

**INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS- AFRICA
REGIONAL ORGANISATION (ICFTU-AFRO)**



**COUNTRY AND TRADE UNION PROFILES
2005/2006**

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Abbreviations

1. AFRO- African Regional Organisation
2. DOAWTU- Democratic Organisation of African Workers
3. ECA – Economic Commission for Africa
4. ICFTU- International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
5. ILO- International Labour Organisation
6. IMF – International Monetary Fund
7. NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
8. OATUU- Organisation of African Trade Union Unity
9. PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes
10. WB – World Bank
11. WCL- World Confederation of Labour
12. WFTU- World Federation of Trade Unions

FOREWORD

This report attempts to give a multiple picture of the socio-economic, political as well as trade union situation in Africa. It is important to point out that although there have been some improvements especially in the political arena, the human and trade union rights situation has not improved correspondingly. At the same time the recent economic growth in GDP has not translated into improvements in the quality of life for the majority of Africans but instead unemployment and poverty remains a big challenge for most African countries.

Over and above this a number of factors continue to retard Africa's progress towards peace, democracy, equity and a balanced and sustained development. For instance Africa continues to face pockets of armed conflict and civil strife in some countries. Despite an increase in democratic governments' poor governance, corruption and violation of human and trade union rights is evident in a number of countries. Africa is equally prone to diseases including the HIV/AIDS and other many curable diseases, and natural calamities such as drought, floods, locust invasion and famine.

The above developments have not spared the workers, trade unions and the wider society. The combined impact of political instability and socio-economic imbalances has left the workers and trade unions and the weak in society who are in the majority highly vulnerable. In response to these challenges the ICFTU-AFRO and its affiliates are making significant strides. The ICFTU-AFRO is making tireless efforts to ensure that partnerships and coalitions are established between trade unions, governments and employers for combating the HIV/AIDS at the workplace and beyond. In order to ensure that the workers' interests and concerns are taken on board, and thus ensure popular participation in development, the ICFTU-AFRO and its affiliates are increasingly getting involved in national development and policy issues including contributing to the on-going processes of implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the NEPAD and PRSPs.

In this report we wish to highlight the trends in the country and trade union profiles for the 2005 to 2006. The report looks at human and trade union rights including child labour, gender and the current situation in the political economy of Africa. The report then goes on to outline the country specific political economy and trade union situation. The methodology used was through questionnaire sent to all our affiliates and secondary data from reports of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), World Bank and IMF and other sources. It should also be pointed out that this report is not exhaustive but is intended to stimulate debate and follow-ups on the issues raised.

Andrew Kailembo



General Secretary

Map of Africa



1.0 HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS SITUATION IN AFRICA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The human and trade union rights situation in the continent as a whole has improved considerably. However, violations of human and trade union rights were noted in a number of countries including new cases in countries that have exhibited good practice such as South Africa. The improvement has come mostly due to the introduction and broadening of democratic space in political affairs and economic management over the last decade. Yet it remains the case that dictatorial regimes are still entrenched in countries such as Eritrea, Libya, Mauritania and Zimbabwe despite some of them, claiming that they are democratic. On the other side reforms to democratise other countries such as Morocco, Egypt and Swaziland are moving at a slow pace.

1.2 POLITICAL INSTABILITY

It is encouraging to note that many countries in Africa are going through the path of democracy and pluralism on the political front. However, political instability, armed conflict and civil strife in some countries remain a great concern. The exercise of trade union rights in these conflict countries is difficult if not impossible. The civil wars in Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Somali, Sudan, and northern Uganda are cases in point. Somalia continues to exist with a fragile government. There was recently a rebellion in Chad and the situation is still not very much back to normal despite the recent presidential elections. The unsettled political situation in Zimbabwe that is characterised by unprecedented gross human rights abuses continues.

However, the UN, the African Union, and the sub-regional groups in particular, have been actively involved in mediation and reconciliation and in the case of Darfur; the AU has sent troops to protect peace monitors and the civilian population.

1.3 TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Violations of human and trade union rights continued in many countries such as Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Attacks on workers and their trade unions including black listing of trade union activists, dismissals, employers and or governments refusing to respect contractual obligations such as payment of minimum wages and salaries continued during the period under review. There were several incidences of victimization, intimidation and harassment of workers and trade union leaders and political interference in trade union affairs.

Some notable cases of gross violations of trade union rights experienced in Djibouti whereby repression of collective workers' action, unfair dismissals, legal prosecution, arrests, arbitrary detention and deportation of ICFTU and ILO officials have been multiplying since September 2005. Trade unions leaders were taken to court on the charge of supplying information to a foreign power and then jailed in the civil prison of Gabode.

There was an increase in some countries on the use of state security laws and operatives to harass and intimidate trade unionists. This was particularly the case in Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Nigeria and South Africa. In some instances, the security forces were not only ordered to arrest and detain trade unionists, but also to act violently against workers during protests and demonstrations. Over 500 and nearly 50 trade unionists were victims of state organised arrests in Zimbabwe in 2005 and in South Africa in 2006 respectively.

Attempts were also made by the government of Zimbabwe to undermine international solidarity work between trade unionists. Some COSATU leaders and other trade unionists from Africa and Europe seeking to visit Zimbabwe were either expelled or refused entry into Zimbabwe. In Mauritius the President of the Pilots' Association was suspended from his official job in October 2005 for informing the ICFTU and other international labour movement members of the unfavourable working conditions facing pilots in Mauritius.

Increasingly, governments were using the law to ensure that they weaken trade unions, especially when the trade unions sought to organise strike action. Apart from the length it takes in many countries to process an industrial dispute, which ends up in making it impossible to organise a legal strike, governments were exploring new avenues to make it even more difficult for workers to join in strike action by legislating against strikes of what they called strike of "interests." This meant that only workers who were directly affected in a dispute could take part in strike action or what they described as "strikes of right." In this case therefore, solidarity strike action became illegal. This was the case in Nigeria. The ICFTU-AFRO strongly condemn these practices

1.4 EXPORT PROCESSING ZONES

The export processing zones remain as one area where employers have been fighting against trade union rights. Employers remain determined in their opposition to any form of organising or trade union activity, particularly in Malawi, Mauritius, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria and Tanzania. Conditions in the AGOA-driven EPZs are precarious and unsafe.

1.5 REFORMS IN LABOUR LAWS

There is now considerable activity to reform labour laws in several countries. Several countries including Botswana and Ghana have reviewed their laws. In East Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have completed the discussions and dialogue on new labour laws. In Kenya, the bill is still awaiting to be tabled to the Parliament for discussion and enactment. In Tanzania the bill was assented in 2004. In Uganda in April 2006 the Bills were passed by the Parliament, and later in May 2006 the President assented to the Bills. These bills include the Employment Bill, Occupational Safety and Working Environment Bill, Labour Union Bill, and Labour Dispute and Settlement Bill. This is taking place mainly as a result of trade union campaigns for ratification of Conventions, following the introduction of the concept of Core Labour Standards and ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. However, in some countries reforms in labour laws brought splinter unions and criminalisation of trade union leaders.

1.6 INDUSTRIAL ACTION

There have been in several countries major industrial actions and unrests aimed at improving the conditions of work. In some cases, these have been as a result of employers, especially in the public sector, failing to pay workers' wages promptly. The strikes have so far been peaceful; but given that some of the governments may not be able to settle the causes of the disputes, trade unions could face more pressure from governments, especially in situations where economic and good governance environment has not improved significantly.

1.7 CHILD LABOUR IN AFRICA

The problem of child labour in Africa is on increase according to the 2006- ILO- IPEC global report on the End of Child Labour Within Reach. Out of 218 million children between the ages of 5 and 17 involved in child labour globally, Sub-Saharan Africa has an estimated 49.3 million child workers, almost one child in three (26 per cent) below the age of 15 works.

There is a visible increase in children working in the agricultural and domestic service sectors in countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin and Mali just to mention a few. It is also evident that there has been an increase in the numbers of street children and also of those engaged in commercial sex. There are also large numbers of children from Bénin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, who are trafficked to Bénin, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Nigeria.

Some of the factors which have had a negative impact on the situation of children include the low level of economic growth if any at all, overall poverty levels, decline in employment partly due to globalisation and structural adjustment policies pursued by the International Financial Institutions, especially cost sharing on education and health, and the growing impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

ICFTU-African Regional Organisation is aware that Child labour has serious consequences that stay with the individual and with society for far longer than the years of childhood. Young workers not only face dangerous working conditions, but they also face long-term physical, intellectual and emotional stress. They face an adulthood of unemployment and illiteracy. It is against this background that ICFTU- AFRO has been committed and involved in the fight against child labour and child trafficking.

The ICFTU-AFRO policy to eliminate child labour was re-enforced during the 12th Regional Conference held in Dakar, Senegal in 1997 and adopted a resolution to intensify the organisation's activities in this area. Similarly, at its 14th Congress a resolution on child labour was also adopted to re-affirm ICFTU-AFRO's commitment in the fight against child labour. ICFTU-AFRO has been campaigning for the ratification of Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour and 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment. ICFTU-AFRO has been constantly exposing and denouncing any violations of human and trade union rights including child labour and child trafficking. Similarly, ICFTU-AFRO has been encouraging its affiliates to expose and condemn employers who are using child labour at their workplaces, and to bargain collectively with employers not to employ children at their workplaces as well to report any violation to the ILO.

Accordingly, trade unions at different levels, are taking up the challenge of dealing with child labour. There are good examples in the fight against child labour in plantation sectors in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania just to mention a few. Similarly, there are trade union initiatives in place at national level to address the challenges of child labour in mines, domestic work and in the informal economy. Although the resources, both in terms human and finance, may not be adequate, there is a real awareness that trade unions have to deal with this problem.

In Africa forty-two out of 53 African countries have already ratified both main ILO child labour Conventions. Among the countries that have ratified neither Convention are those that have faced severe internal conflict in recent years, for instance Sierra Leone and Liberia. Overall, the rate of ratification of child labour Conventions in Africa is good though the implementation leaves much to be desired.

1.8 RATIFICATION AND APPLICATION OF CORE CONVENTIONS

In Africa, many countries have ratified all the ILO Core Conventions. For a number of years, Africa has had one of the highest numbers of ratifications as compared to the other parts of the world. Although the number of ratifications looks impressive the same can hardly be said when it comes to the application of conventions.

ILO Core Conventions

1. Convention No 87 – Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise
2. Convention No 98- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining
3. Convention No 29- Forced Labour
4. Convention No 105- Abolition of Forced Labour
5. Convention No 100 – Equal Remuneration
6. Convention No 111 – Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation
7. Convention No 138- Minimum Age for Employment
8. Convention No 182- Abolition of Worst Forms of Child Labour.

The ICFTU-AFRO continues to promote and monitor ratification of ILO conventions and particular attention has been given to the ratification of the Core Conventions. The ICFTU-AFRO has also continued to follow developments regarding the implementation of the conventions.

1.9 TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION

The period under review saw steady growth in ICFTU-AFRO membership. The number of affiliates increased from 56 in 45 countries to 63 in 47 countries, with a membership of 15 million.

In line with the spirit of globalising solidarity, ICFTU and WCL came together, discussed and deliberated to form a strong and united international trade union organisation. At the global level the unification is expected by early November 2006.

It is against this background that, the two regional organisations i.e. ICFTU-AFRO and DOAWTU are also responding to the trade union unification process initiated at the world level by the ICFTU and WCL. With the support of the ILO-ACTRAV, ICFTU-AFRO and DOAWTU met in Accra, Ghana on 28 and 29 October 2005. The meeting came up with a Declaration outlining the way to achieve a united Pan-African Trade Union Organisation.

All affiliates of WCL and ICFTU have been informed and sensitized about the unification process. Concrete merger talks are in place between NACTU, FEDUSA and CONSAWU in South Africa. In Guinea, Togo and Burkina Faso, affiliates of the two regional trade union organisations have begun to collaborate in pursuit of important labour and industrial relations issues.

So far the ICFTU-AFRO and DOAWTU expressed satisfaction at the progress, which has been made in the discussions regarding unification at the global and regional levels

2.0 GENDER ISSUES

The conditions under which African women have been participating in the development process and trade union movement in particular have not enabled them to enhance their capacity to utilize their physical and intellectual energies in promoting sustainable economic development and trade union development.

In brief, plans and policies have not been "gender responsive", i.e. they have not recognized existing gender imbalances, and have not taken into account the different gender roles, which men and women play.

Women constitute a very small minority in policy making bodies be it in trade union, parliament, cabinet, judiciary and managerial and executive positions in both public and private sectors. The under-representation and sometimes exclusion of women from decision-making bodies limits the possibilities for entrenching the principles of democracy in any institution or society, hindering economic development and discouraging the attainment of gender equality.

As noted in the MDGs, women's equal participation with men in power and decision-making is part of their fundamental rights to participate in political life, and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment. Women have to participate in determining development agenda.

Therefore, trade unions can and must take up the challenge of transforming the labour market through equality and justice so as to overcome gender imbalances in all aspects of human activity. The ICFTU-AFRO, in line with the general policy on gender within the ICFTU is vigorously promoting the policy aimed at ensuring a minimum 30% women's representation and participation in trade union activities. The ICFTU-AFRO is promoting the adoption of an organisational-wide policy on gender mainstreaming to overcome the gender-biased participation and to ensure that both men and women are visible and active in all aspects of trade union life as members, activists and leaders.

Equally important at its 14th Congress, the ICFTU-AFRO re-affirmed its commitment to promote gender equality and equity by adopting a resolution and action programme on the promotion of gender equality and equity in the workplace and in trade unions.

3.0 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR AFRICA 2005/2006

The economic outlook for Africa has continued to indicate strong performance recording real GDP growth of 4.6 per cent in 2005. The African economy was expected to grow by 4.7 per cent in 2006 and 4.5 per cent in 2007. Economic performance across the region is mixed. Oil-exporting countries are outpacing others by a substantial margin while other countries continue to face serious economic problems. Overall, the outlook for much of Africa continues to be more favourable than it has been for many years. This is attributed to global expansion, notably through higher demand for commodities at higher prices; improved domestic macroeconomic management; more aid to Africa, headed by debt relief and cancellations for some countries, and the easing of conflicts in many countries.

Out of the 49 countries implementing full PRSPs about half of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa the majority of which are heavily indebted poor countries. Despite rising aid levels increasing debt relief and cancellation and implementation of PRSPs, progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remain elusive. Attaining the eight goals set for 2015 remains limited. Many African countries still have over half of their populations living in poverty. Only six African countries, most in the North Africa, are likely to halve the share of the population living under a dollar a day and they are on target in achieving most of the goals.

World Development Report (WDR) 2006 points out major concerns arising from the growing inequalities within and across countries and in particular what it terms as the inequality of opportunity. According to the WDR 2006, inequalities in incomes, in health, and in educational outcomes have long been a stark fact of life in many developing countries. When such inequalities in outcomes arise from unequal opportunities, there are both intrinsic and instrumental grounds for concern. The report further states that since inequalities in opportunity are often accompanied by profound differences in influence, power, and social status—whether at the level of individuals or groups—they have a tendency to persist. This leads to an inefficient use of resources and to less effective institutions and as such hindering long-term development. The realities in Africa reflect the above scenario pointing to the urgent need for action in pursuit of equity in which trade unions need to play a vital role. Already trade unions are pushing for people focused and people centred policies as well as decent employment at the domestic level.

To address the inequalities between rich and poor countries particularly those in Africa it is important to consider the functioning of global markets and the rules that govern them, provision of aid to help poor countries. Recommendations of the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization, which call for a fair globalization that creates opportunities for all need to be operationalised. It is encouraging also that African countries are united in the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations in particular around the issues of agriculture, NAMA (None Agriculture Market Access) and GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) among others.

4.0 COUNTRY AND TRADE UNION PROFILES

4.1 EASTERN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION:

A total of thirteen countries form the Eastern Africa sub-region. The countries are: Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Re-union, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Within the Eastern Africa sub-region, there are two economic groupings:

- (a) East African Community (EAC-reborn 1999¹) based in Arusha, Tanzania comprising of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.
- (b) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA-1994) based in Lusaka, Zambia.

At trade union level, the East African Trade Union Council (**EATUC**) based in Arusha – Tanzania is an umbrella organisation bringing together the national trade union centres within the East Africa Community member states i.e. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Another organisation was recently formed in the Sub-region is known as the Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation. It comprises national trade union centres of Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles.

4.1.1 COMOROS

Economic Overview

The people of the Comoros are among the poorest in Africa and are heavily dependent on foreign aid. Natural resources are in short supply and the Islands' chief exports are vanilla, cloves and perfume essence and are prone to price fluctuations. Projected change in real GDP is 3.0 % in 2006 and 4.6% in 2007.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Comoros has a total population of 812,000 people and her total labour force is estimated at 144,500 people. Most of the population is engaged in farming on small land holdings, subsistence fishing, and petty commerce. The wage labour force is less than 7,000. Unemployment rate in Comoros is about 20% and 60% of the population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

In early 2005, an agreement was reached on the division of competences and on the sharing of revenues between the Union and the Islands. Mr Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi won the May 2006 presidential election with 58% of the votes. The presidency of the union rotates between the three islands

Trade Union Movement

¹ EAC has established a Court of justice in East Africa as well as the East African Legislative Assembly.

There are two national centres in Comoros, Confédération des Travailleurs de Comores (CTC) which has a total membership of 4,000 is affiliated to the OATUU, and another centre is Union Syndicale (US). CTC held its last congress in April 2005. Teachers, civil servants, and dockworkers are unionised and their unions are independent of the Government

Violation of Trade Union Rights

There are no restrictions on workers joining unions and unions joining federations or affiliating with international bodies. The law protects workers from employer interference in their right to organize and administer their unions. Unions have the right to bargain collectively; however, employers set wages in the small private sector, and the Government, especially the Ministries of Finance and Labour, set them in the larger public sector.

International Labour Standards

Comoros has ratified a total of 32 conventions including all core conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation. Three Core Conventions i.e. C.111, C.138 and C.182 were ratified in 2004.

General Outlook

The low level of education among the labour force has contributed to a subsistence level of economic activity. Unemployment is expected to remain high including the heavy dependence of foreign grants and technical assistance.

4.1.2 DJIBOUTI

Economic Overview

The economy is based on service activities connected with the country's strategic location and status as a free trade zone in Eastern Africa. Two thirds of the inhabitants live in the capital city, the rest being mostly nomadic herders. The country re-exports, hides and skins, coffee (from Ethiopia). The economy is projected to grow at 4.2% in 2006.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

In Djibouti there are about 721,000 people. Its labour force is 282,000. The unemployment rate is high due to lack of economic activities.

Political Situation

Djibouti introduced democratic system in 1992. However, the Government's human rights record remained poor, and it continued to commit serious abuses. The Government limited citizens' rights to change their government. Ismail Omar Guelleh was the only candidate in the presidential election held on April 8, 2005. Without a challenger, he won 100% of the ballots cast.

Trade Union Movement

In Djibouti there are two national centres; Union Générale de Travailleurs de Djibouti (UGTD) which is affiliated to the OATUU and WFTU; and Union Djiboutienne du Travail (UDT) with a total membership of 15,000 which is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and the Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for the right to join unions and to strike; however, the Government restricts these rights. The repressions of collective workers' action, unfair dismissals, legal prosecution, arrests, arbitrary detention and deportation of ICFTU and ILO officials have been multiplying since September 2005. Two trade union leaders Mr. Adan Mohamed, General Secretary of the Djibouti Workers' Union (UDT) and Mr. Hassan Cher Hared, UDT International Relations Secretary, were tried in a magistrate court on the charge of supplying information to a foreign power and then sent to the civil prison of Gabode. These arrests follow on from those of Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed, Head of Legal Affairs of the Post Workers' Union (UTP) and Djibril Ismael Egueh, General Secretary of the Maritime and Transit Service Union (SP-MTS) on March 5, 2005. They were also accused of supplying information to foreigners after returning from a training course in Israel, organised by the Israeli Labour Confederation Histadrut.

