

**15th World Congress of the
International Industrial Relations Association (IIRA)
The New World of Work, Organizations and Employment
Monday 24 – Thursday 27 August 2009**

Globalizing industrial relations

Globalisation has been accompanied by qualitative changes in the way in which production is organized and a new international division of labour. This presents new challenges to the labour institutions that have traditionally promoted social justice in the workplace, such as trade unions and collective bargaining. This session will examine the way in which existing forms of social dialogue and industrial relations are adapting to meet these challenges, as well as initiatives to promote better working conditions in global supply chains through - amongst others - processes of social dialogue.

Moderator: Tayo Fashoyin

Presentations:

1. Susan Hayter: Negotiating for social justice in a global economy

Financial liberalization, an increase in competitive pressures as a result of trade and technology and new forms of work has placed pressure on traditional industrial relations institutions. While there are signs that in some countries this has led to the individualization of employment relations, in others collective bargaining institutions have adapted to meet contemporary challenges. Whereas industrial relations institutions remain underdeveloped in much of the developing world there are some interesting advancements. What are some of the key challenges facing industrial relations and collective bargaining institutions? How are the systems and practices adapting to address these challenges?

2. Konstantinos Papadakis: Global social dialogue

Global social dialogue has been increasing in recent years, leading to the conclusion of International Framework Agreements (IFAs). IFAs are understood as the outcome of negotiations between individual multinational companies and global union federations, that is, international workers' organizations usually operating at sectoral level. IFAs are aimed to establish and formalize an ongoing relationship between the multinational enterprise and the global union federation which can solve problems and work in the interests of both parties. Do such agreements contribute to the emergence of a global industrial relations framework? What is the evidence regarding the actual impact of IFAs, on social dialogue and industrial relations at company and local levels?

3. Ros Harvey: Promoting Better Work in global supply chains

Better Work is a unique partnership between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The programme was launched in August 2006 in order to improve labour practices and competitiveness in global supply chains. Better Work supports enterprises in improving their labour standards based on core ILO labour standards and national labour law. This helps enterprises compete in global markets where many buyers demand compliance with labour standards from their suppliers. It also strengthens social dialogue in these enterprises and builds new social partnerships in the supply chain. The presentation will focus on country experience in the Asia Pacific region including Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Discussants:

Brent Wilton, Deputy Secretary General, International Employers' Organization

Sharan Burrow, President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and President, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)