



## CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP ON THE RIAL WORKSHOP “SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND SOCIAL COHESION”

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### Conclusions

- Even though the contents of social dialogue are established at a national level in each country, there is consensus between the governments and COSATE in terms of its definition as it is accepted within the framework of the ILO: “social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy.”
- Dialogue is a means and an end in itself. As an end, it is recognized that both agreement and disagreement, are valid results of dialogue. It is also recognized that if there is an exhaustive and real pursuit for consensus, permanent and lasting results are achieved.
- CEATAL representatives manifested their discrepancy with the definition of social dialogue and the assessment of its results, which is supported by several governments and COSATE. In their opinion, it should not be limited to simply an exchange of information on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. Rather, the consultations and negotiations composing it should be aimed at thoroughly exhausting the possibilities of consensus between the parties. If it is not attainable, the manifestation of the different positions should be made possible and, in applying the principle of good faith, social dialogue cannot be invoked as a base of the measures which governments decide to put into practice.
- COSATE and CEATAL expressed that social dialogue is the key process on a path towards development and in the construction of a more just and egalitarian society. Of course, fostering this dialogue is first and foremost, a responsibility of democratic governments, but also an irreplaceable task of the business and worker sectors, through the promotion of strategic alliances aimed at the attainment of integral and inclusive development.
- The following present themselves as fundamental conditions for social dialogue:
  - Political Will
  - Responsibility of social actors
  - Representativity, credibility and summoning ability of the parties
  - Liberty and respect for human rights
  - Rule of Law
  - Good faith and trust among the actors
- Social dialogue is a transcending tool:
  - In the formulation of a national strategic vision, as part of a collective construction of a future prospect.

- In the identification of challenges and responses to contemporary realities that are posed by the globalization process.
- In the definition of public policies, both cyclic and counter-cyclic (in this respect, the need to take advantage of positive cycles to propose mitigation and control strategies for more difficult times was mentioned)
- The centrality of social dialogue in democratic governance and as a basic instrument for the construction of inclusive societies with social justice is reiterated.
- The dichotomy between legislation and its effective enforcement appears as an important concern in this debate. In this context, the role of social dialogue in the dissemination of legislation, conflict prevention activities, fostering a culture of compliance and the search for adequate norms that respond to national realities was mentioned.
- The intrinsic relationship which exists between social dialogue and social cohesion is recognized. On the one hand, social dialogue is indispensable to sustain social cohesion; on the other hand, dialogue is more productive when it is sustained within a cohesive society.
- The need for effective and institutionalized social dialogue under a constructive cooperation environment that goes beyond confrontation was reiterated
- The representatives of CEATAL stated their concern regarding the concept of tripartism-plus, as it incorporates new actors of civil society into discussions that are unique to labor relations and the realities of the productive world.
- The Ministries of Labor play a fundamental role in social dialogue because they create the proper conditions for workers' and employers' organizations to function with autonomy and independence and to be strong institutions.
- The participation of workers and employers through COSATE and CEATAL is considered very important at the Inter-American level in general, and particularly within OAS and IACML activities. The importance of continuing to strengthen the participation of COSATE and CEATAL in OAS activities was stressed.
- COSATE and CEATAL delegates expressed that in every case and at every level, participation, formation and information of social actors should be guaranteed in equitable conditions.
- CEATAL delegates stated their request to institutionalize their participation in OAS activities, as it is now occurring with workers by virtue of Resolution 2315 of the OAS General Assembly of 2007.

#### Follow-up

- Systematize/centralize information on the different social dialogue entities at the national level (information on: actors involved, objectives, operation and concrete results). The Technical Secretariat will incorporate this information in the RIAL website. All countries are invited to send information, particularly:
  - Argentina on the Employment and Productivity Council
  - Peru on the National Labor and Employment Council (CNTPE)

- USA on Federal Advisory Committees, USA
  - Panama on Work Foundation Bambito and Coronado agreements
  - Mercosur on Economic and Social Consultative Forum (FCES)
  - Canada Industrial Relations Board
  - Barbados Vocation Training Board (BVTB)
  - Dominican Republic on Consultative Labor Council
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- To follow-up on these entities through the RIAL webpage and during the Working Group 2 Meeting in 2009. The follow-up will include a discussion on the effectiveness of these entities, particularly to highlight their concrete results.
  
  - To incorporate social dialogue as a cross-cutting theme in the discussions of the themes of Working Groups and RIAL workshops. On all themes to be discussed, bipartite and tripartite agreements should be mentioned, as well as the dialogue entities that operate in each case. (Example: development of decent work programs).
  
  - To continue promoting the institutionalization of CEATAL's participation in OAS activities in order to balance its participation to that of the delegates of COSATE.