International Labour Standards

Djibouti has ratified a total of 62 conventions, including five Core Conventions i.e. C.29, C.87, C.98, C.100 and C.105. Djibouti also ratified convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

The country is faced with a number of economic difficulties such as heavy external debt burden. There is high unemployment and 45% of the total population live below the poverty line.

4.1.3 ERITREA

Economic Overview

The economy of Eritrea is largely based on subsistence agriculture. 80% of the population are said to be involved in farming and herding. GDP growth rate in 2006 is estimated at 1.5 %.

Size of the population and the workforce

It has a population of about 4.4 million, of which 69 percent live in rural areas and 53% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Isaias Afewerki is the First President of Eritrea since 1993. Eritrean national elections were held in 1995 between PFDJ candidates and independent candidates while regional elections have been held every five years with the last round in 2004.

Trade Union Movement

National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW) is the sole national centre in Eritrea. The NCEW represented more than 26,000 of whom 34% are women workers from five trade union federations² formed by 156 base unions. In the Central Committee of NCEW there are about 18 women out of 62 members and in the Executive Committee there is only one woman. The NCEW is an affiliate of the ICFTU-AFRO and the Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation. The main sources of income are membership fees, small income generating activities and some assistance from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and trade union organizations at regional and international levels.

The trade union movement in general is faced with the following problems and challenges:

- Lack of capacity in organising;
- Organising civil servants, teachers and those in medical profession.

The 3rd NCEW Congress was held on 8th and 9th September 2005 and Mr. Tekeste Baire was re-elected as general secretary.

Violation of Trade Unions Rights

The law restricts civil servants, military and police to join or form unions and enjoy the right to bargain collectively. The Ministry of Labour must grant special approval for groups of 20 or more persons seeking to form a union. Despite the fact that trade unions are permitted in Eritrea, but all trade unions, including the national union centre NCEW are controlled by ruling party and closely monitored by the government. In 2005 three trade union leaders were arrested by security police and were held incommunicado in a secret detention centre. The ever increasing police surveillance of civilians seriously undermines the freedom of the trade union movement.

International Labour Standards

Eritrea has ratified only seven conventions and all of them are Core Conventions i.e. C.29, C.87, C.98, C.100, C.105, C.111 and C.138. Eritrea has not ratified convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour.

General Outlook

Tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia resurfaced after Ethiopia's refusal to implement the ICJ boundary commission's ruling on the demarcation of the border. This is having a negative effect on Eritrea's economic recovery, which has also been impaired by four consecutive years of recurrent drought.

4.1.4 ETHIOPIA

Economic Overview

The economy is based on smallholder agriculture, with more than 85 percent of the estimated population of 71 million people living in rural areas under very basic conditions and engaged in subsistence farming. Agriculture accounts for approximately 45 percent of gross domestic

²a. Food and allied Federation, b. Transport and communication, c. Service Giving, d. textile , Leather and Shoes, and Mines and Chemical

product (GDP). In urban centres, the majority of economic activity is in the informal economy. Economic activity has strongly rebounded, following two years of drought. Ethiopia, one of the least developed countries in the world, remains highly dependent on external aid. The full resolution of the conflict with Eritrea on border demarcation needs to be secured for the country to sustain economic growth and poverty reduction. The growth rate is projected at 5.3 % in 2006 and 5.7% in 2007.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Ethiopia with a total of population of 73,053,286 is the second most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa. Forty four percent of Ethiopia's total population fall below the basic needs poverty line. Eight percent of the labour force is employed in agriculture and animal husbandry with only about 12% in government and services and 8% in industry and construction.

Political Situation

On May 15, 2005, the first openly contested elections in Ethiopia's history were held, with some 35 parties vying for seats. The pre-election period saw open and unprecedented public debates between the ruling party and the opposition parties. The ruling Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) party won the majority seats in the elections, which was marred with intimidation of opposition leaders, and full of irregularities, which triggered widespread protests in Addis Ababa in early June, in defiance of a government ban on demonstrations. These demonstrations resulted in mass arrests, and the international media reported an estimated 36 deaths as security forces intervened to halt the protests.

Trade Union Movement

In Ethiopia there is one national trade union centre the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Union (CETU) with a total membership of 203,560. CETU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, the Eastern Africa Trade Union Organization and OATUU. The 12th General Congress of the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions originally was held from 12th to 13th January 2006. A total of 420 delegates drawn from the 9 federations affiliated to CETU attend the Congress. The following officials were elected Mr. Kasshaun Follo – President, Mr. Brahno Gabro – Deputy President, Mr. Asnaka Demessa – Secretary General, Sister Tselay Kasse – Head of Finance Division, Mr. Tessema Heramo – Head of Education and Training Division, Mr. Mulu Gared – Head of International Relations Division, Mr. Zenebe Kabede – Head of Organising and Industrial Relations Division, Mr. Hailekross W. Michael – Head of Social Affairs Division, Mr. Brother Solomon Melesa – Head of Planning, Research and Documentation Division and Sister Rahel Ayele – Head of Women Affairs Division.

Violations of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution accords most workers the right to form and join unions; however, the law specifically excludes teachers and civil servants, including judges, prosecutors, and security service workers from forming unions.

In November 2005 following the widespread civil unrest throughout Ethiopia, the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi ordered the arrest of the leaders of the opposition, pro-democracy

activists, journalists, teachers, trade unionists and students and as well as other protesters. Dozens of them have been charged with " treason and genocide and are currently facing trial.

International Labour Standards

Ethiopia has ratified a total of 21 conventions including all the Core Conventions. However, Ethiopia has not ratified convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Poverty and poverty related issues are most crucial, as the country remains one of the poorest in the world. The extreme poverty is exacerbated by a high level of vulnerability and the large variance in levels of essential food consumption. Although the majority of the people affected by food security live in rural areas, food insecurity is also emerging in urban areas largely due to growing urban unemployment. Nevertheless, the government has positioned poverty reduction at the centre of its medium term growth strategy, as outlined in the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper - targeting the poor and the vulnerable by focusing development on agriculture as the sector which is the source of livelihood for 85% of the population.

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, especially among Ethiopian women is high and it is still on the rise. The government has developed and adopted the HIV/AIDS National Response Strategic Framework to combat HIV/AIDS and a multi sectoral programme to curb this menace is also being implemented.

4.1.5 KENYA

Economic Overview

The economy is market-based, and the large agricultural sector employs more than 70 per cent of the total population. Although many sectors continued to be dominated by state-owned monopolies, the non-agricultural economy is managed by large privately owned investors that are involved in light manufacturing, commercial, and financial businesses.

Transport, communication and tourism are driving a modest rebound in economic activity (3.5% in 2004/2005 and 3.9% in 2005/2006). However, structural reforms and good governance are needed to sustain broad-based growth. Challenging social problems require accelerated restructuring of expenditures towards poverty reduction programmes and development expenditure.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Kenya has a total population of 31.5 million people with a total labour force of 10 million people. Estimates of the unemployment rate ranged from the official 35 per cent to more than 50 per cent. Just 10 per cent of Kenya's population continues to control nearly half of the country's wealth. The portion of poor Kenyans increased from 52.3 per cent in 1997 to 56.8 per cent in 2000 and 57 per cent in 2005.

Political Situation

Kenya is in multiparty democracy. Political tensions surrounding the critical public referendum on the proposed new Constitution that was held in November 2005, rendered difficult in any significant changes to the government. Some leaders of the NARC coalition joined with the opposition party (KANU) leaders to reject the proposed constitution. Tensions are growing as the country approach yet another general election in 2007.

Trade Union Movement

Central Organisation of Trade Unions of Kenya (COTU) is the sole national centre in Kenya. There are 42 unions representing approximately 600,000 workers, approximately one-third of the country's formal-sector work force. The Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) has a total membership of 271,380.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), which is the largest non-COTU affiliate union. COTU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, EATUC, CTUC and the Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation. COTU held its Congress from 19th -20th May 2006. Mr Francis Atwoli was re-elected as General Secretary, Mr Rajab Omondi- Chairman General, Rev Joel Chebii- 1st Vice Chairman General,, Mr Francis Murage- 2nd Vice Chairman, George Muchai- Deputy Secretary General, George Odiko – Assistant Secretary General, Cornel O Nyangun- Treasurer General, Ms Annah Okero- Deputy Treasurer General, Francis Waweru, Marco Tindi and Joseph Nyabiya- Trustees.

Violations of Trade Unions Rights

Frequent violations of the right to strike continued amid increasingly tense industrial relations. Nurses were suspended for strike action, some tea plantation workers were sacked, university staff were threatened to be dismissed and the government fired 1,600 civil servants for taking part in a strike. Workers in the military, police, prisons and youth services and senior teachers are still not allowed to join unions or bargain collectively.

In practice, the right to strike is frequently violated in Kenya. During the period under review, the Minister of Labour generally intervened and proposed a mediator for the dispute. If the negotiations break down, the government usually refers the matter to an industrial court, pre-empting any decision to engage in any strike action. In cases where workers have become frustrated with the lengthy process and have decided to go ahead with a strike, their action has usually been declared illegal.

New Teachers Service Commission (TSC) regulations introduced on 1 October 2005 prohibit senior teaching staff from playing an active part in the trade union, including participating in strikes.

International Labour Standards

Kenya has ratified a total of 49 conventions including seven Core Conventions i.e. C.98, C.138, C.182, C.29, C.105, C.100 and C.111 as well as convention number 144 on tripartite consultation. However, Kenya has not ratified Convention 87.

General Outlook

Government mismanagement and corruption are still worrying most Kenyans and donors. Between October 2004 and January 2006, the World Bank did not approve any lending operations for Kenya. Meanwhile, it has awaited the implementation the outcome and follow-up of various audit activities on its existing portfolio of projects to ensure that it is adequately block any possible corruption.

4.1.6 MADAGASCAR

Economic Overview

The country is very poor and agriculture is still the largest sector of the economy. Shrimp and vanillas are the leading exports. Macroeconomic stability and robust growth have been re-established after the sever weather and sharp depreciation of the currency (50% against the euro) in the first half of 2004. There has been some progress in the reform of public enterprises and in the fight against corruption. The HIPC point was reached in October 2004. This should help in the fight poverty, which currently affects 80% of the entire population.

Size of the population and the workforce

Madagascar has an estimated total population of 16.9 million people with a total labour force estimated at 7 million people.

Political Situation

In Madagascar the President is elected by popular vote. Opposition political parties were legalized in 1990 and Madagascar is now a multiparty republic. The current government was elected in December 2002, the next election will be held in 2006

Trade Union Movement

In Madagascar there are multiplicity of national trade union centres (eight national centres) namely Fivondronamben'ny Mpiaga Malagasy (FMM) with a total membership of 30,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU held its congress in June 2005, Union Syndicats Autonomes de Madagascar (USAM) with a total membership of 2,706 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Sendika Krtianina Malagasi (SEKRIMA) with a total membership of 5,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU and Fédération du Travailleurs Malagasy Revolutionnaires (FISEMA) is affiliated to the WFTU and OATUU, Cartel National des Organisations Syndicale de Madagascar (CARNOSYMA) is affiliated to the OATUU, Fédération des Syndicats de Travailleurs de Madagascar(FISEMARE) with a total membership of 60,000 is affiliated to the WFTU and OATUU, Sendika Revoliskonera Malagasy (SEREMA) is affiliated to the OATUU and Union Syndicale des Travailleurs et Paysans Malagaches (USTPM) is affiliated to the OATUU.

Ministry of Labour statistics indicate that less than 5 percent of workers in EPZ companies and less than 10 percent of all workers are unionised, this is due to the fact that between 70 and 80 percent of the workforce is engaged in subsistence agriculture. Despite the existence of several public employees' unions, few public employees are union members.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

There is widespread of anti-trade union activities in the country's main export-processing zones and in the public sector. Some provisions in the legislation are incompatible with the protection of trade union rights.

International Labour Standards

Madagascar has ratified a total of 38 conventions including seven Core Conventions (C.87, C.98, C.182, C.138, C.29, C.100, and C.111) and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation. It has not ratified Convention 105 on forced labour.

General Outlook

In 2004 and 2005, the government announced a comprehensive package of measures to stabilize the economy, with an increase in the reserve requirements and the interest rate, a 10 percent reduction in current expenditures, and efforts to rectify the VAT, and a safety net programme put in place.

4.1.7 MAURITIUS

Economic Overview

The country has undergone a deep transformation over the last 25 years from crop (sugar) production into a diversified economy built on five pillars: sugar, export, processing zones (EPZs), tourism, financial and communication services. Solid growth of 4.3% in 2004, stable and democratic political regime, and strong high quality institutions make Mauritius the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa to be on track to meet the MDGs. Mauritius now faces substantial new challenges in adapting to the impending loss of trade preferences in sugar and textiles, while reducing unemployment and fiscal imbalances.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Mauritius has a total population of 1.2 million people with 65.4% of the total population in the age group between 15 and 59 years. Unemployment rate in Mauritius is estimated at 8.6% of the total labour force.

Political Situation

Mauritius enjoys a very stable political system based on a multiparty democracy. The last elections took place on 3 July 2005. Leader of the Alliance Sociale, Sir Anerood Jugnauth is President of the Republic and Mr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, leader of the Labour Party, is Prime Minister.

Trade Union Movement

In Mauritius there are seven national centres; Mauritius Labour Congress (MLC) with a total membership of 30,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU, Mauritius Trade Union Congress (MTUC) which is also affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO has a membership of 33,000, General Workers Federation (GWF) is affiliated to the WFTU and OATUU, Confédération des Syndicats du Service Civil (FSSC0 with a total membership of 20,000 is affiliated to the WCL, National Trade Union Confederation (NTCU) with a total membership of 10,000 is affiliated to

the DOAWTU, Mauricienne de Travailleurs (CMT) with a total membership of 10,258 is affiliated to the WCL, Federation of progressive Unions (FPU) is affiliated to the WCL and Fédération Syndicale des Corps Constitués (FSCC) is affiliated to the WCL.

Worker unions are independent of the Government, but some are closely associated with political parties.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The labour law authorises freedom of association within EPZs. However, the rate of unionisation is particularly low in the EPZ because employees are intimidated by employers and restricted access to union organisers. There are some restrictions on the rights of workers in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs). Reportedly 85,700 persons are employed in the EPZ but only 10 percent of EPZ workers are organised.

Correspondingly, Labour legislation applies in the export processing zones (EPZs), but there are also specific labour laws that condone longer working hours (45 hours a week plus 10 hours' compulsory overtime in the EPZs compared to 35 to 48 hours in non-EPZ sectors).

International Labour Standards

Mauritius has ratified a total of 39 conventions including all Core Conventions i.e. C.98, C.138, C.182, C.29, C.105, C.100, C.111 and C. 87, which was just ratified in April 2005. Mauritius has also ratified convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

In the African context, Mauritius can be considered a successful case of sustained economic growth associated with a substantial welfare improvement of the entire population.

4.1.8 RE-UNION

Economic Overview

The economy of Re-union has traditionally been based on agriculture. Sugarcane has been the primary crop for more than a century, and in some years it accounts for 85% of exports. The government is developing the tourist industry to create jobs and reduce the high rate of unemployment.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Re-union has a total population of 743,981 people and labour force is estimated at 261,000 people. Re-union is experiencing a high unemployment rate of 42.8% of the total labour force.

Political Situation

Re-union is an appendage of France. The French President appoints the leadership. Reunion has a multi-party system, with numerous parties in which no one party often has a chance of gaining power alone, and parties must work with each other to form coalition governments.

Trade Union Movement

In Re-union there is only one national centre the Union Régionale - (CFDT) with a total membership of 13,049. CFDT is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. UIR-CFDT organised its last congress in June 2005.

General Outlook

The gap in Re-union between the well off and the poor is extraordinary high and accounts for the persistent social tensions. Minority groups are poverty stricken and unemployed. The economic well being of Re-union depends heavily on continued financial assistance from France.

4.1.9 SEYCHELLES

Economic Overview

The economy is primarily based on tourism. However, the fishing industry is also an important sector. In Seychelles growth is led by the tourism sector, which employs about 30% of the labour force and provides more than 70% of hard currency earnings. In an attempt to deal with the economic difficulties, the government introduced in late May 2003 a Macro Economic Reform Plan (MERP). However, output continued to fall. Since the introduction of the MERP, real GDP declined by more than 10 percent in cumulative terms; per capita GDP followed suit, by falling by over 10 percent for the same period.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Seychelles has an estimated total population of 84,000 people with a total labour force estimated at 30,900.

Political Situation

Since the multi-party elections took place in 1993, 1998, and 2001, the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) led by President France Albert Rene won all three elections. President Rene resigned in April 2004 and Vice President James Michel was sworn into office. The next presidential elections were scheduled to take place in mid-2006.

Trade Union Movement

In Seychelles there are three national centres, the Seychelles Federation of Workers' Unions (SFWU) with a total membership of 5,000, SFWU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. The Seychelles Federation of Workers Union is dominated by the SPPF (ruling party). The Seychelles Federation of Labour (SFL) is some how independent, and the Seychelles National Trade Union (SNTU), which has close connections to the opposition SNP party.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides workers with the right to engage in collective bargaining; however, free collective bargaining did not take place. The Government has the right to review and approve all

collective bargaining agreements in the public and private sectors. Trade unions in Seychelles are not very independent. There is little flexibility in setting wages. In the public sector, which employed 57 percent of the labour force, the Government set mandatory wage scales for employees. The employer generally set wages in the private sector in individual agreements with the employee, but, in the few larger businesses, the Government set wage rates.

International Labour Standards

Seychelles has ratified a total of 27 conventions including all Core Conventions but has not been ratified convention 144 on Tripartite Consultation.

General Outlook

Seychelles is faced with alarming challenges in the years ahead. Without a significant change in policy direction, Seychelles' economic prospects are bleak. In the absence of a comprehensive reform programme, output is projected to decline by 1 per cent per year in the medium term, due to pervasive foreign exchange shortages and the resulting import compression of essential inputs for production.

4.1.10 SOMALIA

Economic Overview

Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world, a situation aggravated by the protracted civil war and the absence of a functioning national government for over a decade. There is significant investment in commercial ventures, including airlines, telecommunications, hotels, fishery resources, and trade, partially funded by remittances from the Diasporas.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Somalia has a total population of 9.4 million people with an estimated labour force of 3.7 million people. The country's economic problems and continued drought have caused severe unemployment and malnutrition, especially in the south.

Political situation

The only entity in Somalia claiming to represent the country as a whole is the Transitional Federal Government, formed in late 2004. The government is still based in Biadoa for purely security reasons. It is recognized internationally, but has failed to establish its authority throughout the country.

However, Somaliland has formed a hybrid system of governance combining traditional and western institutions. Somaliland held elections to an 82-member House of Representatives on 29 September 2005. It was the first multiparty parliamentary election conducted in the unrecognized breakaway republic since 1991, when Somali descended into civil war and Somaliland declared its independence.

