



**European Union  
Statement**

**International Labour Conference  
102<sup>nd</sup> session  
(5-20 June 2013)**

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**Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Dialogue**

**Closing statement**

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**Geneva, 17 June 2013**

**- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -**

**International Labour Conference**

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**EU Statement**

**Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Dialogue**

**Closing statement**

Thank you chair.

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The following countries align themselves with this declaration: Croatia<sup>\*</sup>, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>\*</sup>, Montenegro<sup>\*</sup>, Iceland<sup>†</sup>, Serbia<sup>\*</sup>, Albania<sup>\*</sup>, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

First of all we would like to express our thanks to the Office and in particular to the authors of the report on Social Dialogue. This excellent report was well researched and provided a sound basis for our debate in Committee.

As our conclusions state, social dialogue is a means to achieve economic and social progress. Given the situation that many members of the ILO find themselves in, the work of the Committee this past two weeks on this crucial topic also serves as a timely reminder that the solution to these difficulties lies for a key part with us.

With social dialogue as a foundation and as a tool we are convinced that governments, employers and workers together are able to identify and negotiate a better economic paradigm, not only in times of crisis.

We are particularly heartened by the positive engagement taken and the collaborative approach adopted by workers, employers and governments in the committee's plenary, the discussion at

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<sup>\*</sup> Acceding Country Croatia and the Candidate countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia as well as potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

<sup>†</sup> Candidate Country Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

drafting stage and during the final amendment session. We commend particularly the drafting committee for their hard and efficient work in producing a document of such conciseness and quality that all constituents felt it required little amendment.

We believe that everyone emerged from these discussions with a clearer understanding and appreciation of the challenges faced by governments, employers and workers and that the search for common ground is important and must be never-ending.

Social dialogue, freedom of association and collective bargaining are terms that, in many member countries, we take for granted. It is important that we do not become complacent about these democratic bedrocks. Indeed, we should do all we can to make sure they are rights available to all.

Turning to the conclusions of the Social Dialogue Committee, we would like to say something about ILC reform. This recurrent discussion took place against the backdrop of the reform process. We believe that the discussion has produced the kind of short and concise conclusions we are aiming for, namely an output that: (i) focuses on the ILO's core mandate and areas of expertise; (ii) identifies policy priorities that result in concrete action; (iii) features best practice and knowledge sharing; (iv) is user-friendly and clearly outlines conclusions and future action by the Office and constituents; and (v) identifies follow-up mechanism(s) for implementation. Our aim is to ensure that the ILC is dynamic, relevant and showcases the importance of the ILO to the world of work as it now is.

We believe that the conclusions' guiding principles and context set out in a clear and concise manner the social dialogue concept and framework. They will serve as a template and road map for future actions not just in terms of this document but for some time to come.

The conclusions very clearly and unambiguously identify actions not only for the Office and members but for all of us as proactive constituents of the ILO to make reality the vision contained in the document. We will work with the Office, with other governments, with employers' and workers' representatives to move the process forward and to reinforce the foundations of social dialogue, improve its edifice, and perhaps most importantly, make social dialogue in all its forms, a reality for all.

We would like to thank the ILO office for the excellent work they have done in preparing this aspect of the Conference and for the efficient and good-humoured manner in which they have assisted us over the past two weeks. We appreciate that, at times, we have placed additional burdens on them from time to time but at all times they have been unfailing in their professionalism and courtesy.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to pay tribute to you and your Vice-Chairs. This Social Dialogue Committee has reached its conclusions in a very speedy and efficient manner. This is in no small part down to the efficient and focused approach you have brought to the process Mr. Chairman – we are all in your debt. We also would like to acknowledge the co-operation and hard work of the Vice Chairs Ms. Fox and Mr. Ronnest and their team and the other Government members for their constructive contributions.

Thank you Chair.