

Yes to International Workshop AICESIS

The Implementation of the Athens Declaration at National Level and possible ILO Support

Abidjan, 31 may 2024

Protocol

Honorable President of the Economic, Social, Environmental and cultural Council of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Aka Aouele

President Jacobs

Distinguished Presidents and members of participating ESCs and similar social dialogue institutions

Distinguished SG and deputy secretary generals of AICESIS

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning - good day to all of you,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to AICESIS both Leadership and member institutions especially the host institution the Council of Cote d'Ivoire for the invitation and the opportunity provided to the ILO to participate in this important International Workshop and to speak in this session.

We are very grateful for that.

First of all, let me start my intervention by hailing the important cooperation that we have with your association, the AICESIS, which has been expanding over the years since the conclusion of the partnership agreement in May 2012, which was renewed in 2018, and which still running till October this year.

This partnership has reached a new step with AICESIS recently joining the Global Coalition on Social Justice initiated by the ILO director General, Mr. Gilbert Hounou, and which will be inaugurated officially on 13 June during the International labour Conference in Geneva.

Over all these years, we did achieve important results in our cooperation as illustrated by the numerous international conferences, regional seminars and other capacity building activities that we organised together. These events enabled a reach mutual learning through exchange of experiences and good practice on topics that are of interests for your member councils within the scope of the ILO decent work agenda.

The last one was the successful international conference held in Athens in November 2023, hosted by the Greek ESC (*greet President Paidas present in the room for the warm welcome and the excellent organisation of the conference*), which brought together participants from around 35 countries including Ministers and presidents of ESCs alongside experts from international and regional organisations and senior ILO officials.

The conference addressed a very important topic, that is the need to prevent and reduce inequalities in the world of work through social dialogue and its institutions.

The conference ended up with the adoption of an important Declaration by the participating ESCs and other similar social dialogue institutions.

Through this Declaration, the participating ESCs and similar social dialogue institutions considered that high and persistent inequalities within and between countries are incompatible with the pursuit of the objective of social justice and do represent a threat to achievement of the SDGs.

The ESCs committed to contribute to national policies meant to reduce and prevent inequalities through various means such as:

- ✓ Raising awareness of the challenge of inequalities and their consequences;
- ✓ Promote equal opportunities,
- ✓ Enhance partnerships at all levels,
- ✓ Mainstreaming the question of inequalities in their work,
- ✓ Undertake to develop and implement a work plan on tackling inequalities,
- ✓ Encourage the effective participation of social partner organizations in all deliberations on the question of inequalities.

For the ILO these are important and concrete commitments made by the ESCs in Athens. They show your high level of engagement as social dialogue institutions bringing together government and the social partners as well as other actors, to work together towards the objective of tackling inequalities at national level, which is one of the most serious challenges facing countries and societies today, which need to be addressed in an effective way if we are to advance the objective of social justice and hence promote peace and stability in countries and globally.

As the ILO DG stressed in his recorded message to the conference in Athens, **ESCs and similar social dialogue institutions play a critical role in developing and implementing policies that can support the fight against inequalities.**

For the ILO, ESCs and SD institutions are the place and the space where Governments and the social partners come together and devise policies to address the challenges facing the world of work such as the persistent inequalities and the widespread informal economy. These institutions are also very much needed to manage the transformations at play in the world of work brought about by technology, the climate change and the like..

In the Declaration you have adopted in Athens you called upon the ILO to support you through 6 means. I would like to focus on two as follows:

- (i) Support ILO Constituents and ESC-SIs **in the development of integrated, country-specific strategies to reduce and prevent inequalities in the world of work....**
- (ii) Continue to support social dialogue institutions to improve their inclusiveness and effectiveness, and to promote the full realization of the right to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, along with other fundamental principles and rights at work in all ILO Member States.

My colleague, Alessandro will explain in his presentation what the ILO is doing to support our member countries in dealing with this challenge notably in the framework of implementation of the ILO Strategy adopted by the Governing Body in November 2022 and other instruments that we have.

Regarding our support to SD institutions, the ILO is already providing support to build the capacity of national social dialogue institutions such as economic and social councils and other institutions in the framework of our P&B. This is the framework within which we deliver technical assistance to our member States in promoting DW as the means to advance social justice.

We do this using various means including:

- ✓ The promotion of ratification and implementation of ILS
Such the fundamental conventions No 87 and 98 and the governance convention No. 144
- ✓ Development of policy and training tools
- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Capacity building and training, for instance using the facilities offered by our international training centre in Turin
- ✓ Building collaboration and partnerships; a typical example is the exemplary collaboration we have with AICESIS.

Let me focus on one tool that the ILO has developed in order to support institutions like yours to enhance their role and impact: the tool is titled: Self-Assessment method for social dialogue institutions (SAM-SDI).

This tool was launched in 2021.

It aims is to assist constituents to:

- **«enhance the effectiveness and inclusiveness of mechanisms and institutions for national tripartite social dialogue»** including to address future of work and the SDGs
- **encourage participation of women and other underrepresented groups** in social partner organizations and seek to achieve equal representation of women and men in social dialogue institutions

We did inform AICESIS about this tool, which is very practical and easy to use. It exists in many languages. We do encourage you to use it to assess the functioning of your institutions, to identify strengths and weaknesses and define measures to

enhance their role and impact when it comes to supporting national policies and strategies to address challenges such as the one on inequalities.

We have other tools as well that we shared with AICESIS: the guide on NTSD and the guide to ILO Recommendation No. 113.

Finally, as ILO we are interested to learn from you ESCs what follow up actions you have taken to give effect to the commitment made in Athens and with what results so far.

I do hope this workshop will enable you to exchange experiences and good practice when it comes to the follow up to the Athens Declaration.

Thank you,

Youcef Ghellab

ILO

31 May 2024.