Trade Union Movement

General Federation of Somalia Trade Unions (GFSTU) collapsed with military regime. On 29 and 31 August in 2005, 170 journalists from the main regions of Somali gathered in Mogadishu to attend the General Assembly and to debate various issues including security of journalists and freedom of press. The delegates made amendments to the constitution changing the Somali Journalists Network (SOJON) into a trade union named the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ). This organisation (SOJON) has been there for the last three years. The NUSOJ is the first trade union organisation to be formed in Somali since the overthrow of the military regime.

However, in the northern part there is the Somaliland Trade Union Organisation, which claims to have a membership of 26,000 and has received assistance from the ILO. It claims to be democratic and independent.

International Labour Standards

Somalia has ratified 14 conventions including 3 Core Conventions (C. 29, C. 105 and C. 111).

General Outlook

The civil conflict, continuing insecurity in many parts of the country and poor access to services and infrastructure have made conditions worse than they were before the civil war.

4.1.11 SUDAN

Economic Overview

Current oil production stands at 220,000 barrels per day, of which 70% is exported and the rest refined mostly for domestic consumption. Agriculture production remains Sudan's most important sector, employing 80% of the workforce and contributing 43% of GDP. However, most of the farms remain rain-fed and susceptible to drought. In 2003 the economy grew at 6.0 % and at 6% in 2004.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Sudan has a total of 32.8 million people with a total labour force of 11 million and the unemployment rate is 18.7%.

Political Situation

Sudan is an authoritarian regime. Sudan has no form of democracy and the politics of the country are strongly controlled by the Muslim clerics. For public media there is little freedom of speech, but large parts of Sudanese life are beyond the control of the government, and freedom to express opinions can be exercised.

The on-going civil war has displaced more than 4 million southerners. Some fled into southern cities, such as Juba; others walked as far north as Khartoum and even into Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt, Chad and other neighbouring countries.

Trade Union Movement

Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation (SWFTUF) is the only national centre. It is affiliated to the OATUU and Eastern African Trade Union Organisation.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for the right of association for economic and trade union purposes; however, the Government restricts this right in practice. The Government prescribes severe punishments, including the death penalty, for violations of its labour decrees. The Trade Union Act established a trade union monopoly. Only the government-controlled Sudan Workers Trade Union Federation (SWTUF) can function legally, and all other unions were banned.

Labour organizing committees have the right to organize and bargain collectively; however, in practice, government control of the steering committees meaning that the Government dominates the process of setting wages and working conditions. The Labour Code strengthens government control over trade unions and continues to deny trade unions autonomy to exercise their basic right to organize or to bargain collectively.

International Labour Standards

Sudan has ratified a total of 14 conventions including seven core conventions (C. 98, C. 29, C. 105, C. 100, C. 111, C. 138 and C. 182). The government has not ratified Convention No 87.

General Outlook

Sudan is facing several problems including civil war and chronic instability. There are wide regional disparities in economic and social development. Without addressing these problems the country is likely to remain at or below the poverty line for years.

4.1.12 TANZANIA

Economic Overview

Sustained strong economic performance (6.4% in 2004) and high levels of donor support (more than 30% of budget revenue) offer the opportunity to break out of poverty. Steady macroeconomic policies and improved business environment are key issues to promoting broad-based growth and further reduction in poverty. Long-term growth through 2005 featured a pick-up in industrial production and a substantial increase in output of minerals, led by gold. Recent banking reforms have helped increase private-sector growth and investment. Growth reached 7 percent in 2005 and is estimated to be 7.2 percent in 2006.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Tanzania has an estimated total population of 37 million people and a labour force of 13.5 million. Unemployment rate is 13% of the total labour force.

Political Situation

Tanzania is one of the most politically stable countries in Africa. Tanzania is following multiparty democracy since its introduction in 1992. The Zanzibar, although integrated into the country's governmental and party structures, has its own President and Parliament and continues to exercise considerable autonomy. The presidential and parliament elections were held in October and December 2005 and Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete from the Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) was elected President of the United Republic of Tanzania for five-year term. In Zanzibar, Amani Karume from CCM was also re-elected in the October election, winning 53.18% of the votes. This time, however, international observers gave the election a stamp of approval with some going to the extent of labeling it as an example to follow.

Trade Union Movement

In Tanzania there are three national centres. In Tanzania mainland there is Trade Unions' Congress of Tanzania (TUCTA) with 359,930 (38% are women) members. TUCTA has thirteen affiliates. TUCTA is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, SATUCC, CTUC, Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation and EATUC. Its main sources of income are membership contributions, small income generating activities and donor support.

Participation of women in leadership and in decision-making bodies is still low, only 25% of all members of the TUCTA general council are women. However, on average if you combine all affiliates of TUCTA, 44.5% of members of the general councils are women but only 2% of women are in top leadership positions (chairperson/general secretary).

Another national centre is known as Tanzania Federation of labour (TFL). It is not yet registered. While in the Island there is only one national centre the Zanzibar Trade Union Congress (ZATUC) with a total membership of 14,000. ZATUC is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law allows workers to form and join unions without prior authorization. However, in practice, many private sector employers adopted anti-union policies or tactics that limited this right. The Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar Governments do not share the same labour laws, and they enforce them separately. The labour law that applies to the mainland applies to both public and private sector workers. The mainland's law requires a trade union for employees to consist of at least 20 members, and for employers, 4.

In Zanzibar labour law requires that a union consist of 50 members to be registered, and it stipulates that trade union officers must possess a sufficiently high literacy level. On Zanzibar, the law prohibits all workers from striking.

In April 2004, the President assented to two labour bills that Parliament passed after consultations with unions and employers. But so far, the Ministry of Labour has not implemented the new labour laws because it had not yet established transitional arrangements.

In Tanzania mainland, the registrar is permitted to deregister the smaller trade unions when more than one exists in an industry and to order the smaller union to rescind memberships. The Registrar can suspend a trade union for contravening the law or the union's own rules, suspend a union for 6 months on grounds of public order or security, and invalidate the union's international trade union affiliation if certain internal union procedures are not followed.

In Zanzibar trade union rights on freedom of association are violated under the EPZ Act, which in a way hinders the formation of free trade unions in EPZ.

International Labour Standards

Tanzania has ratified a total of 46 conventions including all Core conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Tanzania is facing a number of socio-economic problems including a high level of unemployment. 51.1% of the population live below the poverty line and the HIV/AIDS pandemic prevalence rate is estimated at 8.8%. However, the Government finalized its second PRSP, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, which focuses on economic growth with emphasis on agriculture and rural development, as well as the further strengthening of the business environment to boost private sector-led growth and export diversification.

4.1.13 UGANDA

Economic Overview

Prudent macroeconomic policies are paying off in steady economic growth (5.9% in 2004) and high levels of donor support (more than 35% of total budget revenue). However, poverty is on the rise (8.9 millions of Ugandans were poor in 2003 compared to 7.2 millions in 2000)

Size of the Population and the Workforce

In Uganda the total population is estimated at 28,195,754 million people. The incidence of poverty rose from 34% in 1999/2000 to 38% in 2002/2003. The labour force is estimated at 12 million people.

Political Situation

On 4th May 2005, the Ugandan Parliament voted to conduct a referendum on the reintroduction of multi-party politics in Uganda. The referendum was held on 28th July 2005, and Ugandans voted for a return to multi-party politics. The elections of 2006 took place on 23 February 2006. This was the first multiparty election since Yoweri Museveni, the current president, took over power in 1986. Six candidates contested for the Presidential office, and close to 33 parties entered the Parliamentary and District chairperson elections.

Yoweri Museveni ran for re-election. His main opponent was the leader of the opposition party Forum for Democratic Change, Kizza Besigye. Besigye was arrested on November 2005, on allegations of treason, concealment of treason, and rape. Official figures released on 25 February 2006 showed Museveni had won 59% of the vote, giving him a third term as President, while main rival Kizza Besigye got 37%.

Trade Union Movement

In Uganda there are two national centres namely National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) and the Central Organisation of Free Trade Unions (COFTU). Twenty unions are affiliated to NOTU with a total membership of 145,000, out of an estimated 2 million persons working in the formal sector. In NOTU leadership the Deputy Secretary General, Vice Chairperson and Deputy Treasurer are women. The main sources of its income are members' contribution, donation from other trade unions and cooperating partners abroad. NOTU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, CTUC, Eastern Africa Trade Union Organisation and EATUC.

The second national centre is the Central Organization of Free Trade Unions (COFTU). The losing candidate at the last election and his supporters complained that the polling was unfair and announced the formation of a rival union federation. Five of NOTU's affiliated unions defected to COFTU. COFTU is also recognised under the Labour Union Act of 2000 which was assented this year.

One of the Uganda's break through in industrial relations in the recent history is recognition of trade unions in EPZs by signing recognition and procedural agreements which promises formation of trade unions within the sector

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for the right of every person to join workers' associations or trade unions. The Government at times doesn't respect this right in practice. Restrictions continue to limit trade union freedom in Uganda.

However, the Parliament passed four bills namely Labour Union's Act 2000, Employment Act 2000, Labour Dispute and Settlement Act 2000 and Occupation Safety and Working Environment Act 2000. This was seen as a great step in attainment of workers' rights and freedoms as enshrined in the National Constitution (Articles 29 and 40) ,and in the ILO Core Conventions.

International Labour Standards

Uganda has ratified a total of 28 conventions including all Core Conventions C. 98, C. 182, C. 29, C. 105, C. 138, C. 100, C. 111 and C. 87. Core Conventions C. 100, C. 111 and C. 87 were ratified in June 2005. Convention 144 on tripartite has also been ratified.

General Outlook

Uganda was one of the first countries to be affected by HIV/AIDS. Sustained efforts to combat the disease at the highest level of Government have resulted in a dramatic decline in the HIV prevalence rate from approximately 18.5 per cent in the early 1990s to 6 per cent in 2003. Similarly, the country's firm commitment to poverty reduction, as spelled out in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP, Uganda's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper), and the World Bank's and other Development Partners' contributions brought the country closer to reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

4.2 NORTHERN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION:

Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania and Egypt form the Northern Africa sub-region. In this sub-region the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), consisting of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, is one of the oldest sub-regional cooperation bodies in Africa.

At trade union level, the Union Syndicat des Travailleurs du Maghreb Arabe (**USTMA**) brings together trade union federations in the sub-region. The USTMA was formed in Casablanca in April 1991 with a view to increasing the unity between the trade unions in the Maghreb states. USTMA issued the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of Workers in the Maghreb.

4.2.1 ALGERIA

Economic Overview

Economic performance in 2003/2004 confirmed the positive results achieved in recent years. The economy remains vulnerable to price fluctuations in the oil and gas sector. A substantial increase in public investment has helped to reduce unemployment. The economy was expected to grow at around 4.5% in 2005 and 2006.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Algeria has a total population of 31.2 million people while total labour force is estimated at 8.6 million people. A negligible number of jobs have been created in the industrial sector. The youth unemployment rate remains persistently high, over 45 per cent, and affecting especially new university graduates and first-time job seekers. Unemployment rate is 27.3% and 22.6% of the population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

The president was re-elected in April 2004 with 85% of the vote. So far lawlessness has not yet been completely eradicated the justice system is still not fully independent and corruption is still rampant. Security improved noticeably; however, labour unrest persisted in 2004, notably in the education and health sectors.

Trade Union Movement

In Algeria Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens (UGTA) is the only national centre with a total membership of 1,350,000. UGTA is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, ICATU and USTMA.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Attempts from new unions to form federations or confederations have been obstructed by delaying administrative manoeuvres. The Autonomous Unions Confederation (CSA) has attempted since early 1996 to organize the autonomous unions, but without success. The CSA continued to function without official status.

The right to strike is also severely suppressed in a country where any trade union demonstrations can be considered as an act of terrorism or subversion. In 1990 a law was enacted which prohibits trade unions from having links with political parties or receiving funds from abroad.

Correspondingly, the law provides that all public demonstrations, protests, and strikes must receive government authorization prior to commencement

International Labour Standards

Algeria has ratified a total of 54 conventions. In connection with that Algeria has ratified all core conventions plus convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Within a difficult socio-political environment, Algeria has succeeded in making a fundamental opening of the political process, with the end of the one-party system and the adoption of policies encouraging democratic practices. The overall performance is good but the economy still relies too heavily on the oil and gas sector for growth.

4.2.2 EGYPT

Economic Overview

Growth has revived since mid-2003 driven by improved external competitiveness. The economy is going through an important phase of economic reforms. The government faces two major economic challenges: an increase in unemployment and a large public debt. Real GDP grew at 4.3% in 2003/2004, as against 3.2% the preceding year. It was projected to grow at 4.6% in 2004/2005 and 4.8% in 2005/06.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Egypt has an estimated total population of 76 million people and labour force is estimated 20.2 million people. Unemployment rate is 10.5 % while 22.9% of the whole population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Egypt is divided into 26 administrative sections. In February 2005 President Mubarak proposed an amendment to article 76 of the constitution that would allow, for the first time, multi-candidate presidential elections. A referendum was held on May 25, as required by the constitution, and the amendment was approved (reportedly, with a majority of over 82% support). The 4th and current President of Egypt is still Hosni Mubarak. He is serving his fifth term in office. President Mubarak is not constitutionally barred from yet another term.

Trade Union Movement

In Egypt there is only one National Centre i.e. Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) with a total membership of 4 million and is affiliated to the OATUU, ICATU and USTMA. There are also a number of independent unions and NGO's representing workers interests. However they are faced with repression policies from the state. Most union members, about one-quarter of the labour force are employed by state-owned enterprises. Unionisation decreased in the past several years as a result of early retirement plans in the public sector enterprises, and the privatisation of many of these enterprises. There are about 23 trade unions all belong to the ETUF the sole legally recognized workers' federation.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Freedom of association is non-existent in Egypt, the trade union monopoly remains in place. Workers may join trade unions, but are not required to do so. A union local or workers' committee may be formed if 50 employees express a desire to organise.

Strikes are prohibited in strategic or vital entities in which the interruption of work could result in a disturbance of national security or basic services. A recently issued prime ministerial decree complementing the new labour law identifies strategic and vital entities: national security and military production facilities; hospitals and medical centres; pharmacies; bakeries; public transportation and cargo transportation; civil defence facilities; public utilities (water, waste water, gas, electricity, and communications); ports and airports; and educational institutions.

The government continues to keep close control over the ETUF, which in turn exercises control over its affiliated national industrial federations. Legal recognition is only granted to unions, which belong to those federations. There is little tolerance of the very limited right to strike, as demonstrated during an air traffic controllers' strike when the Civil Aviation Minister reportedly described the strikers as 'traitors' who could be executed

There is lack of protection of the right of workers' organizations to organize their administration, including their financial activities, without interference from public authorities. There are also a few employers' associations, but they have little industrial power.

International Labour Standards

Egypt has ratified a total of 62 conventions including all Core Conventions and Convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

After several years of slow growth, the Egyptian economy is on the road to recovery. The recovery has been mainly due to the contribution from the tourism sector, significant natural gas discoveries and exports, and higher merchandise exports helped by a significantly depreciated Egyptian pound. However, the higher growth rate has not yet translated into a reduced unemployment rate which was reported officially to be at 10.5 per cent but is even higher by unofficial estimates.

4.2.3 LIBYA

Economic Overview

Since the lifting in 2003-04 of international sanctions, Libya has experienced a strong economic growth, mostly driven by high oil prices and investments in that run-down sector. In 2005, however, economic reforms and trade liberalisation has finally lifted Libya's under-developed non-oil sector to become the motor of economic growth. This comes despite the still persistent limits to foreign investments. With an estimated total real GDP growth at 3.5 per cent in 2005, the non-oil sector had contributed to most of the growth.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Libya has an estimated total population of 5.7 million people and a labour force of about 1.5 million people. Unemployment rate in the country is 30 per cent of the total labour force.

Political Situation

Libya is a military dictatorship regime and there are no political parties. There is some freedom of speech, but somehow controlled. The head of state in Libya has been in power since 1969 and there are no established mechanisms for political change in the country.

Trade Union Movement

General Federation of Producers Trade Unions (GFPTU) is the only national centre. GFPTU with a total membership of 500,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, OATUU, ICATU and USTMA.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Freedom of association is non-existent in Libya. Libyan legislation still prohibits the formation of independent trade unions. Independent trade unions and professional associations are prohibited, and workers do not have the right to form their own unions. The Government regards such structures as unacceptable. The rights of foreign workers are particularly disregarded. Collective bargaining does not exist in any meaningful sense, because the labour law empowers the Government to approve all agreements. Similarly, the law does not provide workers with the right to strike and there is heavy government control over the press.

International Labour Standards

Libya has ratified a total of 29 conventions including all Core Conventions but it has not ratified convention number 144.

General Outlook

Despite these moves towards an open market economy, the Libyan economy still is largely state controlled and poorly diversified. Three quarters of employment in the country of 5.7 million inhabitants is still in the public sector and private investment is very small, reaching only 2 percent of GDP, according to recent statistics. The oil sector remains totally under exploited.

4.2.4 MAURITANIA

Economic Overview

Mauritania is a sparsely populated country at the western extremity of the Saharan desert. Only the southern extremity supports rain-fed vegetation (more than 90 per cent of the land surface is desert, with less than 200 mm rainfall per year).

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Mauritania had a total population of 2.7 million people in 2004. Total labour force is estimated 786,000 people and the unemployment level is 21%. 57% of the population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Politics in Mauritania continue to be tribally based. Conflict between white, black Moor, and non-Moor ethnic groups, centering on language, land tenure, and other issues, continues to pose challenges to the idea of national unity. On August 3, 2005 a bloodless coup disposed President Ould Taya who was governing the country since 1985, first after a military coup and then after three democratic presidential elections, the last one in 2003. The country has been under the Military Council for Justice and Democracy headed by Colonel Ely Ould Mohamed Vall since August 2005. Presidential elections are scheduled for March 2007.

Trade Union Movement

The majority of the labour force is in the informal economy, with most workers engaged in subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry; only 25 per cent are employed in the wage sector. However, nearly 90 per cent of industrial and commercial workers are organized.

There are about five labour confederations: The Union of Mauritanian Workers (UTM), the General Confederation of Mauritanian Workers (CGTM), the Free Confederation of Mauritanian Workers (CLTM) with a total membership of 5,000 is affiliated to DOAWTU, and the General Union of Mauritanian Workers (USLM). The UGTM, founded in 2002, is the most closely allied with the ruling PRDS. Many workers still viewed UTM, the oldest confederation, as also closely allied with the Government and the ruling PRDS; however, it has lost members to the CGTM and the CLTM. The CGTM with a total membership of 25,000 is not affiliated with any party, although most of its members tend to favour the opposition. CGTM is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU and USTMA. CGTM held its congress in December 2005. The CLTM is associated with the AC opposition party. The Government provide funds to the confederations in proportion to their memberships.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides for unions to organize workers freely without government or employer interference, although to be legally recognized a union is required to have the authorisation of the Public Prosecutor who can provisionally suspend a trade union at the request of the Ministry of the Interior if believes that the union has not complied with the law.

The law guarantees workers the right to strike. However, strikes in the private sector have to be preceded by submission of a non-conciliation or negotiation-breakdown report. The Government can dissolve a union for what it considered an "illegal" or "politically motivated" strike.

International Labour Standards

Mauritania has ratified a total of 42 conventions including all Core Conventions. However, Mauritania has not ratified convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Mauritania will continue to face many challenges, which oil revenues may not solve, or may even aggravate if not carefully managed. Sources of growth are few, and the economy is dominated by mining and fishing with few experiences of other competitive sectors. Despite the liberalization efforts, competition among companies is limited, with a small circle of families or groups dominating all main markets and economic activities.

