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DECENT WORK IS SAFE WORK

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The anniversary tenth World Day of Action for decent work was celebrated under the slogan "Decent work - productive work! Decent work is a highly paid work! Decent work is safe work!".

Traditionally, occupational health and safety (OSH) has been given much attention by the Government and social partners, especially in mining and metal industries. Ukraine has ratified a number of ILO instruments related to OSH. The large-scale privatization, creation of small and medium-sized enterprises as well as growing informality raised however a number of challenges for preventing and recording workplace accidents.

The available statistics cover only the formal employment, demonstrating that workplace accidents have dropped by 13.4 per cent, while lethal accidents increased by 7.9 per cent. The main reasons were organizational (63.9 per cent), psycho-sociological (24 per cent), technical (12.1 per cent), linked to substance abuse (2.5 per cent). In the first six months of 2015, 2,156 accidents have occurred (including 178 lethal).

At the same time, the trade unions are alarmed that the moratorium on labour inspection visits makes it impossible for the labour inspectors to promote and enforce the OSH. The State Labour Service was eventually excluded from the moratorium; however, it cannot immediately become effective as it has to clarify its mandate and internal structure as described above.

Despite the decreasing trend in the number of work accidents in recent years, Ukraine is facing huge challenges in the area of occupational safety and health (OSH). According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 24.7 percent of workers still work in conditions that fail to meet the safety and health standards. The challenge today is that national stakeholders pursue their joint efforts to ensure that OSH programmes are implemented and reach all the employees.

According to the data of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine, in the last 5 years in Ukraine, almost 36 thousand employees were injured, including 2,5 thousand - deadly. Of the registered fatalities, only 42 per cent are related to production, which means that 58 per cent of the families of employees killed in the year do not receive any compensation for the damage they cause.

More than 900 thousand workers in Ukraine work under poor sanitary and hygienic conditions - due to the increased pollution of the air at the workplace by chemicals, dust, excessive levels of noise and vibration, the severity and intensity of labour, which is 30% of the total number of employees.

There is a steady tendency to increase the share of employees employed in the labour market, which do not meet sanitary and hygienic standards, despite the fact that for the period of 2005-2016, the total number of employees in such conditions decreased by almost 42 percent.

Each year, these conditions of work lead to the fact that more than 6 thousand employees are occupational diseases and, as a rule, in the late stages of development, which are not subject to effective treatment. As a result, about 80% of those who first detected occupational diseases become disabled employees.

Unjustified reduction of existing privileges and compensations for employees engaged in work with heavy and harmful working conditions, massive, under the guise of deregulation, abolition of existing, but "obsolete" legislative and other normative legal acts on labour protection, reduction of dozens of times the legislative norm of volume the minimum costs for labour protection measures and the restriction of the rights of state inspectors to comply with legislation in this area does not facilitate, but, on the contrary, complicate the economic activity of employers whose results are offset the major additional financial costs for disaster recovery, fires, accidents, treatment for common and occupational diseases, which hinders the economic development of not only individual companies but also the state as a whole.

Occupational Safety and Health remained a priority for many countries and that many developed and developing countries were in the process of formulating or updating their national Occupational Safety and Health policies and their regulatory systems.

The State Labour Service of Ukraine, which has the authority to monitor compliance with employers' labour legislation, plays an important role in ensuring occupational health and safety. In exercising control functions, the State Labour Service of Ukraine emphasized the formation of partnerships with business, defining as a priority direction of explanatory work, providing consultations. On the other hand, the State Labour Service of Ukraine holds a principled position on violators of the law, defending the interests of the employee in the safe and healthy working conditions, timely and full payment of wages and social guarantees.

Between Ukraine and the International Labour Organization a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on the implementation of the Decent Work for Ukraine Program for 2016-2019. Within the framework of this program, the State Labour Service of Ukraine in conjunction with ILO launched the project "Strengthening the System of Labour Inspection and Social Dialogue Mechanisms", which envisages, in particular, developing

and implementing a gender-sensitive personnel policy and appropriate measures for the recruitment and retention of skilled staff; to expand the possibilities of the State Labour Service of Ukraine to work in partnership with other institutions and organisations; as well as the construction of a functional model of trilateral dialogue within the system of labour administration.

The results also confirm that the right to safe and healthy working conditions by its legal nature, in addition to being a personal non-property labour right, is also characterized as one of the main labour rights and an integral part of the concept of "decent work" as an individual labour right and regulatory labour right.

The structure of the right to safe and healthy working conditions is considered as a set of powers, the main of which are the competence for working conditions, which should not endanger the health of the employee, require the introduction of modern systems of management of occupational safety at enterprises, providing information about working conditions, availability of the place where he will work, the dangerous and harmful production factors that have not yet been addressed, and the possible consequences of their impact on health, the active participation of representatives of employees in labour protection in the development of but the use of preventive methods for the prevention of accidents and health at the enterprises.

It is also worth highlighting that the experience of developed countries suggests that a high culture of safety at work is beneficial for both employees, employers and the state. Various preventive measures have proven effective in preventing accidents at workplaces and in improving productivity. Modern high standards of safety in some countries are a direct consequence of long-term policies that encourage tripartite social dialogue, the conclusion of collective agreements and agreements between the parties to the social dialogue in the field of labour.

Consequently, only joint efforts of the social partners of Ukraine will contribute to the implementation of the fundamental principles of daily life: «Decent work is safe work!».