Social Justice for a fair Globalization

A timely declaration of the ILO

On the eve of the economic crisis, in June 2008, the ILO adopted a powerful legal instrument, which places the organization in a better position to help its constituents (governments, employers and workers) and their partners to address the unfair consequences of globalization.

On 10 June 2008, the International Labour Conference adopted by acclamation the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, to be implemented through the Decent Work Agenda and its four strategic objectives.

This is the third major statement of principles and policies adopted by the International Labour Conference in the ILO’s history. It follows the Declaration of Philadelphia in 1944 and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in 1998. These three texts constitute the foundation and method of implementation of the ILO’s constitutional objectives.

The Social Justice Declaration is a strong reaffirmation of ILO values. The Declaration -

• recalls that the ILO has a constitutional mandate to pursue the universal aspiration for social justice through its activities in the world today;
• acknowledges the ILO’s particular responsibility to promote fair globalization in order to better reach the goals that its constituents have set;
• institutionalizes the Decent Work Agenda as the key policy and operational concept to attain the ILO’s constitutional objectives and provide efficient and
The Declaration clearly stresses the importance of working towards fair globalization.

Fair globalization will help prevent the potentially harmful consequences stemming from today’s global economy and which threaten the world’s most vulnerable populations.

The Social Justice Declaration therefore guarantees a fair outcome for all.

Finally, the Declaration is based on the recognition of two of the main principles on which the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda is based -

- First, it recalls the universality of the ILO’s objectives – employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work – which are to be pursued by all Members of the Organization. International labour standards apply to all strategic objectives and are a means to achieve them.

- Secondly, the Declaration recognizes the indivisibility of these objectives, which are said to be “inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive”.

These principles are complemented by two equally important principles -

- How the objectives are achieved is a question to be determined by the Members themselves, in relation to their national circumstances and priorities.

- Solidarity and cooperation among all Members of the ILO are more relevant than ever to the achievement of the objectives.

A preliminary implementation plan will be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2009 after consultation with the tripartite constituents of the ILO.