4.2 .5 MOROCCO

Economic Overview

Significant progress has been made in democratisation and in the fight against social and regional disparities. The economy is enjoying good growth (3.5 %) and increased macroeconomic stability. More efforts will be needed to reduce poverty and the heavy dependence of the economy on the agricultural sector.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Morocco has an estimated total population of 30 million people and total labour force is estimated at 11 million people. Unemployment level dropped from 22 in 1999 to 18.4 % in 2004. About 19% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Morocco is a constitutional monarchy and has been in a period of political transition since 1998. Much has changed in Morocco over the past decade, including efforts to liberalise public life and make government and public institutions operate more transparently. King Mohammed VI has taken steps to boost civil liberties and human rights.

Trade Union Movement

There are several trade union centres in Morocco such as the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT) with a total membership of 305,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, ICATU and USTMA, the Confédération Démocratique du Travail (CDT) with a total membership of 40,000 is affiliated to DOAWTU and OATUU, the Union Générale des Travailleurs du Maroc (UGTM) with a total membership of 21,765 is affiliated to the OATUU and DOAWTU; the Islamist-oriented Union Nationale du Travail du Maroc (UNTM); and a breakaway wing of the CDT, the Fédération Démocratique du Travail (FDT). Most of trade unions are linked to political parties. The UMT dominates the private sector; the CDT and FDT dominate the public sector.

Other organisations are the Union des Travailleurs Marocains (UTM), Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Libres(USTL), Forces Ouvrières Marocains (FO), Syndicat Démocratique du Travail du Maroc (SDTM), Union Marocaine dei'Action (UMA), Union Nationale des Syndicats des Travailleurs libres (UNSTL), Union des Syndicats Populaires (USP), Syndicat Nationale Populaire (SNP), Union Nationale de l'Action (UNA), Syndicat Autonome du Travail (SAT), Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Maroc (CGTM), Syndicat National Démocratique (SND), Union Démocratique des Travailleurs (UDT), Union des Syndicats Démocratique (USD), Commission Ouvrière Marocaines (COM), Syndicat del l'Action, Sociale (SAS), Syndicats Confédérés (SC) and Organisation Marocaine des Travailleurs Unis (MTU).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Serious violations of trade union rights continue. Police force brutality is increasingly being used to suppress labour disputes. The law permits workers to establish and join trade unions of their own choosing, although the laws reportedly have not been implemented in some areas, and the unions were not completely free from government interference.

The new July 2003 Code specifically prohibits anti-union discrimination and incorporates ILO Convention 87. In the past, under the perceived justification of separation for cause, employers had dismissed workers for union activities that were regarded as threatening to employer interests. The new law expressly prohibits companies from dismissing workers for participating in legitimate union organising activities. The new law also prescribes the Government's authority, under Section 288 of the Penal Code, to intervene in strikes.

With the passage of the new Code the rights to organise and bargain collectively are now statutorily mandated. Any group of eight workers may organize a union and a worker may change union affiliation easily. A work site may contain several independent local trade unions or local trade unions affiliated with more than one labour federation. However, only unions able to show that they have membership of at least 35 percent of the workforce must be recognised as negotiating partners

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

A total of 49 conventions have been ratified by Morocco in line with that Morocco has ratified seven core conventions i.e. C. 98, C. 29, C. 105, C. 100, C. 111, C. 138 and C. 182 but has not ratified Convention No. 87.

General Outlook

To sustain growth the government will have to press on with its reform programme and to bring industry up to the standard. Although unemployment rate dropped, still, to be able to reduce unemployment rates in the coming years, the economy must sustain growth rates of at least 6 per cent annually.

4.2.6 TUNISIA

Economic Overview

Tunisia has a diverse economy, with important agricultural, mining, energy, tourism and manufacturing sectors. Tunisia is well integrated both commercially and financially into the global economy. Strong economic growth over the last few years should be reinforced in 2005 and 2006. More efforts should be made to prepare the country to meet the challenges of diversification and economic competitiveness following its opening to the world market.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Tunisia has an estimated total population of 9.7 million people while 4.2% of the total population live below the poverty line. Total labour force is 2.7 million people. Unemployment has remained relatively high at about 14 per cent of the labour force. With a steady increase in the number of young graduates, it is considerably higher for new job seekers.

Political Situation

Elections for the presidency and the parliament are held every five years. The government is virtually a dictatorship though internal political situation is stable with strong social and economic progress having been made. However, the government has been working to ensure a smooth political transition and make progress in liberalising public affairs. These reforms have been given practical expression in a law that provides for the organisation of political parties and another law on public financing of parties.

Trade Union Movement

In Tunisia there is one national centre i.e. Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT) with a total membership of 532,917. The UGTT's membership includes persons associated with all political groups. Its main sources of income are membership fees and substantial government subsidies to supplement modest union dues. UGTT is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, ICATU and USTMA.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Trade unions, including those representing civil servants, have the right to strike, provided that they give 10 days advance notice to the UGTT and it grants approved.

International Labour Standards

Tunisia has ratified a total of 58 conventions and all Core Conventions; however Tunisia has not ratified convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Among Tunisia's chief challenges are to further improve on its progress in economic growth, human development, and equity. Tunisia has an impressive record in poverty reduction over the years, cutting the overall incidence of poverty from 40 in 1970, to 16 per cent in 1990, to 10 per cent in 2000. However, poverty remains considerably higher in rural areas

4.3 WEST AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

The countries that form the West African sub-region are sixteen in total namely Senegal, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe and Nigeria.

There is one economic grouping in the sub-region i.e. the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria came into existence in 1975.

At the trade union level, there is one sub-regional trade union organisation i.e. the Organisation of Trade Unions of West African (**OTUWA**). It was revitalized in August 2003 after a long period of inaction.

4.3.1 BENIN

Economic Overview

The economy of Benin remains underdeveloped and depends on subsistence agriculture, cotton production and regional trade. Real GDP growth slowed to 3.1 per cent in 2004, recovering somewhat to 4 per cent in 2005. Poor performance of the cotton sector due to declining international prices and an intensification of trade restrictions in Nigeria led to this economic slowdown. The cotton sector which provides income for more than two million people and is the country's main export is undergoing a major crisis owing to difficulties in the liberalisation of the sector at a time of low prices.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Benin has an estimated total population of 7.5 million people and 49.4% of the total population are in the age group of 15 to 59 years. The incidence of monetary poverty remained almost static at 29 percent between 2000 and 2004.

Political Situation

During the 2001 presidential elections alleged irregularities led to a boycott of the run-off poll by the main opposition candidates. The second round balloting, originally scheduled for March 18, 2001, was postponed for days because both two opposition party leaders withdrew, alleging electoral fraud. This left Kérékou to run against his own Minister of State, Amoussou, in what was termed a "friendly match". The next elections were held in March 2006 and Kérékou was unable to stand, political newcomer Yayi Boni was elected, defeating Adrien Houngbedji of Democratic Renewal Party in a second round of voting.

Trade Union Movement

Although approximately 75 per cent of the wage earners belong to worker unions, a much smaller percentage of workers in the private sector are union members. There are several union confederations, and generally unions are independent of government and political parties.

In Benin there are seven national centres namely Union Nationale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Bénin (UNSTB) with 42,000(37% are women) membership is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OTUWA and OATUU, Centrale des Syndicats Autonomes du Bénin (CSA-B) is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO with a total membership of 53,000(23% are women), Confédération Générale Travailleurs du Bénin (CGTB) with a total membership of 8,650 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Centrale Syndicales des Syndicats Unis du Bénin (CSUB), Centrale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Bénin (CSTB), Centrale des Syndicats des Secteurs Privé et Informel du Bénin and Organisations Syndicales Indépendantes (COSI) with a total membership of 7624 is affiliated to the DOAWTU ,and Centrale des Syndicats Secteurs Privé et Informel du Bénin (CSPIB).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code generally allows workers the freedom to organize and administer their own unions. The Labour Code provides for collective bargaining, and workers freely exercise these rights. Wages in the private sector are set in negotiations between unions and employers. The Government sets wages in the public sector by law and regulation.

International Labour Standards

Benin has ratified 26 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Benin is facing a number of problems such as poverty and unemployment just to mention a few. Further progress will be required in accelerating and sustaining economic growth and strengthening policies designed to improve coverage, quality and delivery of basic services. Fiscal consolidation has been a major achievement over the last decade; but domestic revenues will have to increase further, especially given new trade restrictions from Benin's main trading partner-Nigeria.

4.3.2BURKINA FASO

Economic Overview

Exceptional growth in 2003 (8 %) returned to more modest levels in 2004 (4 %). The fall in world cotton prices in 2004 is a source of uncertainty for growth. The continued vulnerability of the economy to external shocks underlines the lack of progress made in diversifying the economy. Progress in health and education provision is inconsistent with the amount of financial resources devoted to the sectors by the government with the support of donors.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

In 2004, the population was estimated at 13.9 million, with a population growth rate of 2.4 percent per year, 5 million constitute the labour force of the country. 80% of the workforce is employed in the informal economy. In 2004, 45% of the population lived below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Burkina Faso is politically stable but social tensions have grown in recent years. The turbulent political situation and ethnic tensions in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire since 2002, and the anti-foreigner sentiment prevailing there, pushed a large number of Burkinabè estimated at 300,000 people to flee the violence and return to their homes. This may create damaging effects on the economic and social fronts for the country itself and for its neighbouring countries, along with increased regional instability. Elections were held on 13 November 2005 and Balise Compaoré was re-elected president, defeating 12 opponents and winning 80.35% of the vote.

Trade Union Movement

There are seven national centres in Burkina Faso. Organisation Nationale des Syndicats Libres (ONSL) with a total membership of 42,500 (30% are women) is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU, Confédération Syndicale Burkina Faso' (CSB) with a total membership of 16,977 (41% are women) is also affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU, Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Burkina Faso (CNTB) with a total membership of 8,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU and OATUU, Union Syndicale des Travailleurs du Burkina Faso (USTB) with a total membership of 6,000 is affiliated to the OATUU and WFTU, Union Générale des Travailleurs du Burkina Faso (UGTB) with a total membership of 6,000, Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Burkina Faso (CGTB) and Nationale des Syndicats Libres- Force Ouvrière (UNSL-FO).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Workers have the right to organise unions, engage in collective bargaining, and strike for better pay and working conditions.

In May 2006 workers in Burkina Faso launched a two-day strike in protest at high living costs and fuel price rises of up to 39 percent. Several thousand people marched in the capital Ouagadougou to denounce price rises ranging from 5 to 39 percent for different fuels, which were announced by the government in early May in response to record high crude oil prices. The General Secretary of the Burkina National Workers Confederation (CNTB) called the strike.

International Labour Standards

Burkina Faso has ratified a total of 39 conventions including all the Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

In Burkina Faso, HIV/AIDS has become one of the country's greatest development challenges; in 2002 the national HIV/AIDS rate was estimated at 6.5 percent, although rates are much higher in urban centres. However, as the country moves forward into the second series of Poverty Reduction Support Credits (PRSC), the World Bank and the government will deepen their dialogue on economic diversification in general, including development of the private sector and small and medium enterprises. This is especially important since the country's reliance on cotton makes it vulnerable to terms of trade shocks.

4.3.3 CAPE VERDE

Economic Overview

Cape Verde's growth performance since the late 1980s has raised it to the ranks of lower middle income countries, with a GNP per capita of US\$1,800 in 2004. Recent economic growth of around 4.3 percent per capita (2005) has been sustained through public and private investment based on a high level of donor support, strong private capital flows, and remittances.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Cape Verde has an estimated total population of 454,000 people and 54.2% are in the age group of between 15 and 59 years. Because of the economic growth poverty has declined by one-fourth over the last decade. It is estimated that 1.6 million Cape Verdians migrated to other countries mainly U.S, Canada, Portugal and the Netherlands.

Political Situation

Cape Verde is a republic government and the President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term of office. Cape Verde enjoys a stable democratic system. The elections have been considered free and fair, there is a free press, and the rule of law is respected by the State. Pires ran for a second term as president in elections held on 12 February 2006. He narrowly defeated former Prime Minister Carlos Vieira winning 50.98% of the vote, and was sworn in for his second term on March.

Trade Union Movement

There are two national centres in the country. Union Nationale de Travailleurs du Cap Vert-Central Syndicale (UNTC— CS) with a total membership 15,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. UNTC-CS held its congress in May 2005. Another national centre is Confédération Capverdienne des Syndicats Libres (CCSL) with a total membership of 18,000. Both unions suffered from a shortage of funds.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides union members with the right to strike, but the Government at times limits this right. In the past, when workers attempted to strike, the Government invoked a "civil request" under which it had the power, in an emergency or if a strike threatened coverage of basic needs, to name a list of minimum services that a union must continue to provide during any strike.

International Labour Standards

Cape Verde has ratified the following Core Conventions: C.87 C.98, C.182, C.29, C.105, C.100 and C.111, but has not ratified conventions 138 and 144.

General Outlook

Economic reforms, launched by the new government are aimed at developing the private sector and attracting foreign investment to diversify the economy. The prospects depend much on continued aid flows, remittances and the momentum of the government's development programme.

4.3.4 COTE D'IVOIRE

Economic Overview

The Ivorian economy is still focused on agriculture, which employs about 60% of the workforce and provides 27% of GDP and 60% of export earnings. The continuing political crisis has resulted in a substantial worsening of the social and economic situation. The increased tension resulted in a further drop in activity in 2004, numerous job losses and the interruption of economic programmes financed by development partners. The peace plan negotiated by South African President Mbeki may be the last chance for normalising the political situation and improving the economic outlook.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

The total population is estimated at 16.8 million people whereby 52.9% are in the age group of 15 to 59 years. Unemployment rate in Cote d'Ivoire is estimated at 13% while poverty was expected to have risen between 42% and 44% in 2003.

Political Situation

In order to move the peace process forward and keep preparations for the October 2005 elections on track, President Mbeki invited Côte d'Ivoire's political leaders to a new summit in Pretoria in June. The disarmament was due to start by the end of July 2005 and end ahead of the October polls. However, the deadline of end-July has passed without progress. However, in June 2006 the agreement was reached between the government forces and northern rebels to begin the disarmament process. The issue has been a stumbling block in Ivory Coast's efforts to end four years of civil war.

Trade Union Movement

In Cote d'Ivoire there are three national centres. Union Générale des Travailleurs de Cote d'Ivoire (UGTC) with total membership of 120,000 (40% are women). UGTC held its congress in May 2005. UGTCI is an affiliate of the ICFTU-AFRO, OTAC and OATUU while Confédération des Syndicats Libres de Cote d'Ivoire (DIGNITE) with a total membership of 50,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU. Another centre is the Fédération des Syndicats Autonomes de la Cote d'Ivoire (FESACI).

In Cote d'Ivoire only a small percentage of the workforce is organized, and most of the people work in the informal economy that includes small farms, small roadside and street side shops, and urban workshops. However, workers in the large industrial farms and some trades are organized in trade unions.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution and statutes provide for the right to strike, and the Government generally protected this right in practice. However, the Labour Code requires a protracted series of negotiations and a 6-day notification period before a strike may take place, making legal strikes difficult to organize. Workers in the private and government sectors continued to strike over working conditions and terms of employment, and the Government generally tolerated the strikes, which rarely resulted in violence.

International Labour Standards

Cote d'Ivoire has ratified a total of 36 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

The economic downturn has led to deterioration in the jobs situation, public finances and the capital account in the balance of payments. The implementation of many reforms and investment programmes has been postponed. This was unfortunate since in peace circumstances, growth prospects would have been good.

4.3.5 GAMBIA

Economic Overview

Although Gambia has a limited agricultural base, about 75% of the population depend on crops and livestock for livelihood. Real GDP rebounded in 2003 with a growth rate of 7 per cent, followed by 5 per cent in 2004 and 2005.

The size of the Population and the Workforce

Gambia has an estimated total population of 1.5 million people and its labour force is estimated at 400,000 people. In Gambia 64% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Gambia is following multiparty democracy. The President is elected by popular vote for five-year term and the number of terms is not restricted. A coup attempt against President Yahya Jammeh was reported to have been foiled in March 2006. Jammeh is expected to run for a third term as president later in 2006

Trade Union Movement

There are three national centres in Gambia namely the Gambia Workers Union (GWU) with a total membership of 3,000 is affiliated to the OATUU, CTUC and ICFTU-AFRO, Gambia Labour Congress with a total membership of 45,000 is affiliated to the WFTU and OATUU, and the Gambia Workers' Confederation (GWC) with a total memberships of 3,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU and OATUU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Act allows workers to organize and bargain collectively. The Act also sets minimum contract standards for hiring, training, terms of employment, and provides that contracts may not prohibit union membership.

The Labour Act authorises strikes but requires that unions give the Commissioner of Labour 14 days' written notice before beginning an industrial action (28 days for essential services). Because of these provisions and weak unions, few strikes occurred.

International Labour Standards

Gambia has ratified all Core Conventions. Gambia has not ratified convention 144.

General Outlook

The Gambia has had mixed performance towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including lowering the poverty level and achieving the ambitious 6 per cent growth rate presented in the PRSP. Improving performance will require continued progress on policy reforms in areas such as investment and infrastructure, and the fight against corruption.

4.3. 6 GHANA

Economic Overview

Improvement in macro economic management in Ghana is contributing to economic growth. Prudent macroeconomic policies and strong agricultural performance, have sustained steady economic growth. The annual real GDP growth rate reached 5.8 per cent in 2005, sustaining the growth rate observed in 2004; Export growth continued strong, rising by 5 per cent in 2005, with the decline in cocoa exports offset by increases in gold and timber exports.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Ghana has an estimated total population of 20.4 million people and out of that total labour force is estimated at 9 million people. In Ghana 31.4% of the population live below the poverty line and the unemployment rate is at 20% of the total labour force.

Political Situation

Ghana's political climate remains stable. The country's democracy continues to be strengthened by efforts to ensure the rule of law and to enhance social order. Kufuor was re-elected in presidential and parliamentary elections held in December 2004, earning 52.45% of the popular vote in the first round, thereby avoiding a run off. The relative peace and tranquillity being enjoyed in the country can be attributed to growing level of political maturity of the Ghanaians themselves, who time and again have demonstrated their strong desire for peaceful coexistence.

Trade Union Movement

The percentage of workers belonging to unions appeared to be decreasing as more of the workforce entered the informal economy. The Ministry of Employment and Manpower

Development estimated that 80 per cent of the work force is employed in the informal economy, and that number is expected to increase.

In Ghana there are two national centres; Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) with a total membership of 350,000 is affiliated to the OATUU and ICFTU-AFRO. This is the largest worker organization in the country with 17 national union affiliates. The GTUC held its last Delegates Congress from 4th to 7th August 2004.

Another centre is the Ghana Federation of Labour (GFL), which serves as an umbrella organization for several independent trade unions with a total membership of 10,545. The Ghana Federation of Labour is affiliated to the DOAWTU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The new legislation of 2003 repealed a law restricting the right to bargain collectively to only those groups that apply for a Collective Bargaining Certificate through the TUC, essentially giving the TUC a monopoly and breaching the right to establish and choose organizations. The new law allows any trade union to apply for a Collective Bargaining Certificate through the Chief Labour Officer.

In Ghana freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively are enshrined in the basic laws. The framework for industrial relations and trade union activities are stable, though poorly implemented. Furthermore, the government enjoys broad powers to deny trade union registration. Pre-strike procedures are lengthy and complex and no trade union has ever managed to get through the entire process.

