

Press Note 01-08-07

Turin, 1 July 2008 (ILO news) – Today saw the start of a high-level conference on the “European Social Model” at the Turin Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) involving labour policy experts, governments, leaders of the social partners, entrepreneurs and trade unions.

Today’s session began with a welcome by the minister Gilles de Robien (the French Government representative on the ILO Governing Body), by Ms. Virve Vimpari, European Commission Delegate (Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) and by Mr. François Eyraud, Director of the ILO Training Centre.

It was unanimously acknowledged that the three days of the conference would take a fresh look at the ILO and EU’s shared goal of improving the living conditions of both European and non-European workers, and would also facilitate permanent regular dialogue between the North and the South of the world.

Europe intends to meet four challenges: globalization, climate change, demographic trends and disparities. Globalization affects everyone, and touches upon many aspects of workers’ lives. The European Union intends to make a further effort to harness economic development to social progress. In Europe itself, 40 per cent of work contracts are “atypical”, and 78 million people have their wage-earning position at risk, especially young workers and women.

The European Social Agenda seeks new solutions by making the most of the opportunities that globalization offers. In the last two years, 6.5 million jobs have been created, productivity has risen for the first time in ten years, and the unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level for 25 years.

The ILO, for its part, with its Decent Work Agenda, is striving in the same direction as the European Social Model, namely to improve the working conditions of all men and women.

The points where the two models meet are being discussed over the three days at the ILO’s Training Centre, which has put itself forward as the “shared home” of this interesting debate.

Thursday 3 July, in particular, will see the Ministers of Labour of Denmark, India and Tanzania, and the Deputy Ministers of the Czech Republic, Italy, Poland and Romania meet, together with the Director-General of the ILO, Juan Somavia, and a representative of the European Commission, who will read a message from European Commissioner Vladimír Špidla.

The full programme is posted on the following site: www.itcilo.org/hld2008/press

Venue:

**International Training Centre of the ILO (UN campus)
Viale Maestri del Lavoro 10
Turin
Pavilion P**

For information and accreditation: Alessandro Amerio – 347 703 99 29 - press@itcilo.org

For interviews: Nathalie Mirabile - 335 1246 793 - mirabile@itcilo.org

Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10
10127 Torino, Italy

Phone: +39 011 693 6111
Fax: +39 011 663 8842
E-mail: communications@itcilo.org