

## **Final remarks by Martin Clemensson, ILO Director**

**May 22, 2012**

I wish to thank all 100 participants from the Zambian policy making institutions and the international organizations attending. It has been a most constructive exchange of views how to take the employment creating agenda forward and the contributions from Government, IMF, ITUC, the trade unions, the employers, EAZ, NEDLAC and the youth – apart from the ILO of course - have been enriching and inspiring.

The ILO is committed to the Oslo spirit, which committed us all to a job-focused recovery process. Globally and in Zambia.

We recall that the ILO and IMF, with the strong inspiration from the ITUC, agreed to work together on policy development in two specific areas:

- First, it was agreed to explore the concept of a social protection floor for people living in poverty and in vulnerable situations, and
- Second, the two institutions agreed to focus on policies to promote employment-creating growth.

We bring the same message here, and from our side, we will redouble our energies towards using social dialogue as the vehicle in building consensus, especially toward macroeconomic and decent work target setting. The IMF has chosen to not take part in the social protection support in Zambia but the ILO will.

This is a Zambia-led agenda, and we are here to support the Zambians' work toward a more job-rich growth policy. So, from our side, and given our mandate and expertise, we will be glad to support your wishes.

We acknowledge that sound macroeconomic stability is necessary for growth and decent work. However we also know what the quality of growth matters: growth has to be job-rich, sustainable and inclusive. That is why a pro-employment macroeconomic framework is necessary.

And this is why social dialogue as the way to realize it. We have the Sixth National Development Plan. Clear employment targets are set in the SNDP but it also has to be clear who is responsible for achieving the targets and who is responsible for employment creation in the country.

In terms of tangible support by the ILO, we are ready to support the **upgrading of the Tripartite Consultative Labour Council (TCLC)** into a true avenue for social dialogue, ie tripartite consultations on all labour, economic and employment related matters. Lessons and experiences from NEDLAC and other international good practice will be important here.

Supporting the Government's efforts towards a **social protection floor** is required. Through proper targeting and prioritization, this is an affordable mechanism towards cushioning any negative effects of economic difficulties, as we have seen in a number of developing countries. IMF collaborates constructively with the Government, the ILO, WB and UNICEF towards that goal in Mozambique and we would like to see that here in Zambia too.

We see workers' rights as an indispensable part of the growth and development process. International Labour Standards should not be seen as costs of doing business. That is why we would like to see the labour legislative framework play a positive role in protecting fundamental human rights at work, in promoting employment and economic growth, and in improving labour market performance. We have already begun the support to the Government with regard to a **review and update of the entire labour code**.

Infrastructure development is key to structural transformation and employment creation. The ILO has expertise in **employment-intensive infrastructure development**, and we are glad to partner with the Government of Zambia in ensuring this objective.

As we have discussed repeatedly during this workshop, an overhaul, starting with a review of the **vocational and technical training system** in Zambia is much needed and we will be pleased to propose terms of reference for that.

We are keen to join hands with the Government, the social partners, IMF and other stakeholders to develop a **policy package aimed at job-rich and inclusive growth**, including an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises that can flourish and create jobs. Particular attention needs to be directed towards the opportunities for jobs for **young women and men**.

Of course, **support to our constituents** in Zambia is part and parcel of anything the ILO does.

A good number of these activities are in fact components of the new **Decent Work Country Programme 2012-2015** and this conclusion gives us added impetus to forge ahead with its implementation. I count on many partners in making the goals of the new DWCP a reality, including development partners and in particular the IMF.

The next step now is to agree on a concrete **action plan** based on the Communique, and for partners to agree on who will support what.

Thank you for making these two days **constructive** and action oriented. We will soon meet again.