The new labour law restricts that right for workers who provide essential services to go on strike. The Minister of Manpower Development and Employment had not formally designated the list of essential services.

While the 2003 Labour Act had some positive aspects it curtailed unions' right to go on strike. All disputes have to be referred to the newly created National Labour Commission, also known as the National Tripartite Committee (NTC) a body of government, union and employers' representatives for arbitration. Strikes are seen as a last resort, if arbitration is unsuccessful, and then the union must give seven days' notice.

On 2 September 2005 Ghanaian police shot three people during a demonstration by former employees at the Normandy Gold mines. Newmont Ghana Gold Limited (NGGL) is now running the mining concession at Yamfo in the Tano North District of the Brong Ahafo. The protesters were demanding their severance compensation from NGGL, who took over the concession of the Normandy Gold mines. They were promised that they would either receive the payout or be re-engaged by Newmont.

17 workers from the Aviance Ghana, including five union executives, were sacked for embarking on an illegal strike on 17 October 2005. The workers from the Aviance Ghana freight and baggage-handling company at the country's airports were demanding better conditions: some had been asked to work for up to 48 hours without a break.

International Labour Standards

Ghana has ratified a total of 46 conventions including seven Core Conventions i.e. C. 87, C. 98, C. 182, C. 29, C. 105, C. 100 and C. 111. The country has not ratified convention No. 138

General Outlook

Growth should reach 6% in the next two years boosted by bumper crops for cocoa. Structural reforms have improved the business and regulatory environment. Growing youth unemployment (from 10.4% in 2000 to 12.2% in 2003) represents a major challenge to social cohesion. The government is combining the improving macroeconomic situation with a commitment to reduce poverty systematically through the implementation of the country's PRSP. Similarly, the sustainability of the economic expansion is predicated on the continuation of the current macroeconomic policies and the sustained inflows of external remittances and official transfers.

4.3.7 GUINEA

Economic Overview

Guinea has abundant natural resources, including 50 percent of the world's known bauxite reserves, along with diamonds, gold, and other metals. While the country always preserved internal peace since its independence, conflicts in neighbouring countries had an adverse impact on the economic performance

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Guinea had an estimated population of about 9.5 million in 2005 and estimated work force of 3 million people. It is estimated that 40% of the population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

In Guinea the President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. Local elections were held in 2005 and have been an important test for improving the framework for the next national elections in 2007.

Trade Union Movement

In Guinea there are seven national trade union centres. Organisation Nationale des Syndicats Libre de Guinée (ONSLG) with a total membership of 43,500 and the Union Syndicale des Travailleurs de Guinée (USTG) with a total membership of 40,212 (28% are women) are both affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. USTG held its election in May 2005. Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs de Guinée (CNTG) with a total membership of 41,745 is affiliated to the DOAWTU and OATUU and Union Générale des Travailleurs de Guinée (UGTG) with a total membership of 25,360 is also affiliated to the DOAWTU. Other national centres are Union Démocratique des Travailleurs de Guinée (UDTG), Syndicats Indépendants Force Ouvrière de Guinée (SIFOG) and Union Générale des Syndicats Libres et Indépendants (UGSLI).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code grants salaried workers, including public sector civilian employees; the right to strike 10 days after their representative union makes known its intention to strike. It prohibits

strikes in sectors providing "essential services," which include hospitals, radio and television, army, police, communications and transport services.

A two-day national strike in Guinea, called by the union federation, National Confederation of Guinean Workers (CNTG), began on November 15, 2005. It brought schools, offices and hospitals to a standstill all over the country. The action was backed by another of the country's three union federations, the Guinean Workers Trade Union (USTG). The strikers' main demands are for better wages and pensions, a minimum wage, a labour disputes tribunal and better public transport services.

International Labour Standards

Guinea has ratified a total of 60 conventions including all the Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Overall, Guinea's growth performance since the late 1990s is considered below its potential, especially in view of the country's tremendous natural resource endowments. Guinea's social indicators compare poorly with neighbouring countries, although significant strides have recently been made in primary education and access to safe water.

4.3.8 GUINEA BISSAU

Economic overview

Guinea Bissau depends mainly on farming and fishing. Cashew crops have increased remarkably in recent year and the country now ranks sixth in cashew production. Despite significant improvement in the fiscal situation, the economic situation remained difficult in 2005. Similarly to 2004, the recorded production of cashew nuts increased at the rate of 15 percent in 2005. Real GDP growth is estimated to have reached 3.5 percent in 2005.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Guinea Bissau has an estimated total population of about 1.5 million people. The total labour force is estimated at 480,000 people. More than two-thirds of the population lives under the poverty line.

Political Situation

Guinea Bissau adopted the multiparty system in 1991. Guinea Bissau held a presidential election on 19 June 2005, and a second round run off vote was held on 24 July and Joao Bernardo an independent candidate won the election. The election marks the end of a transition to democratic rule after the previously elected government was overthrown in a September 2003 military coup led by General Verissimo Seabra..

Trade Union Movement

In Guinea Bissau there are two national centres Union Nationale des Travailleurs de Guinée Bissau (UNTGB) with a total membership of 39,691. Fifteen national unions are affiliated with

the National Workers Union of Guinea-Bissau (UNTGB). UNTGB is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. Six national unions are affiliated with the General Confederation of Independent Unions (GCIU).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution does not provide for or protect the right to bargain collectively; however, the tripartite National Council for Social Consultation conducts collective consultations on salary issues and draft legislation concerning worker issues. Most wages are established in bilateral negotiations between workers and employers.

The Constitution provides for the right to strike and protection for workers from reprisal for strike activities. The only legal restriction on strike activity is that it requires prior notice.

One of the new government's first acts, on 8 December 2005, was to bring in a new work timetable for civil servants without any consultation. The government had refused to negotiate the change in hours with the UNTGB, the national trade union centre, saying that it was only a 'government businesses. Lima da Costa, UNTGB General Secretary accused the government of "refusing any form of dialogue".

International Labour Standards

Guinea Bissau has ratified a total of 30 conventions including the following Core Conventions: C.98, C.29, C.105, C.100 and C.111. Guinea Bissau has not ratified convention 144 on tripartite consultation. The country has also not ratified Conventions 87, 138 and 182.

General Outlook

The recent presidential elections offer prospects for an effective return to normal economic activity. The government's draft on PRSP is now in its final stages of preparation and will become the basis of the medium-term economic and social policies.

4.3.9 LIBERIA

Economic Overview

Liberia is endowed with water, mineral resources, forests and a climate favourable to agriculture. Before the outbreak of the civil war, agriculture accounted for about 40 per cent of GDP. The sector grew to over 70 per cent of GDP just before the outbreak of the last round of fighting. The restoration of productive capacity and livelihood opportunities has been slow. And what is essentially a rural economy faces collapse since farmers fled the countryside, abandoning their farms, for the relative safety and over-crowded conditions of the capital, Monrovia.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Liberia has an estimated total population of 3.4 million people with 80% of the population live below the poverty line. In Liberia unemployment rate is estimated at 70% of the total labour force. Most of the population in urban areas survived on income generated in the informal economy.

Political Situation

Liberian elections in 2005 marked the end of the political transition following Liberia's second civil war. Ellen Johnson -Sirleaf former World Bank employee and finance minister, won the presidential contest and became the first democratically-elected female Head of State in the history of the African continent in January 2006.

Following the resignation and departure into exile of President Charles Taylor in August 2003, the country was led by a transitional government as part of a deal to end the war, until Johnson-Sirleaf was sworn in as president.

Trade Union Movement

In Liberia there are two national centres. Liberia Federation of Labour Unions (LFLU) with a total membership of 16,500 (11% are women). Ten national trade unions are affiliated to the LFLU. LFLU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. The LFLU had its 4th Constitutional Delegates Convention from 20th to 21st May 2004. The Convention brought together 75 accredited delegates from the affiliated unions of the LFLU.

Another national centre is the Congress of National Trade Unions (CONATU), which is affiliated to the DOAWTU.

As far as organising is concerned, informal economy members are organised in groups such as petty trade, cash crops, and tie-dyeing and other merchandise businesses to empower them economically. The unions have been assisting these groups to obtain loans through Micro-Credit Institutions.

The most challenges and threats to the trade union movement in Liberia are to unify all splinter unions and to reject government influence to divide and rule syndrome.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

In Liberia the state of industrial relations with the government is poor. Although the constitution provides workers, except members of the military and police, the right to associate in trade unions, and workers exercised this right in practice, however, government is interfering in union activities. The outdated labour law has no protective provision for workers only gives right to employers. Ministry of Labour has been involved in creating splinter trade unions.

Government interference in union activities, especially union elections and leadership struggles, was common both before and during the civil war. The Liberia Federation of Labour Unions (LFTU) Secretary-General Isaac Williams, the Treasurer-General Ida Collins and the President General Joyce Freeman were served letters informing them that they had been removed from office by the Minister of Labour on 21 September 2005. The Minister of Labour then announced that he had 'appointed' Deputy Secretary General Alfred Thomas as Acting General Secretary. The LFLU and the ICFTU-AFRO fought back and challenged the legality of the Minister's action.

As regards to strikes, civil servants, who went on a go slow on 11 July 2005 to protest for salary arrears of 18 months, were warned by police that they would be arrested and prosecuted if they

demonstrated without the necessary permit. The government handpicked one female trade unionist from the LFLU to attend the past International Labour Conference of the ILO.

International Labour Standards

Liberia has ratified a total of 25 conventions. However, the country has ratified only six Core Conventions i.e. C. 87, C. 98, C. 29, C. 105, C. 111, C. 182 plus convention No. 144 on tripartite consultation. Conventions C. 100, C. 138 and have not been ratified.

General Outlook

Among other problems Liberia is facing high level of poverty and high unemployment rate. The restoration of the infrastructure and the raising of income will depend much on the implementation of sound macro and micro-economic policies, including the encouragement of direct foreign investment with emphasis on labour intensive activities. Economic growth will require major policy successes and attainment of political stability and the rule of law.

4.3.10 MALI

Economic Overview

The primary sector is dominant in Mali. Growth fell in 2004 (2.2 % compared to 7.4 % in 2003) because of unfavourable terms of trade and bad weather. In 2005 it was estimated to grow at 5.4%, but lower world cotton prices continued to affect production as well as public finances in 2005 and 2006. The liberalisation of the cotton sector has been postponed to 2008. The peaceful political and social climate and well-oriented public policies received the support of donors at the Geneva Round Table Conference.

Size of the population and the workforce

Mali has an estimated total population of 13.5 million people with 64% of the total population live below the poverty line. Labour force is estimated at 4 million people and unemployment is 14.6 % (urban).

Political Situation

The third multi-party government since President Amadou Toumani Touré took office in June 2002 was formed in May 2004. This has placed Mali in the forefront of African countries moving to a truly democratic and pluralistic political system, and provides a strong platform for moving ahead on economic and institutional reforms. The next presidential elections are scheduled for 2008.

Trade Union Movement

In Mali there are two national centres i.e. Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Mali (UNTM) and Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Mali (CSTM) with a total membership of 122,000 and 15,010 respectively. All national centres are affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. The UNTM is also affiliated to the OATUU. The two major trade union federations maintained their autonomy from the Government.

Violation of Trade Unions Rights

The growth of independent trade unions led to more direct bargaining between these unions and their employers. However, wages and salaries for workers belonging to the UNTM and the CSTM are set by tripartite negotiations between the Ministry of Labour, trade unions, and representatives of the National Council of Employers of the sector to which the wages apply.

The Constitution provides for the right to strike; however, there are restrictions in some areas. For example, civil servants and workers in state-owned enterprises are required to give 2 weeks' notice of a planned strike and enter into mediation and negotiations with the employer and a third party, usually the Ministry of Labour

International Labour Standards

Mali has ratified a total of 27 conventions including all Core Conventions but not convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Mali has a high incidence of poverty and is a landlocked country with poor infrastructure. Current social indicators are mixed, and the MDG objectives will not be achieved without more robust and shared growth in the medium term, coupled with better service delivery to the poor.

4.3.11 NIGER

Economic Overview

Niger is a landlocked country whose economy depends on subsistence agriculture, animal husbandry, re-exports trade and uranium (declined on world demand). Drought and a locust invasion seriously affected the economy in 2004 emphasising its vulnerability. The HIPC completion point was reached in April 2004. In 2005, the GDP growth rate rose to an estimated 7.0 percent because of the strong recovery of agriculture from the 2004 drought and continued robust growth in non-agricultural sectors.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

The country has an estimated population of 12.4 million and Sixty-three percent of Niger's population lives on less than a dollar a day.

Political Situation

In Niger the President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. General elections were held in November 2004 (Presidential election first round) and December 2004 (Presidential second round and legislative elections The President-elect is Tandja Mamadou. Voter Turnout in this round of polling was 48.3%. The political situation is stable; and in early 2006, the president initiated regular consultations with opposition leaders to sustain this stability

Trade Union Movement

More than 95 percent of the work force is employed in the nonunionized subsistence agricultural and small trading sectors. There are four national centres in Niger. The Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger (USTN) has 38 national trade union affiliates with a total membership of 60,000 (28% are women). Majority of members are government employees, such as civil servants, teachers, and employees in state-owned corporations. USTN is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. USTN held its congress in January 2006. Confédération Nigérienne de Travail (CNT) with a total membership of 15,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU. Confédération Démocratique des Travailleurs du Niger (CDTN) , Union Générale des Travailleurs Nigériens (UGTN) and Confédération Générale des Syndicats libres du Niger (CGSLN).

There were several breakaways trade union confederations and independent teachers' and magistrates' unions, including the Nigerien Labor Confederation (CNT), the Nigerien General Workers Union (UGTN), and the Democratic Confederation of Niger's Workers (CDTN).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law specifies that trade union must give notice and begin negotiations before work is stopped; public workers must maintain a minimum level of service during a strike; the Government can demand workers to provide minimum service; and striking public sector workers may not be paid for the time they are on strike. The latter condition already prevailed in the private sector.

International Labour Standards

Niger has ratified a total of 33 conventions including all Core Conventions. However the country has not ratified convention 144.

General Outlook

The country has qualified for the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) and would save up to US\$30 million per annum over the next decade from additional debt relief.

4.3.12 NIGERIA

Economic Overview

The Nigerian economy continues to demonstrate mixed performances marked by macroeconomic imbalances. The adopted comprehensive strategic plan addresses Nigeria's deep-rooted economic and structural problems. Macroeconomic performance (4% in 2004, following 10% in 2003) has been satisfactory due to high oil prices and prudent policies.

However, in 2005, growth continued to be strong at 7% for the economy as a whole and 8% for the non-oil sector. In the first quarter of 2006, the Nigerian economy grew by 8.3%.

Size of the population and the workforce

Nigeria has an estimated population of more than 130 million people and it is a largest country in Africa. It accounts for 47 per cent of West Africa's population and 41 per cent of the region's GDP. In Nigeria 37% of the total population live below the poverty line and 28% of the total labour force is unemployed.

Political Situation

In Nigeria governance problems continue. The political situation is dominated by the upcoming general elections in 2007. As the political race is heating up, incidences in the Niger Delta and ethnic and religious tensions are likely to attract public attention.

Trade Union Movement

Less than 10 percent of the total work force is organised. The agricultural sector, which employs the majority of the work force, is not organised. The informal economy and small and medium enterprises are also largely unorganised.

There are three operating trade union national centres in Nigeria namely NLC, TUC-N and CFTU. Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is the main labour national centre in Nigeria. Its total membership is 4,000,000 and spans the public and private sectors of the economy. It has 29 affiliate unions and 37 State Councils. NLC is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU.

The TUC-N has a projected membership of 500,000 members drawn from both public and private sectors of the Nigerian formal economy. TUC-N was registered under the labour laws of Nigeria on September 9, 2005. The Congress of Free Trade Unions (CFTU) has approximately 100,000 members. It has not been registered because of its non-fulfilment of the legal requirement of having a minimum number of twelve affiliates.

In May 2006 ICFTU-AFRO representative went to Nigeria on an inquiring mission on behalf of the ICFTU concerning the requests for affiliation to the ICFTU received from the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC-N) and the Congress of Free Trade Unions (CFTU). First meeting was organised with the NLC as an existing affiliate of the ICFTU in order to get their opinion on the two requests. Facts were gathered about the democratic, independent and representative profiles of the two organisations as well as their relationships with the NLC and roles in the furtherance of the cause of working people.

Based on the facts gathered, it is clear that the NLC, TUC-N and CFTU uphold and support the fundamental principle of freedom of association. They also believe in greater worker unity and solidarity as evidenced by past attempts at promoting mergers between the NLC and the TUC-N and the current close working relationship between the NLC and the CFTU. The NLC has no opposition to the requests from the TUC-N and CFTU for affiliation to the ICFTU. Both TUC-N and CFTU applied for the affiliation to the ICFTU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Report on increasing cases of anti-labour activities in the work place has been of concern to trade unions in the organised private sector in Nigeria. It is against this background that in June 2006 the picketing was done under the auspices of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and its affiliate unions. It happened because some financial institutions and industries have shown themselves as anti workers' policies. Picketing is a right from the Labour Act given to trade unions to picket institutions for reasons arising from disputes in Labour relations between management and the workers' union. The Federal Government recently threatened to lay-off about 33,000 public sector workers. This move has been challenged by the NLC.

In Export Processing Zones disputes are not matters to be handled by trade unions but rather by the authorities managing the zones. Employees working in designated export procession zone (EPZ) may not join a union until 10 years after the start-up of the enterprise.

Workers have the right to strike; however, certain essential workers are required to provide advance notice of a strike. A worker under a collective bargaining agreement cannot participate in a strike unless his/her union complies with the requirements of the law, which include provisions for mandatory mediation and for referral of the dispute to the Government.

International Labour Standards

Nigeria has ratified a total of 33 conventions. Nigeria has also ratified all Core Conventions and convention number No. 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Nigeria's economy depends heavily on the oil sector, which contributes 95 per cent of export revenues, 76 per cent of government revenues, and about a third of gross domestic product (GDP). With its large reserves of human and natural resources, Nigeria has the potential to build a prosperous economy, reduce poverty significantly, and provide health, education, and infrastructure services to meet the needs of its population.

4.3.13: SAO TOME PRINCIPE

Economic Overview

Sao Tome Principe is composed of two islands (Saint Thomas and the Island of the Prince), located in the Gulf of Guinea, at approximately 200 miles off Gabon. Its economy has become increasingly dependent on cocoa since independence 29 years ago .In 2005, economic performance remained strong (real GDP growth of 3.8 percent), although inflation picked up (17 percent) against the background of sharp increase in international oil prices that were passed on to domestic consumers.

Size of the Population and Workforce

The total population was estimated at 157,000 in 2005 and is growing at about 2.1 percent per year. The age between 15 and 64 years is 48.4% of the total population.

Political Situation

The legislative election took place in late-March 2006. The election process was deemed fair by the international observers present, but has been mired in controversy and accusations of vote buying by different political parties. The next presidential election was planned in July 2006

Trade Union Situation

Few trade unions exist in the very small formal wage sector. In Sao Tome Principe there are two national centres namely: Organizacao Nacional dos Trabal-hadores de Sao Tomé et Principe

(ONTSTP) with a total membership of 3,133 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, and Uniao Geral dos Trabalhadores Sao Tom e Principe (UGT-STP) with a total membership of 1,867 is affiliated to the DOAWTU. Government workers and members of farmers' cooperatives belong to one of these unions. Public sector employees still constitute the majority of wage earners

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides that workers may organize and bargain collectively; however, due to its role as the principal employer in the wage sector, the Government remains the key organ for labour on all matters, including wages.

