problems at work, has continued with financial support from the Government of Italy. As at August 2004, 600 course directors and delegates from 40 countries had been trained including ten French-speaking African countries. SOLVE has been translated into Spanish, Russian, Thai, Bulgarian and Portuguese with translations into Italian and German foreseen.

Knowledge development, management and dissemination

25. The ILO's International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS) continues to play a key role in the international exchange of OSH information through its own information products, network of focal points and support of ILO projects and experts in the field. Links to other centres' web sites are provided by CIS through its own pages and through a dedicated portal. Combined web access is estimated to be about 1 million hits per month.
26. In approving the CIS programme and budget for 2004-05 (GB.288/PFA/5/1), the Governing Body endorsed the provision of free access to the content of the ILO *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety* on the ILO web site. The *Encyclopaedia* will soon be available in six languages¹ following the publication of the last volume in Japanese. Free Internet access to the English version of the *Encyclopaedia* is planned for early autumn 2004. CIS's bibliographic database, which is a guide to world literature on OSH, will be opened for free Internet access by the end of 2004. The database is fully

¹ English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Japanese.

bilingual English-French, and an exchange of letters with the CIS National Centre for Spain will permit the expansion of its Spanish content.

27. In 2004, CIS exhausted the technical cooperation resources provided by the Government of Finland over ten years ago. As well as contributing to the publication of the African and Asian-Pacific newsletters, CIS used the remaining funds to contribute to producing work improvement in neighbourhood development materials, which help local facilitators carry OSH information to workers who are not served by conventional information channels. From its own resources, CIS also continued to provide literature searches and documentation to ILO experts in regional and subregional offices.
28. Following extensive collaboration with the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) Institute of Occupational Health and Safety, the Institute was named a Regional CIS Centre, an initiative that is expected to initiate more exchange of OSH experience between the ILO and ALO. Several CIS Centres in the Arab world helped to translate the International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSCs) into Arabic. Training on OSH information management was provided to the staff of the CIS National Centre in Morocco (August 2004).
29. French, German and Portuguese editions of the ILO International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses have been prepared in order to help promote the use of this universally recognized ILO classification. Training events have also been organized for occupational physicians in developing countries to upgrade their skills in using this tool in workers' health surveillance.

International collaboration

30. The 13th Session of the Joint ILO/WHO Committee on Occupational Health (December 2003) discussed ways to reinforce collaboration between the agencies on topics such as the promotion of integrated approaches to OSH, management systems and priority fields for action in occupational health. The Committee recommended that collaboration should focus on: (1) guidance and support for national OSH programmes; (2) enhancing regional collaboration and coordination; (3) coordination and enhancement of information and educational programmes and materials; and (4) awareness-raising activities and instruments through campaigns, events and special days.
31. Collaboration at the regional and country levels between the agencies started soon after the above Committee meeting, focusing on the development of national OSH programmes, preparation of country OSH profiles, silicosis elimination, updating national lists of occupational diseases, ratification of OSH Conventions, extending OSH services to agriculture, SMEs and the informal sector. The WHO/ILO African Joint Effort gained new momentum when the regional directors of both agencies signed a statement of intent and wrote jointly to ministers of labour and health in all their member States to mobilize political support for their joint efforts in improving OSH in Africa. Activities have been organized for information sharing, training and capacity building, and launching of national OSH programmes.
32. In collaboration with WHO, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Health and the University of Balamand in Lebanon, the Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS) contributed technically and financially to a study on reproductive health hazards among women workers in Lebanon. In the same region, the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions and the Office have continued jointly to organize seminars, in the Syrian Arab Republic and Algeria, on the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the workplace and the promotion and implementation of OSH policies.

33. In Latin America, discussions have been held between the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of American States on OSH policy-making at regional level, and a workshop on indicators was organized by PAHO for Latin America and the Caribbean with support from the ILO.
34. On chemical safety, employers, workers and seven international organizations have collaborated under the ILO's umbrella to produce the UN Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). GHS is now available in English, French, Chinese, Russian and Arabic from the UN Economic Commission for Europe; other language versions and web versions will follow.
35. The ILC also requested the ILO to participate actively in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process. At PrepCom 1 (Bangkok, November 2003), the ILO organized a discussion on the issues involved, informing constituents of the essential elements that the ILO believes should form part of SAICM. The ILO has formally submitted firm proposals for agreement at PrepCom2 (Nairobi, October 2004).
36. The Office has also been collaborating with the International Association of Labour Inspection (IALI) on promoting the Global OSH Strategy, for example through joint conferences in South East Asia, specifically targeting the construction sector, and in Africa, focusing on the role of labour inspection. One new joint area of work has been on hazardous child labour, for which the Office is sponsoring IALI on the preparation of a law and practice report.
37. Collaboration with other international agencies, such as the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Maritime Organization, has continued in their respective fields. For example, the ILO and UNITAR are jointly managing a capacity-building programme on GHS, which is initially being piloted in Zambia and South Africa, then in Thailand and Senegal. Collaboration with the International Occupational Hygiene Association is under way to develop a simple and easy-to-use chemical toolkit.
38. Finally, the Office has made formal agreements with some international and national organizations to improve the exchange of data and to assist technical cooperation. For example, an agreement was reached with the World Bank on the exchange of labour inspection data and the creation of a database on systems, structures and performance indicators for labour inspection and OSH.

Conclusions

39. The Global Strategy adopted by the ILC in 2003 has already had an impact on OSH policies and programmes at both international and national levels, and the ILO's present work and new programme and budget proposals are based and structured on this Strategy. The systems approach and strategic national programming are gaining momentum, and national profiles including a set of indicators of progress are being progressively developed. Gradual improvement of both national OSH systems (the infrastructure) and national OSH programmes, which have measurable targets and are governed by tripartite dialogue, will also help to achieve better OSH outcomes.
40. The innovative "integrated" or "strategic approach" towards OSH has had a groundbreaking role and will be taken further by the 2005 and 2006 sessions of the ILC. National and international reporting on progress, through mechanisms that are now being

developed, will provide further evidence of improvements, which can be regularly reported to the Governing Body.

Geneva, 15 September 2004.

Submitted for discussion.