

Confédération internationale des cadres (CIC)

Speech by Ludger Ramme, Secretary General of CIC, during the 98th Conference of the International Labour Organisation

Dear President,

First of all, let me congratulate you on behalf of the Confederation Internationale des Cadres, international federation representing executives and managerial staff, on your election as President of the 98th International Labour Conference and wish you every success in this important mission. Let me also congratulate the workers of the International Labour Organization for their outstanding results presented in this report. This report informs us in a remarkable way on the situation of fundamental rights of workers in the world and the multiplicity of approaches to improve the situation of workers.

On behalf of the CIC, I would like to address, in my speech, the following points. First, let me say a few words about the effects of the financial crisis. It is obvious to everyone that managers go through a lot of pressure. They are responsible for the worst economic crisis known since decades. This is true. In the banking sector, some irresponsible managers have built castles in the air, and have produced a speculative bubble through their volatile transactions. This behaviour is reprehensible. And especially as the crisis effects have primarily affected the most modest population, notably the poor countries of the world.

We should remain cautious and avoid stigmatization when presenting the managers as greedy and irresponsible. The large majority of executives work in a responsible way and with engagement for business development, thus contributing to the welfare of all. Our association of managers, coming from many countries around the world, represents quality criteria for responsible management by managers. A manager, who complies with these criteria in his/her leadership task, can help avoid a future crisis. However, it is also true that the failure of the State in terms of financial supervision has made it possible for investors to malpractice. In the future and to overcome the crisis, financial supervision should be significantly reinforced and improved by international treaties and government intervention.

The advantages of a free market must now be linked more effectively to social equilibrium. In this respect, some European countries already provide successful models. But we have to convert these criteria into international standards. Moreover, it is the duty of States to mitigate the effects of the crisis on the poorest countries in the world. It is unfortunate that the global economic crisis coincides precisely with a time when we face another threat to the growth and welfare: the demographic trends in developed countries.

I assure you that the CIC supports you in every way, to face major changes in the population pyramids of different countries and continents as soon as possible, to proactively seize development opportunities for the employment. The executives represented through the CIC have the specific responsibility to foresee the effects of demographic change in their business, to ensure the recruitment of young employees and to create a good work environment for senior employees.

Finally let me conclude before this Assembly on the situation still unsatisfactory in various countries as regards the right of managers and leaders to form associations and

to achieve collective agreements. Workers' fundamental rights include the creation of associations but the right is still denied to managers in some countries such as Canada and other regions of North America. We are deeply convinced that the mission of the International Labour Office is also to use its influence in these countries so that managers can also create their own associations and be recognized, as are all other workers.

Dear President, I am pleased to report that our global network is committed – in the spirit of disseminating the fundamental rights of workers - to support the goals of a fairer and more human work environment.

Finally, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations gathered here in this Plenary Session, for your attention.

Ludger Ramme
CIC Secretary General