International Labour Standards

The country has ratified a total of 16 including all the Core Conventions.

General Outlook

Prospective off-shore oil production could significantly modify the medium and long-term economic outlook. The recent discovery of petroleum resources in Block 1 could signify steady petroleum production revenue for the country starting in 2010-2012.

4.3.14 SENEGAL

Economic Overview

The primary sector's share of GDP is quite small compared with neighbouring countries, though it remains the source of income for three- quarter of the working population. The economy largely depends on agriculture, as well as foreign aid and remittances from Senegalese workers abroad. In 2003 and 2004, economic performance was strong. The economic growth rate averaged 6.4 percent, due to growth in the agricultural sector, the expansion of construction and the public works sector, and growth in the transport and telecommunication sectors. Despite rising petroleum prices and the adverse consequences of the locust invasion, real GDP growth in 2005 was estimated to be 5.1percent

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Senegal had an estimated population of 11 million in 2005 with 57% of the population live below poverty line. The unemployment rate is 48% of the total labour force. The country's dynamic growth is not creating enough jobs in the formal sector and its impact on poverty is limited

Political Situation

Political peace still largely prevails, unlike elsewhere in the sub-region, with a free media, an opposition that has experience in government and an increasingly well-informed population. .

Trade Union Movement

There are sixteen national centres in Senegal namely Confédération Nationale de travailleurs du Sénégal (CNTS) with a total membership of 80,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU, Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes du Senegal (UNSAS) with a total

membership of 52,360 is also affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, Union Democratique des Travailleurs du Senegal (UDTS) with a total membership of 5,00 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Union des Travailleurs Libres du Sénégal (UTLS) with a total membership of 6,000 is affiliated to the WFTU, and Confédération des Syndicats Autonomes (CSA). Coordination Démocratique des Syndicats Autonomes (CDSA), Fédération Générale des Travailleurs du Sénégal (FGTS-Tendance A), Fédération Générale des Travailleurs du Sénégal (FGTS-Tendance B), Fédération Générale des Travailleurs du Sénégal (UTLS - Tendance A), Fédération Générale des Travailleurs du Sénégal (UTLS - Tendance B), Syndicats des Travailleurs Démocratique du Sénégal (STDS), Confédération Démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal (CDTS), Syndicats des Professionnels de l'information et de la Communication Sociale (SYNPICS), Confédération Générale des syndicats de Cadres et du Personnel d'Encadrement (COGES) , Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Démocratique du Sénégal (CGTDS) and Confédération Nationale de Travailleurs du Sénégal- Force du Changement (CNTS-FC) with a total membership of 13,910 is also affiliated to the DOAWTU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code requires the Minister of the Interior to give prior authorization before a trade union can exist legally, and the Government can also dissolve trade unions by administrative order.

The Constitution and the Labour Code provide for the right to strike, but with significant restrictions. Government can prohibit a strike if it seen as damaging to the employers profits. To organise a strike trade unions are required to notify the government one month in advance.

International Labour Standards

Senegal has ratified a total of 36 conventions including all Core Conventions and Convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

GENERAL OUTLOOK

Economic prospects for the 2006–2008 periods are positive: GDP growth rate is expected to average 5.1 percent, with an inflation rate averaging 2 percent and a current account balance within historical range, averaging 7.1 percent of GDP.

4.3.15 SIERRA LEONE

Economic Overview

Sierra Leone's post-conflict economic performance has been robust, owing to recovery in agriculture and mining. With a real GDP growth of 4.3 percent in 2002, Sierra Leone's recovery continued into 2003 and 2004, when real GDP grew at an estimated 9.3 percent and 7.4 percent respectively, despite an oil price shock. Growth prospects in the medium term are encouraging based on the expansion of the mining sector, agricultural expansion and service related activities. Real growth is projected in the range of 6-7% for 2005-7.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Sierra Leone has an estimated population of 4.9 million people with 68% of the total population living below the poverty line. Labour force is estimated at 1.8 million people.

Political Situation

Civil war, which engulfed Sierra Leone over the past decade, resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and the displacement of more than 2 million people, many of whom, fled to neighbouring countries. The majority of the refugees returned since the end of the war in 2001. Sierra Leone is a democratic country. Last elections were held in May 2002.

Trade Union Movement

Approximately 60 percent of the workers in the formal sector in urban areas, including government workers are unionised, but attempts to organize agricultural workers have met with some difficulties.

The main national trade union centre in Sierra Leone is the Sierra Leone Labour Congress (SLLC) with a total membership of 20,169 from 20 affiliated national unions. The SLLC is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. SLLC held its Congress on 23 and 24 February 2006. The results were as follows: Mr M.A Deen as President, Ms. Isabella Campbell as Vice President, Mr. K.B. Conteh as Vice President and Mr.I.K Deen as Treasurer. Another national centre is the Central Confederation of Trade Unions (CCOTU) with a total membership of 3,916, which is affiliated to DOAWTU.

The trade union movement in Sierra Leone is facing the following challenges among others: declining membership, poor standards of living, organising, low level of women and youth participation in the trade union activities and high unemployment rate.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides for the right of association, and in practice workers had the right to join independent trade unions of their choice. Police and members of the armed forces are prohibited from joining unions. The law prohibits anti-union discrimination against union members or organizers and employers' interference in the establishment of unions. The law also provides for collective bargaining, and the government protected this right in practice. Unions have the right to strike, although the law requires 21 days notice.

International Labour Standards

Sierra Leone has ratified a total of 34 conventions including the following Core Conventions: C.87, C.98, C.29, C.105, C.100, C.111 and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation. The country has not ratified conventions 138 and 182.

General Outlook

Sierra Leone's future rests on two main pillars: peace and economic reform. With the main political objectives of the post-conflict transition now coming to fruition, Sierra Leone is at the potentially important stage for sustained growth.

4.3.16: TOGO

Economic Overview

Over the last three years, economic performance has improved, with real GDP growth rate estimated at 2.0 percent in 2003, and a record of 4.2 percent in 2004. This growth was sustained in large part by improved performance of the agricultural sector as the result of favourable climatic conditions and increased cotton production. However, growth has dropped to 1 percent in 2005 as exports production, notably cotton production has dropped by almost 50 percent. This has been exacerbated by the drastic fall in phosphate production and the increase in oil price

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Togo has an estimated total population of 5.6 million people with 32% of the population live below the poverty line. The total labour force is estimated at 1.7 million people.

Political Situation

Faure E. Gnassingbe has been the President of Togo since May 4 2005; he was previously president for twenty days from 5 February to 25 February. He is the son of the late President Gnassinbe Eyadema, and was named leader of Togo following his father's death. He resigned on 25 February, prior to a presidential election on 24 April, which he won; he was subsequently sworn in as president again. However, the opposition alleged massive fraud.

Trade Union Movement

In Togo, approximately 60 to 70 percent of the formal sector workforce is union members or supporters. There are eight national centres in Togo namely Confédération Nationale du Travailleurs du Togo (CNTT) with a total membership of 35,000 (33% are women) is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU, Union Nationale des Syndicats Indépendants du Togo (UNSI) with a total membership of 7,721 (31% are women) is also affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, Confédération des Syndicats de Travailleurs du Togo (CSTT) with a total membership of 20,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Union Générale des Syndicats Libres (UGSL) with a total membership of 10,000, Confédération Générale des Travailleurs du Togo (CGCT) with a total membership of 840, Union des Travailleurs du Togo (UTT) with a total membership of 4,200, Groupe des Syndicats Autonomes (GSA) with a total membership of 5,600 and Force Ouvrière Togolaise (FOT).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides most workers with the right to join unions; however, security forces, including fire fighters and police, do not have this right. The Labour Code technically provides workers with the right to organize and bargain collectively; however, the Government limits collective bargaining to producing a single nationwide agreement that has to be negotiated and endorsed by representatives of the Government, trade unions, and employers. All formal sector employees are covered by the collective bargaining agreement that set nationwide wage standards for all formal sector workers.

The EPZ law provides exemptions from some provisions of the Labour Code, notably the regulations on hiring and firing. Workers in the EPZs are prevented from exercising their

freedom of association because unions do not have free access to EPZs or the freedom to organize workers.

International Labour Standards

Togo has ratified a total of 20 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

The suspension of external aid increased the accumulation of external arrears. Budget execution and monitoring also weakened in recent years, which had an adverse impact on transparency, efficiency, and the quality of public finance data. The restoration of a sound and stable macroeconomic framework will require strengthening fiscal management, while essential expenditures in health, education, agriculture support services, and infrastructure are secured to rehabilitate the country's productive capacity.

4.4 CENTRAL AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

Nine countries form the Central African Sub-region namely Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Rwanda.

Intra sub-regional trade among Central African States is still very minimal. The Economic Community of Central African States (CEEC) was founded in 1981, but was largely dormant until 1998 due to lack of funds. In Central Africa there is also the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa- Communauté économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC).

In the area of trade union cooperation, Organisation des Travailleurs de l'Afrique Centrale (OTAC) is the only trade union organisation in the sub-region.

4.4.1 BURUNDI

Economic Overview

Burundi is a landlocked country whose economy is predominantly agriculture with 90% of the population dependent on subsistence agriculture. Its economy depends on coffee exports that account for 80% of foreign exchange earnings. Since 2003 overall macroeconomic performance was satisfactory, despite exogenous shocks (severe drought and crop disease in parts of the country, and the increase in world oil prices), which resulted in inflation of 11.8 percent in 2004, higher than the 10.7 percent observed in 2003. Real GDP growth was at 4.8 percent in 2004, a little lower than the targeted 5 percent, due to a severe drought and crop failure.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Burundi has an estimated total population of 6.6 million people and 36% of the total population live below the poverty line. Labour force is 1.9 million people and unemployment rate is 30%.

Political Situation

The political landscape of Burundi has moved to a long peace and democracy. The current President of Burundi is Pierre Nkurunziza former rebel leader of the Hutu National Council for the Defense of Democracy who was elected unopposed as the new President of Burundi by the parliament on 19 August 2005. Nkurunziza was the first president chosen through democratic means since the start of the civil war in 1993 and was sworn in on 26 August, replacing transitional president Domitien Ndayizeye.

Trade Union Movement

In Burundi there are two national centres, the Confederation of Burundi Labor Unions (COSYBU) with a total membership of 12,079 from 17 affiliated unions. It is an affiliate of the ICFTU-AFRO. COSYBU held its congress in October 2005. Second national centre is the Confederation of Free Unions in Burundi (CSB) which has a total membership of 5,500. CSB is affiliated to the DOAWTU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code recognizes the right to collective bargaining; however, wages are excluded from the scope of collective bargaining in the public sector.

In 2005 two Burundian trade union leaders, Claver Hajayandi and Célestin Nsavyimana, were freed after several days of detention. The two were arrested after criticising the government at a labour meeting. While the union workers are set free, their organisation's computer still remains in police custody.

The two leaders were detained by Burundi police forces following an address before a workers' meeting in which they reportedly criticised government plans to submit a new draft constitution to a national referendum. The two were the President and Treasurer of the Confederation of Burundi's Labour Unions (COSYBU), the country's main trade union.

International Labour Standards

Burundi has ratified a total of 31 conventions including all Core Conventions plus convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Burundi is the fourth least developed country in the world, mainly due to decades of violence that caused a long period of economic decline. However, the government has engaged in an ambitious program to improve economic governance and fiscal management, and strengthen the implementation capacity for pro-poor programs. Improving governance is an important element of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). A country financial accountability assessment (CFAA) was conducted in June 2004, the recommendations of which helped outline a detailed plan of actions for implementation by the government

4.4.2 CAMEROON

Economic Overview

The economy is mainly agricultural. The principal commercial crops are cocoa, coffee, tobacco, cotton, and bananas. Economic growth has slowed since 2002 because of outdated production facilities and substantial energy shortages, which affected industry. Economic growth has been dynamic over recent years, averaging 4.5 %, but businesses are strongly penalised by lack of legal and judicial protection.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Cameroon has an estimated total population of 16.3 million people with 40. % of the population living below the poverty line and 51.3% of the population are in the age group 15 to 59 years.

Political Situation

Cameroon enjoys relative political stability, unlike most other countries in the turbulent Central African sub-region. Paul Biya won another seven-year term in the presidential election of 11 October 2004, officially taking 70.92% of the vote, but the opposition has alleged widespread fraud.

Trade Union Movement

There are six national centres in Cameroon namely the Confédération Syndicats des Travailleurs du Cameroun (CSTC) with a total membership of 385,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OTAC and OATUU. CSTC organised its congress in 2005. Union des Syndicats Libres du Cameroun (USLC) with a total membership of 12,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Confédération Syndicats des Indépendants du Cameroun (CSIC) and Confédération Générale du Travail)-Liberté (CGT-LIBERTE), Centrale du Secteur Public (CSP) and Confédération Syndicale Autonome du Cameroun (CSAC).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law allows workers both to form and join trade unions; however, the Government imposes numerous restrictions. The law does not permit the creation of a union that includes both public and private sector workers.

The law provides for collective bargaining between workers and management as well as between labour federations and business associations in each sector of the economy; however, no formal collective bargaining negotiations have taken place since 1996.

When labour disputes arise, the Government chooses the trade union with which it will negotiate, selectively excluding some worker representatives.

The Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline, the greatest infrastructure project in the region's history, is highlighting the poor labour conditions in the two affected countries. Workers on both sides of the border are being denied basic rights

International Labour Standards

Cameroon has ratified a total of 49 conventions including all core conventions. However Cameroon has not ratified convention 144.

General Outlook

Cameroon's PRSP, which was based on extensive consultations and a thorough poverty analysis, identifies development challenges, especially improving governance. Recognizing that economic growth needs to be raised above the levels of recent years in order to reach the MDGs, the PRSP sets priorities such as strengthen human resources, bolster the social sectors, and promote the integration of vulnerable groups into the economy, improve the institutional framework, administrative management, and governance, promote a stable macroeconomic framework, strengthen growth through economic diversification

4.4.3 CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Economic Overview

Beyond the political turmoil, economic development has also been hampered by the country's landlocked position, a poor transport system, a largely unskilled workforce, and a legacy of misdirected economic policies. The country thus remains poor despite the economic potential of CAR's natural resources (diamonds, gold, uranium, and timber) and favourable farming conditions.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

CAR has an estimated total population of 3.8 million people with 50.9% of the total population in the age group 15 to 64 years.

Political Situation

François Bozizé Yangouvonda is the current President , he won the country's 2005 presidential election . He received the most votes in the first round in March 2005, but less than a majority, requiring a second round, which he won in May 2005.

Trade Union Movement

There are six national centres namely Union Syndicale des Travailleurs de Centrafrique (USTC) with a total membership of 15,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs de Centrafrique (CNTC) with a total membership of 7,018 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Organisation des Syndicats Libres du Public (OSLP), Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs de Centrafrique (CSTC) with a total membership of 6,146 is also affiliated to the DOAWTU, Confédération Chrétienne des Travailleurs de Centrafrique (CCTC) and Union Générale des Travailleurs de Centrafrique (UGTC) .

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code grants trade unions full legal status, including the right to file lawsuits. It requires that trade union officials be full-time wage-earning employees in their occupation, and they may conduct union business during working hours. The Code does not specifically provide that trade unions may bargain collectively; however, the law protects workers from employer interference in their right to organize and administer their trade unions.

Private sector wages have not changed since they were collectively bargained. Salary arrears continued to be a problem for both civilian and military personnel. The government is on record for non- payment of wage to public sector workers.

International Labour Standards

CAR has ratified a total of 37 conventions including all Core Conventions. CAR has not ratified convention 144.

General Outlook

The political instability has contributed to poor socio-economic outcomes. CAR ranked 169th among 177 countries in UNDP's 2004 Human Development Index. Poverty is widespread with an estimated 67 percent of the population living under the poverty line, and the incidence of poverty in rural areas is higher. Access to even basic education and health services is minimal, and outcomes are worsening as these sectors have been significantly under funded for several decades.

4.4.4 CHAD

Economic overview

Strong economic growth (31.3 % in 2004) was boosted by activity in the oil sector. Government resources dried up in 2004, due to the non-disbursement of scheduled budget aid, but the situation should be alleviated in 2005 following an agreement with the IMF.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Chad has an estimated total population of 8.3 million people with 48.6% in the age group 15 to 59 years. About 80% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Despite movement toward democratic reform, power remains in the hands of a northern ethnic oligarchy. Idriss Déby was re-elected in 1996 and 2001, but international observers noted irregularities in the election process. In June 2005, a successful referendum was held to eliminate a two-term constitutional limit, which enabled Déby to run again in 2006. He was a candidate in the 2006 elections which were held on 3 May, which were greeted with an opposition boycott; according to official results Déby won the election with a large majority. Déby has been facing internal unrest and tension with neighboring Sudan as of early 2006; a coup plot involving the shooting down of Déby's plane was reported foiled in March, and there has been fighting with rebels in the east of the country, pushing west towards the capital and at times coming within 100 miles.

Trade Union Movement

There are three national centres in Chad namely the Union des Syndicats du Tchad (UST) with a total membership of 30,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. UST held its congress in November 2005. Confédération Libre des Travailleurs du Tchad (CLTT) with a total membership of 10,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, and Confédération Syndicale du Tchad (CST). A number of minor federations and trade unions also operate, some of which have ties to government officials. In the formal economy, more than 90 percent of employees belong to trade unions.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution contains only general provisions for the rights of the Government to set minimum wage standards and to permit unions to bargain collectively. The Labour Code has specific provisions on collective bargaining and workers' rights, and authorises the Government to intervene in the bargaining process under certain circumstances.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

Chad has ratified a total of 26 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

With the petroleum revenues coming on-line, Chad's main development challenge is to translate them into concrete improvements in the livelihood of the population. For that reason, in June 2003 Chad adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategy that presents five strategic goals: Improve the social, judicial, political, and economic environment, Ensure rapid and sustained economic growth, Build human capital, Improve living conditions for vulnerable groups and Safeguard and restore ecosystem.

4.4.5 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Economic Overview

DRC is rich in natural and human resources, including the second largest rain forest in the world, fertile soils, ample rainfall, and considerable and varied mineral resources. Historically, mining of copper, cobalt, diamonds, gold, zinc and other base metals, and petroleum extraction accounted for about 75 percent of total export revenues, and about 25 percent of the country's GDP. Despite the abundance of raw material, the country's formal economy has virtually collapsed in the last few decades due to mismanagement, conflict, and instability.

Peace has largely returned but some conflict zones persist in the east of the country. Economic policies supported by international financial institutions are beginning to show results, restarting growth. The top priorities are preserving political stability, improving governance, fighting corruption and pursuing structural reforms. After a decade of contraction, economic growth returned in 2002 (3 percent) and has increased steadily. It was projected to reach 7 percent in 2005.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

DRC has an estimated total population of 58 million people and total labour force is estimated at 14.5 million people.

Political Situation

On 18 and 19 December 2005 a successful nationwide referendum was carried out on a draft constitution which sets the stage for elections in 2006. The country's first democratic elections in four decades was held on 30 July 2006.

Trade Union Movement

There are thirteen national centres; the Confédération Démocratique du Travail (CDT) with a total membership of 200,000 (19% are women) is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. CDT held its congress in February 2005. Union Nationale des Travailleurs du Congo (UNTC) with a total membership of 326,452 is also affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. There are also Confédération Syndicale du Congo (CSC) with a total membership of 10,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, Fédération Générale des Travailleurs du Kongo (FGTK) and Organisation des Travailleurs Unis du Congo (OTUC); Conscience des Travailleurs et Paysans du Congo (CTP), Force Syndicale du Congo (FOSYCO), Coopération des Syndicats du Secteur Public (COOSSEP), Solidarité Ouvrière et Paysane(SOPA), Nouvelle Dynamique Syndicale (NDS), Syndicat Action (ACTIONS) and Alliance des Travailleurs du Congo (ATC).

The collapse of the formal economy, which was exacerbated by the civil war, resulted in a decline in the influence of trade unions, and employers have a tendency to ignore existing labour regulations. Currently, trade unions are not able to effectively defend the rights of workers in the deteriorating economic environment.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law prohibits employers or the Government from retaliating against strikers, but this prohibition is not enforced.

In territories not under central government control, there are no regulations that govern employment or trade union memberships.

International Labour Standards

DRC has ratified a total of 37 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Political instability is the main obstacle to sustainable development in DRC. The social situation remains fragile, and poverty is prevalent throughout the country.

4.4.6 CONGO BRAZZAVILLE

Economic Overview

Links have been restored with the international financial community (notably through an IMF programme, an agreement with the Paris Club of lending nations and talks with the London Club). There have been improvements in the transparency of the oil sector (EITI). Non-oil real GDP increased by about 9.5 percent per annum on average during 2000-04, propelled by improvement in agriculture, commerce, and transportation.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Congo has an estimated total population of 3.6 million people and 48.7% of the total population are in the age group 15 to 59 years. About 70 % of Congolese live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

In Congo the last election was held in March 2002. The progress has been strengthened with the signing of a peace agreement between the government and almost all the remaining rebel groups in March 2003. This accord enabled the government to launch a program to demobilize former combatants and reinforce democratic institutions. However, the security situation remains fragile, as indicated by sporadic attacks by a hold-out rebel group on the vital Brazzaville-Pointe Noire rail line, the most recent having occurred in April 2005.

Trade Union Movement

In Congo there are five national centres i.e. Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Congo (CSTC) and Confédération des Syndicats Libres et Autonomes du Congo (COSYLAC) with a total membership of 67,841 and 13,000 respectively. CSTC and COSYLAC are affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. COSYLAC held its last congress in March 2006. Confédération Africaine des Travailleurs Croyants (CATC), Confédération Syndicale du Congo (CSC) is affiliated to the OATUU and DOAWTU, and Confédération Générale des Cadres et Agents de Maitrise (CGCAM).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution affirms workers' right to strike, subject to conditions established by law. Unions are free to strike after filing a letter of intent with the Ministry of Labour. The letter of intent must include the strike date, at which time the strike legally may begin, even if arbitration is not complete. Employers have the right to fire workers if they do not give advance notice of a strike.

International Labour Standards

Congo has ratified a total number of 25 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

The successive governments since independence have not been able to translate the country's rich economic potential into an actual improvement of living conditions for the largest part of the population.

4.4.7 EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Economic Overview

Oil revenue increased dramatically in value from US\$3 million in 1993 to US\$212 million in 2000 and US\$800 million in 2005. Massive foreign investments in the oil and gas sector, together with a sharp rise in oil exports and favourable terms of trade, have contributed to the country's impressive GDP growth since 1996, an average real annual growth of 28.4% during 2001-2005, and 9.2% in 2005.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

The country has an estimated total population of 500,000 people and 50.3% are in the age group of 15 to 59 years.

Political Situation

In early 1996, President Obiang was re-elected for a seven-year term with more than 97 percent of the vote. In December 2002, he won a new seven-year mandate in a controversial presidential election, and his party secured 98% of the seats in the legislative election in April 2004.

Trade Union Movement

There is only one national centre the Union Nationale des Travailleurs de Guinée Equatoriale (UNTGE).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for the right to organize members; however, the Government has never allowed the registration of trade unions; as a result, the Equatorial Guinea Trade Union has been forced to carry out its activities in secret.

Similarly, the law stipulates that a union must have at least 50 members who are from a specific workplace and located in the same geographic area to register; this effectively blocked the formation of trade unions. A law has never been enacted to govern unions for civil servants.

International Labour Standards

Equatorial Guinea has ratified a total of 14 conventions including all Core Conventions.

General Outlook

The oil boom has not yet been translated into human development: developmental outcomes remain poor, as evidenced by the low human development index ranking (121st out of 177 countries). Only 44 percent of the population has access to safe water. Poverty is still widespread, and income disparities are becoming more apparent in the larger towns. Recognizing the importance of addressing their poor socio-economic indicators, the government is working to improve governance and transparency, especially in the oil sector, through the implementation of the Extractive Industries Transparencies Initiative (EITI) and the elaboration of a poverty reduction strategy (PRS).

4.4.8 GABON

Economic Overview

Gabon is one of the richest African countries in raw materials notably oil, minerals and timber. The government began reforms and a policy of stabilisation in 2003 which led to agreement with the IMF in 2004. Real GDP growth since 1995 averaged 1.3 percent, and was 2.1 percent in 2003, 1.4 percent in 2004, and 2.1 percent in 2005. Inflation decreased from 9.8 percent in 1995 to 2.1 percent in 2003, 0.4 percent in 2004, and 1 percent in 2005.

Size of the population and the workforce

Gabon has an estimated total population of 1.3 million people with 51.1% of the total population in the age group 15 to 64 years. It is estimated that 62% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Gabon adopted a multiparty democracy in 1991 that allowed for a more transparent electoral process and for reforms of governmental institutions. Gabon held a presidential election on 27 November 2005. Incumbent President Omar Bongo, in power since 1967 (making him Africa's longest-serving ruler), sought another seven-year term against four other candidates. According to an announcement of results by the country's interior minister, Bongo won the election with 79.2% of the vote.

Trade Union Movement

There are five national centres in Gabon. The Confédération Gabonaise des Syndicats Libres (CGSL) with a total membership of 19,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO. Many independent unions, including powerful unions of teachers, civil servants, transport workers, and communications workers are affiliated to the CGSL. CGSL held its last congress in March 2005.

Confédération Syndicale Gabonaise (COSYGA) with a total membership of 3000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU, OATUU and OTAC, Entente Syndicale des Travailleurs du Gabon (ESTC), Confédération Démocratique des Syndicats Autonomes (CDSA) and Confédération Gabonaise du Travail-Force Libre (CGT-FL).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

According to Gabonese law, all workers have the right to freely form and become members of the trade union of their choice. Although trade unions must be registered to obtain official recognition, they can freely join international bodies and participate in their activities. Trade unionists in both the public and private sectors are systematically discriminated against in Gabon. Trade unionists are regularly harassed or simply dismissed. Apart from trade union rights are recognised by the law for the great majority of national workers, migrant workers are not encouraged to form trade unions.

International Labour Standards

Gabon has ratified a total of 35 conventions including the seven Core Conventions (C.87, C.98, C.29, C.105, C.100, C.111, and C.182) and convention 144 on tripartite consultation. Gabon has not ratified convention 138.

General Outlook

Although Gabon is one of the prosperous countries in Africa, the country is characterised by unequal distribution of income and the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is estimated at 7.7% in urban areas.

Despite its relative wealth, social spending is small both in the budget and relative to GDP. The government prepared an interim poverty reduction strategy in June 2003, and, in consultation with donors and through a participatory process, developed the final Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) which was adopted by the Council of Ministers in January 2006. The PRSP is articulated around four pillars: (i) promoting strong and sustainable pro-poor growth, (ii) improving infrastructure, (iii) improving basic social services, and (iv) improving governance.

4.4.9 RWANDA

Economic Overview

Economic performance was not good in 2004 because of the adverse weather conditions. Reaching the completion point under the HIPC initiative in April 2005 gives a window of opportunity to increase economic activity and advance towards the MDGs. Consolidation of the peace process in the Great Lakes region will be critical to achieve sustained growth.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Rwanda has an estimated total population of 8.4 million people and total labour force is 3.6 million people. It is estimated that 51.2% of the population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

The country is at peace and safe, and the establishment of a national police force has helped to improve the security situation. The majority of suspects of genocide still remain in jail. Faced with the difficulties of handling such a large number of cases, the government has decided to rely on a traditional arbitration mechanism (Gacaca) to expedite the judgment of local executants in the genocide.

A new constitution was enacted in June 2003. The first multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections since independence were held in August and September 2003 and Kagame was elected as the President of Rwanda.

Trade Union Movement

There are three national centres in Rwanda. Centrale des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Rwanda (CESTRAR) with total membership of 30,000 (38.7% are women). Seventeen national unions are under the Central Union of Rwandan Workers (CESTRAR). CESTRAR is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO and OATUU. CESTRAR held its congress in December 2005. The second

national centre is the Congr s du Travail et de la Fraternit  au Rwanda (COTRAF) with a total membership of 7,500 is affiliated to the DOAWTU. The third trade union national centre is Conseil National des Organisations Syndicales Libres du Rwanda (COSYLI).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides for the right to strike, except for public service workers and workers in essential services. A trade union's executive committee must approve any strike, and the union must first try to resolve its differences with management according to steps prescribed by the Ministry of Public Service and Labour. This process essentially prohibits strikes

International Labour Standards

Rwanda has ratified a total of 27 conventions including all Core Conventions.

General Outlook

The outlook for the Rwandan economy largely depends on peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. In the absence of peace in the region, even in a positive scenario, growth would remain below 6 percent per year. Regional cooperation (especially in the infrastructure sectors) is therefore a pre-requisite to economic growth. Rwanda is making good progress has joined COMESA, and is seeking admission to the East Africa Community.

4.5 SOUTHERN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

Ten countries (South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Malawi and Mozambique) form this sub-region.

There are three economic groupings in the sub-region:

- Southern African Development Community (SADC-1992) based in Gaborone comprising Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi, Tanzania, Mauritius, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Madagascar and Democratic Republic of Congo.
- The Southern African Customs Union (SACU-1969) based in Pretoria comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.
- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA-1994) based in Lusaka comprising Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In the area of trade union cooperation, there is one organisation namely the Southern African Trade Union Coordination Council (**SATUCC**), which consists of 13 national trade union centres from Tanzania, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. SATUCC was formed in Gaborone, Botswana in March 1987 and in November 1991 SATUCC adopted the Social Charter of Fundamental Rights of Workers in Southern Africa. SATUCC has an observer status in the SADC structures.

During the period under review SATUCC has been active in engaging SADC on various issues of trade unions concern. Similarly, SATUCC has been participating in various meetings organised by the SADC secretariat

4.5.1 ANGOLA

Economic Overview

Offshore oil production, which dominates the national economy, performed exceptionally well in 2004 (daily production reached 1 million barrels for the first time in 2004) as new oil fields came on stream. GDP growth since 1995 has averaged 6.6 percent but, on the strength of increased oil revenues, it has now reached about 18 percent in 2005. By the end of 2005, oil output exceeded 1.4 million barrels per day. Angola must channel resources into poverty reduction and infrastructure reconstruction. There have been some improvements in macroeconomic fundamentals, but more progress is needed to achieve transparency of oil revenues.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Angola has an estimated total population of 13.1 million people while labour force is 5 million people. Poverty remains widespread with more than 65% of the urban population live below the poverty line. Poverty is reportedly far deeper in rural areas.

Political Situation

Angola has been fighting in a war for many years since independence from Portugal in 1975. Up to 1.5 million lives may have been lost in fighting over the past quarter century. Angola has adopted a multiparty political system since 1992 and the first multiparty elections were held in September 1992. Since then no elections were held.

However, the elections will be held in September in 2006. These elections would be the first since 1992 and would serve to elect both a new president and a new National Assembly.

Trade Union Movement

In Angola there are three national centres i.e. Uniao dos Trabalhadores de Angola (UNTA) with a total membership of 130,000(30% women) is affiliated to the OATUU, WFTU and SATUCC, Central General de Sindicatos Independents Livres de Angola (CGSILA) with a total membership of 51,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU, and Forca Sindical Angolana Central Syndical (FSA-CS).

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for the right to strike, and the law strictly regulates such actions. The law prohibits lockouts and provides protection for non-striking workers. It prohibits strikes by armed forces personnel, police, prison workers, and fire fighters. The law does not effectively prohibit employer reprisal against strikers; it permits the Government to force workers back to work for breaches of worker discipline and participation in strikes.

Collective bargaining is restricted in practice. The government is the country's biggest employer and through the Ministry of Public Administration, Employment and Social Security sets wages and benefits on an annual basis. This involves consultation, but no negotiation with the unions.

In practice, the emerging process of democratisation and restrictions on civil liberties, still in place after the civil war, make it difficult for trade unions to enforce their rights or to carry out any activities not approved by the government

International Labour Standards

Angola has ratified a total of 33 conventions including all Core Conventions. However the country has not ratified convention 144.

General Outlook

Angola is a potentially wealthy country, with enormous resources of oil, gas, and diamonds, as well as considerable hydroelectric potential, varied agricultural land, and adequate rainfall. Despite these benefits, the decades of war, a largely non-supportive policy environment, and widespread corruption have resulted in economic performance well below potential in the industry, manufacturing, and agriculture sectors, where most of the population has traditionally been employed. The lack of substantial economic activity outside of the oil and diamond sectors has left most Angolans without sustainable incomes, while the government has not yet been able to build up a skilled civil service or the infrastructure needed to provide basic services to most of the population.

4.5.2 BOTSWANA

Economic Overview.

Botswana remains one of Africa's success stories of sustained economic growth, which is secured on good governance, political stability and prudent macroeconomic management. One of the best-performing economies in Africa over the past 35 years has obtained the highest sovereign credit rating reflecting a sound management of its large diamond resources, a commitment to democracy, and effective anti-corruption policies.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Botswana has an estimated total population of 1.7 million people whereby 47% of the total population live below the poverty line and 53.4% is in the age group of 15 to 64 years.

Political Situation

Botswana is politically stable holding elections every five years since its independence in 1960s. The government of Botswana adheres to democratic principles. Botswana is a one party dominant state with the Botswana Democratic Party in power. Opposition parties are allowed, but are widely considered to have no real chance of gaining power. Last elections were held in October 2004 and Festus Mogae was elected President. .

Trade Union Movement

Botswana Federation of Trade unions (BFTU) is the sole national centre in the country; it has a total membership of 18,000. BFTU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU, SATUCC and CTUC. But there are no obstacles to the formation of more trade union federations.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law still limits trade union freedoms; public servants can only form associations rather than trade unions. The legislation requires elected officials to work full time in the industry or sector that the trade union represents. So there are no full time trade union officials in Botswana.

The law severely restricts the right to strike. Legal strikes theoretically are possible only after an exhaustive arbitration process.

In January 2005 Debswana (which is jointly owned by Debeers and the government of Botswana) barred children of the sacked miners from attending the company sponsored schools and forcibly evicted the sacked miners from their company houses.

In 2005, 461 miners were sacked; including the Botswana Mining Workers Union (BMWU) Chairman Chimbidzani Chimidza and General Secretary Jack Tlhagale for taking part in what the government deemed was an illegal 13-day strike during August-September 2004.

Debswana management took the case to the Industrial Court to press for maximum penalties against the sacked strikers in March, but the Court threw it out saying it had no jurisdiction of the dispute. Debswana followed this in April by trying to intimidate the sacked BMWU leaders by summoning them to internal hearings.

The Public Service Workers Association complained in June 2005 that the government was deducting money from the salaries of civil servants who participate in industrial action

International Labour Standards

Botswana has ratified a total of 15 conventions including all Core Conventions and Convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

While Botswana has experienced extremely high rates of growth, it also experienced the most acute ravages of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with an estimated 38 percent (2004) of the adult population infected. The country has to diversify its economic base, as diamond production nears full capacity and HIV/AIDS epidemics threaten to undermine past economic gains.

4.5.3 LESOTHO

Economic Overview

Lesotho is a landlocked and mountainous country. Its primary natural resource is water. Its economy is based on subsistence agriculture, livestock, remittances from miners employed in South Africa and rapidly growing clothing sector.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Lesotho has an estimated total population of 2 million people. Out of this total 49.2% of population live below the poverty line. Labour force is estimated at 700,000 people and about 35 percent of the labour force is unemployed or under-employed.

Political Situation

Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy, with the king, Letsie III, as head of state, although his power has been curtailed. Executive power resides in the government, led by the Prime Minister. Legislative elections took place on 25 May 2002 with the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) remaining in power giving the party a majority in the 120-seat parliament. The Prime Minister, Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili was sworn on 4th June 2002.

On April 30th 2005, Lesotho held its first ever local elections, following a constitutional amendment in 2004. The ruling party won the elections comfortably, gaining over three quarters of the vote

Trade Union Movement

In Lesotho there are three national centres namely Lesotho Trade Union Congress (LTUC) with a total membership of 1,639 is affiliated to the DOAWTU and SATUCC, LECODU has a total membership of 15,000 workers and COLETU) with a total membership of 13,000 workers. In Lesotho trade union movement is weak and fragmented.

ICFTU and AFRO organised a mission to Lesotho aimed at assessing LECODU and COLETU with respect to their applications for affiliation to the ICFTU. The Mission interested to know in specific terms why LECODU and COLETU want to join the ICFTU family and to give vivid background information about their independence, democratic and representative profiles as well as their viability.

The Mission views the trade union situation in Lesotho to be vague and complex. For instance, there are discrepancies over membership. The democratic, independent, and representative credentials of national centres are questionable. As such there is need for ample time to be allowed in order to carefully under study the trade union situation. ICFTU-AFRO and other partners like the ILO should make commitment towards the empowerment of workers through the provision of relevant education and training programmes. The promotion of corporation and unity among workers is also essential for building strong, independent and democratic trade unions. The Mission therefore recommended that the ICFTU to continue holding the applications from LECODU and COLETU in abeyance and concentrate on resource.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Labour Code prohibits civil servants from joining or forming unions; however, the law allows them to form staff associations. The Government regarded all civil servants as essential employees.

The law provides for the right to strike; however, civil servants are not allowed to strike, and all public sector industrial actions are by definition unauthorised. In the private sector, the Labour Code requires an escalating series of procedures to be followed by workers and employers before strike action is authorized. Because the strike procedure is complicated, there have not

been any official strikes in the country for many years. There have been regular spontaneous protest actions over the years, however, as these are technically defined as illegal, workers continue to risk losing their jobs and being taken to court.

The government and some employers, particularly in the textile sector, do not observe trade union freedoms. In the private sector, the complex procedures and employers' anti-union attitude make it very difficult to operate a trade union. Foreign employers in the industrial zones - mainly textile groups from South Africa, Hong Kong and Taiwan ignore national legislation and pay wages below the statutory minimum, refuse to pay sickness benefits and make unilateral deductions from their employees' pay.

International Labour Standards

Lesotho has ratified a total of 23 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Lesotho is facing a number of problems among others are: high unemployment rate, poverty and HIV/AIDS scourge. Lesotho's economic growth of around three percent since 2001 is significantly better than that of many African countries, but is far smaller than that needed to achieve the country's long term goals, as expressed in the National Vision 2020 and the Millennium Development Goals

4.5.4 MALAWI

Economic Overview

The economy is predominately agricultural, with about 85% of the population living in rural areas. Since taking office in May 2004, President Mutharika has implemented some bold policies to curb fiscal spending and tackle corruption. These policies were also meant to counter the mixed results of the growth-oriented reform program attempted by the previous government over the last two years. However, Malawi's economy still depends heavily on aid from international financial institutions and individual donors.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Malawi has an estimated population of 12 million people while 54% of the population live below the poverty line and labour force is estimated at 4.5 million people.

Political Situation

Malawi is a multiparty democracy country with four main political parties in place. Last elections were held in May 2004 for five-year term. Bingu wa Mutharika, running for UDF Party, succeeded Mr. Muluzi in May 2004 as the President of Malawi

Trade Union Movement

In Malawi there are two national centres the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) with a total membership of about 45,000. MCTU is affiliated to the CTUC, SATUCC, ICFTU-AFRO

and OATUU. The second nation centre is the Congress of Malawi Trade Union (COMATU) with a total membership of 7,000 is an affiliate of the DOAWTU.

In Malawi, workers have the legal right to form and join trade unions; however, union membership is low due to the small percentage of the work force in the formal sector, the lack of awareness of worker rights and benefits, and a resistance on the part of many employees to join unions.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law allows workers to form and join trade unions and workers exercise this right in practice; however, union membership is low due to the small percentage of the workforce in the formal sector, the lack of awareness of worker rights and benefits, and a resistance on the part of many employees to join unions.

The full range of labour regulations applied to the EPZs; however, union organizers have little access to workers in the EPZs and companies in the EPZs are also resistant to union activity.

International labour Standards

Malawi has ratified a total of 29 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Although the government of Malawi has initiated an economic reform agenda, it faces challenges on several fronts: a rapidly growing population, a high HIV/AIDS infection rate (about 15 percent), limited natural resources, high levels of inequality caused by years of an exclusive development strategy, and the effects of recurring droughts, poor resource management, and environmental degradation

4.5.5 MOZAMBIQUE

Economic Overview

Continued high economic growth (7.8% in 2004) has been encouraged by large foreign ventures, but obstacles to private sector development need to be removed to sustain broad-based growth and reduce poverty. President Guebuza, elected in December 2004, has placed the fight against poverty, corruption and crime at the centre of his political manifesto.

Size of the population and the workforce

Mozambique has an estimated total population of 19.4 million people. Poverty has decreased from 70% in 1996/97 but more than 50% of the population still live in absolute poverty and income and wealth inequalities remain pervasive. The total labour force is estimated at 7.4 million people.

Political Situation

Since the peace agreement of 1992 put an end to 16 years of civil war, Mozambique has returned to political stability. Presidential election was held on 1 and 2 December 2004. President Joaquim Chisano was stepping down after 18 years in power and five candidates were vying to replace him. Armando Guebuza of Mozambican Liberation Front, ruling party; won by a narrow majority.

Trade Union Movement

There are two national centres in Mozambique. Organizacao dos trabalhadores de Mozambique –Central sindical (OTM-CS) has 14 national trade union affiliates with a total membership of 91,523. OTM- CS is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU and SATUCC.

Another national centre is the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Mozambique (CITUM) its membership and affiliation is not known. However CITUM, OTM and non-affiliated trade unions have established a forum for trade union coordination.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

Although labour legislation in Mozambique guarantees the exercises of trade union rights but those rights are not yet sufficiently observed in several fields. This applies in particular to public service workers. Victimization of trade unionists by employers is common, and industrial disputes settlement machinery, including the industrial court are inactive.

International Labour Standards

Mozambique has ratified a total of 21 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

The country is still in transition, with a large number of social and economic challenges, including unemployment, low agricultural production, and limited infrastructure and social service. One of the key challenges is the rising rates of morbidity and mortality from HIV/AIDS. The national HIV prevalence among adults (15–49 years old) is estimated at 16.2 percent in the period 2003-5.

4.5.6 NAMIBIA

Economic Overview

The economy is dependent on the extraction and processing of minerals for export. Mining contributes a lot in GDP. In the year 2000 it accounted for 33% of GDP. The overall economic growth in 2002 was 2.7% compared to 2.5% in 2001. Namibia is the fourth-largest exporter of nonfuel minerals in Africa and the world's fifth largest producer of uranium.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Namibia has an estimated total population of 1.9 million people and unemployment rate is 34 percent for the broad measure of unemployment nationwide. This high rate is partly attributed to

exports of unprocessed primary products and the low levels of education among the economically active population.

Political Situation

In Namibia the President is elected by popular vote for five-year term. Hifikepunye Pohamba took office as president on 21 March 2005 and has since distinguished himself by careful but decisive moves against corruption. Prior to this, he was the Minister for Lands in Namibia.

Trade Union Movement

In Namibia there are two national centres. The National Union of Namibia Workers (NUNW) the country's largest trade union federation has a total membership of 65,000. NUNW is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, OATUU and SATUCC. NUNW held its 4th Congress on 29th and 30th April 2006. Mr. A.V. Muheue was elected as President and E. Kaaronda was elected as Secretary General. Other elected officials are: David Namalenga was voted as first Vice President, Elias Manga was elected as the second Vice President, while Mr.C.U. Pandeni was elected as Treasurer. Ms.Stella Louw was elected as the Deputy Treasurer and Mr. Erago Tandus as the Deputy Secretary General.

However, the Namibia National Teachers' Union (NANTU) rejected the NUNW congress, charging it was unfair and had been driven by the political agenda of some members. NANTU and the Mineworkers' Union of Namibia (MUN) delegations walked out of the congress.

The second national centre is the Trade Union Congress of Namibia (TCUN) with a total membership of 17, 5000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The Constitution provides for freedom of association, including freedom to form and join trade unions, and the Government generally respected this right in practice. Public servants, farm workers, and domestic employees also have this right; however, farm workers and domestic servants working on rural and remote farms often are ignorant of their rights, and trade unions experienced obstacles in attempting to organize these workers; as a result, they reportedly suffered abuse by employers.

The right to strike has not yet been restored in Namibia's EPZs. The police have also prohibited several trade union protests. Farm and domestic workers are covered by the labour code but they are still subjected to employer intimidation when they organise into trade unions.

International Labour Standards

Namibia has ratified a total of ten conventions including the following seven Core Conventions i.e. 87, C. 98, C. 138, C. 182, C. 29, C. 105, C. 111 and convention 144 on tripartite consultation. Namibia has not ratified convention 100

General Outlook

The majority of Namibia's people live in poverty because of large-scale unemployment, the great inequality of income distribution, and the large amount of wealth going to foreigners. The

Namibian economy is closely linked to South Africa with the Namibian dollar pegged to the South African rand.

4.5.7 SOUTH AFRICA

Economic Overview

Growth regained momentum in 2004 (3.8%) as the South African economy adjusted to the strong rand. Strong domestic demand and a favourable external environment are expected to bring growth to an average of 4% over the next two years. A successful macroeconomic stabilisation policy has provided room for more spending on social services. Social (disability and children) grants were provided to close to 9 million people by the end of September 2004.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

South Africa has an estimated total population of 44.8 million people whereby labour force is estimated at 17 million. The country has unemployment rate of 37%.

Political Situation

South Africa's third democratic legislative and presidential elections took place on 14th April 2004. The ANC obtained its first two –third majority in parliament, with Mr. Mbeki retaining the presidency.

Trade Union Movement

In South Africa there are seven national centres namely Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) with a total membership of 1,600,000, National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) with a total membership of 327,000. COSATU and NACTU are affiliated to the ICFTU, SATUCC, OATUU and CTUC while FEDUSA with a total membership of 500,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU and SATUCC. The South African Workers Solidarity Federation is independent. The Confederation of South African Workers Union is affiliated to the WCL. The other two are the Union of South African Trade Unions (USATU) and the South African Confederation of Labour (SACOL). They are also non-affiliated.

Trade union participation as an equal partner with businessmen and Government in the National Economic Development and Labor Council (NEDLAC), and tripartite negotiating forums ensured a direct voice for workers in the formulation of economic, social and labour policy. Through NEDLAC, organized workers have been able to participate in the formulation of the country's labour legislation.

COSATU organised a national strike on 18th May 2006 in protest against job losses. The COSATU national strike was strongly supported by workers in the clothing and textile industry about 71% of workers nationally supported the protest action against job losses. The job loss database of the Southern African Labour Research Institute (SALRI) shows that, since 2003, approximately 62 000 formal jobs were lost in the clothing, textile and leather industries.

As far as the unification is concerned three trade union organisations i.e. FEDUSA, NACTU and CONSAWU have made progress with regards to merger process between the three federations.

Violation of trade union rights

Trade union rights are not always respected in practice. In the agricultural sector, in particular, employers are hostile to trade unions and organising is difficult because union organisers are considered trespassers on private property. Workers who try to form or join trade unions face intimidation, violence and dismissal. There are several cases such as, two workers were killed and one critically injured when their employer Tony Jones of MCE Engineering opened fire on 15 employees during a wage dispute on 18 April 2005. The shooting happened when workers asked to be paid their full salary of R650 (\$US107), rather than the (US\$16.50) they had received

More than 700 workers (members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA)) at the Kromberg-Schubert factory in Brits were sacked on 26 May 2005 after a strike that began on 23 May. The company then immediately hired contract workers to replace them. The company has allegedly made more than 100 unfair dismissals since 1998.

The workers were demanding an increase of between R1 and R5 (US\$0.15 – 0.74) per hour for shift workers, a better transport policy and an end to racist and unfair practices.

The police had arrested over 150 municipal workers who were striking peacefully across the country by 11 August. Strikers were arrested at Bellville at Delft, a suburb of Cape Town accused of intimidation and violating property rights and in Knysna (a Cape Province) for damaging council property and public vehicles. In all cases they were brutally attacked by police forces.

In fact, there is a growing climate of anti-union repression. Employers and the government have both prevented strikes by obtaining a court order that declares them ‘illegal’, thus forcing strikers back to work. On some occasions rubber bullets and live ammunition have been used against strikers both by government and employers’ forces.

International Labour Standards

South Africa has ratified a total of 23 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Despite a positive outlook, both investment and output growth are still below the levels necessary to reduce unemployment and to achieve more equitable income distribution. The country is also faced with major social challenges including poor management of social and education systems, widespread poverty (exceeding 50%), a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (20% of adult population), and an exodus of skilled labour from social services.

4.5.8 SWAZILAND

Economic Overview

In Swaziland subsistence agriculture occupies more than 80% of the population. The Swazi economy depends heavily on South Africa, from which it receives over 80 percent of its imports

and to which it sends 74 percent of its exports. GDP growth has averaged about 3 percent between 1995 and 2001; the growth in 2004 was 2.1 percent.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Swaziland has an estimated total population of 1.0 million people out of that total 53.1% are in the age group of 15 to 59 years, and 40% of the total population live below the poverty line.

Political Situation

Swaziland is ruled by an absolute monarchy and the Prime Minister is appointed by the monarch. According to Swazi law and custom, the monarch holds supreme executive, legislative and judicial powers

Trade Union Movement

There are two national centres in Swaziland. The Swaziland Federation of Labour (SFL) has 9 affiliates and a membership of approximately 11,000 drawn from the financial, manufacturing, retailing, pre-school, academic and nursing sectors of the economy. Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) with a total membership of 25,000. SFTU is affiliated to the ICFTU, SATUCC, CTUC and OATUU, while SFL is seeking to affiliate to the ICFTU-AFRO.

In April 2006, the ICFTU delegation and ICFTU-AFRO went to Swaziland on a Mission to inquire into the application request received from the Swaziland Federation of Labour (SFL) for affiliation to the ICFTU. The Secretary General of COSATU joined the delegation on April 18, 2006. The ICFTU delegation first met with the leaders of its traditional affiliate, the SFTU in order to get their opinion on the application request before they later met with the leaders of the SFL.

The Mission on careful examination of the views expressed by both the SFTU and SFL particularly on the need for greater worker unity recommends that the SFL be affiliated to the ICFTU in the hope of using this opportunity to foster greater cooperation and unity between the two centres in the not too distant future.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides for the right to form associations, including trade unions, and workers exercise this right in practice. However, the Government has continued to harass trade unions, more so since the trade unions are playing a major role in the campaign for democratisation of the country.

International Labour Standards

Swaziland has ratified a total of 33 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Most Swazis are rural and tend to support the continuation of the monarchy, though in recent years trade unions and outlawed political parties have become more outspoken in their opposition. The HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate is estimated at 42.6 percent (2004).

4.5.9 ZAMBIA

Economic overview

Zambia is well endowed with mineral resources and the country derives most of its foreign earnings from the export of minerals (copper, zinc, silver, gold and cobalt). Zambia achieved its fifth consecutive year of solid growth (5.1% in 2004) as a result of strong copper output and exceptionally good agricultural performance. Strong GDP growth is expected to continue over 2005-06. The country remains highly vulnerable to climatic and commodity prices shocks. The HIPC completion point for debt relief was achieved in April 2005, building on the macroeconomic stability successfully attained in 2004. The run-up to the 2006 elections will test the sustainability of government policies and macroeconomic stability

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Zambia has an estimated total population of 11.2 million people. Current estimates indicate that about 80% of Zambians are poor with the incidence being more severe in rural areas than in urban areas. In 1999 out of the total labour force estimated at 4.6 million only 10.4 % were employed in the formal sector. The remaining 89% of the labour force were either unemployed or employed in the informal economy.

Political Situation

Zambia is one of the multi- party democracy countries in Southern Africa. The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) holds a parliamentary majority. The next presidential and parliamentary elections are due in 2006.

Trade Union Movement

There are two national centres namely Federation of Free Trade Unions of Zambia (FFTUZ) with a total membership of 20,000 an affiliate of the DOAWTU ,and Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU).

The ZCTU draws its membership from 26 affiliates, the membership increased to 212,375 in 2004 from 212,187 in 2001. This marginal increase in ZCTU membership is mainly attributed to increase in the Guards Union of Zambia membership that was one of the fast growing security industries. ZCTU is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, SATUCC, CTUC and OATUU.

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The law provides for freedom of association, but the government placed some limits on this right in practice. All organisations must formally apply for registration to the registrar of societies. In most cases, authorities routinely approved these applications

The law recognises the right of workers to form and belong to trade unions, and workers exercised these rights in practice. Police officers are not permitted to form unions and are not unionised. Only 11 percent of the eligible workforce is employed in the formal sector; approximately 60 percent of the formal sector workforce is unionised.

During the period under review non-payment of wages on time and non-payment of retrenchment and retirement benefits were seen as violation of trade union and worker rights. The increased deregulation of the labour market through systematic and rushed labour law reviews is undermining trade union and worker rights. Investors now opt to employ casual employees who do not belong to unions and have little protection from labour laws.

During the period under review Zambia has been experiencing several strike actions in various institutions. The work stoppages usually come about when workers feel their demands for better conditions of service are not honoured accordingly.

International Labour Standards

Zambia has ratified a total of 43 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation.

General Outlook

Among many problems Zambia is facing are high unemployment rate, poverty and HIV/AIDS scourge. Correspondingly, a major obstacle to development in Zambia seems to be governance issues. While on the one hand, the Zambian president has embarked on an anticorruption crusade since his appointment in 2001, on the other hand government continues to face the problem of accountability in its spending. Despite a commitment to increased social spending and the release of large amounts of donor financing following the launch of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2002, disbursement in poverty reduction programmes have so far been limited and the quality of spending has been poor.

Similarly according to the survey of 2004 that was conducted by ZCTU, it was observed that the first PRSP has not brought about any significant improvement on the welfare and living standards of Zambians in the last three years of its implementation.

4.5.10 ZIMBABWE

Economic Overview

Zimbabwe's economy relies heavily on agricultural crops, such as tobacco, cotton, and sugarcane, and on related manufacturing industries, such as textiles and sugar production. Mining, primarily gold, is also a major activity of Zimbabwe's economy, however, has continued to deteriorate since 1997. Expansionary macroeconomic policies, a breakdown in law and order, and the virtual collapse of the agricultural sector as a result of the fast-track land reforms have reduced the potential for growth. Real GDP declined by 6.5 percent in 2005, which was the 7th consecutive year of negative GDP growth since 1997. Over the period 1997-2005, GDP declined by more than 30 percent.

Size of the Population and the Workforce

Zimbabwe has an estimated total population of 12.8 million people whereby 75.6% of the population live below the poverty line. Labour force is estimated at 5.5 million people and unemployment rate is estimated at 60%.

Political Situation

The political crisis deepened after President Robert Mugabe was sworn in March 2002 after an election the Commonwealth Observer Group said was not fair and free. Zimbabwe was suspended for a year until March 2003, and the European Union and the United States imposed sanctions targeting selected government officials. The next presidential elections are scheduled for 2008. President Mugabe has stated that he intends to stay in office until his presidential term ends in 2008.

Trade Union Movement

There are three trade union centres in Zimbabwe; the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) with a total membership of 361,000 is affiliated to the ICFTU-AFRO, SATUCC, OATUU and CTUC. ZCTU held its Congress in May 2006 and the results of elections were as follows: Mr. Lovemore Matombo - President, Ms Lucia Matibenga - 1st Vice President, Mr. George Nkiwane -2nd Vice President, Ms. Thabitha Khumalo -3rd Vice President, Mr. Willenton Chibebe -Secretary General, Mr. Joseph Moyo-1st Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Gedion Shoko -2nd Assistant Secretary General, Mr.Estavao Cumbulani -Treasurer.

Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) is another centre that has been created by the authorities. The Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions has continued to disrupt relations between workers and their union leadership. The ZFTU works closely with the ruling party, ZANU-PF.

The third national centre National Federation of Trade Unions with a total membership of 12,000 is affiliated to the DOAWTU. .

Violation of Trade Union Rights

The situation of trade unionists is still extremely precarious at present. Several of them have been victimised and detained by the police in recent times, and the police have been interfering in ZCTU meetings. There are various incidences happened between 2005 and 2006 for instance the ZCTU invited COSATU delegation to visit the country on a fact-finding mission at the beginning of February, but when the COSATU delegation arrived at the airport on 2 February they were immediately deported. The aim of the visit had been for ZCTU and COSATU to discuss issues confronting workers in Zimbabwe and the region in general.

In May 2006 international invited guests to the Congress, including those from Norway, Zambia, South Africa and Swaziland were deported from Zimbabwe by the authorities. In addition to that COSATU general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi has been declared persona non grata in Zimbabwe and will not be admitted to the country while President Robert Mugabe is in power.

The right of trade unions to discuss with their comrades from other countries is a basic right, as was recently confirmed by the International Labour Organisation. The Zimbabwe government's actions confirm their intolerance of fundamental human and trade union rights.

In Zimbabwe members of the public services, as well as other government employees (with the exception of the armed forces) are allowed to form and join unions. However, a new Labour Amendment Bill that went through Parliament in 2005 deprives government employees of the right to strike.

International Labour Standards

Zimbabwe has ratified a total of 26 conventions including all Core Conventions and convention number 144 on tripartite consultation. The biggest challenge for Zimbabwe is practising or domestication of the core conventions.

General Outlook

Following the disputed re-election of President Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwe economic and political situation continues to deteriorate and aggravating already a worrying social context with a society characterised by strong divisions.

Poverty has worsened since 2000, due to economic crisis, strained relations with donor groups, the impact of land reform and drought. The health sector is collapsing, hit by a brain drain, deteriorating infrastructure and shortage of medicine. At the same time HIV/AIDS was estimated at 21.36% of the adult population at the end 2004.

A large number of donors have scaled down or suspended their operations in Zimbabwe. The IMF Board suspended Zimbabwe's voting rights on June 6, 2003 because of Zimbabwe's lack of cooperation in policy implementation and payments. Other donors and agencies have limited their activities to social concerns, including HIV/AIDS, social protection, and human rights.

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