

Port au Prince, Haiti. 25 May 2010. 10:00 am

First Meeting on the Re-foundation of Social Protection in Haiti

The Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, Mr. Yves CRISTALIN and Mr. Nigel Fisher, Special Deputy Representative of the Secretary General and Coordinator of the UN System in Haiti, launched the “First Meeting on the Re-foundation of Social Protection in Haiti” organized jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MAST), the Ministry of Planning and External Collaboration (MPCE) and the ILO.



Mr. Cristalin shared with the participants his vision on the role of social protection in the re-foundation process of Haiti as well as his conviction on the need to have a “social protection thinking” in the whole reconstruction process. The Minister confirmed his support to the Social Protection Floor initiative (SPF) and invited all participants to be realistic in the design of the implementation process. The Minister thanked all UN agencies and their national counterparts for participating in the PDNA and celebrated ILO’s initiative and support to the MAST and the MPCE to organize the meeting.

Mr. Nigel Fisher also underscored the importance of social protection in the re-foundation process of Haiti and shared with the participants his own arguments supporting the implementation of a social protection floor. He highlighted the importance of the UN agencies working together and the need for national and international continued coordination. Mr. Fisher also stressed the importance and the urgency of launching the implementation of the SPF considering the increased challenges created by the earthquake as well as the imminent start of the cyclone season.



The 3-day meeting constitutes a follow up to two important previous exercises. The first one is the Post-Damage Needs Assessment exercise (PDNA) carried out by all the agencies of the United Nations system, The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the European Commission, between February and March 2010, to elaborate a thorough proposal to re-found Haiti after the devastating earthquake of January 12th. The second one is the Donors Conference held at the UN in New York on March 31st which earmarked resources to specific priorities established by the Haitian Government in its Plan of Action for the Re-foundation of Haiti.

The purpose of the meeting is to identify and fine-tune concrete projects and activities for the implementation of the social protection dimension of the Plan of Action which includes the

creation of a “Social Protection Floor (SPF)” which is one of the nine joint initiatives agreed by the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB) on April 2009 to confront crises, accelerate recovery and pave the way for a fairer and more sustainable globalization. Within the framework of the SPF, the agenda of the meeting includes discussions on issues such as: identification of all recipients of social protection benefits, access to basic goods and services, care and attention of vulnerable groups, occupational safety and health, and cash transfers.

Most UN agencies and national counterparts dealing with social protection issues were present during today’s first day of activities as well as representatives of the Association of Industries of Haiti (ADIH) as well as representatives of the Confederation of Haitian Workers (CTH) and the Confederation of workers from the public and private sectors (CTSP).

The first day of activities included an ILO presentation of the Social Protection Initiative in the context of the Reconstruction of Haiti; a presentation by PAHO/WHO of the health dimension of SPF; a presentation by UNICEF of the education dimension of the SPF and a food security by the World Food Program. In the second part of the day’s activities presentations were made by Ministry of Planning and External Collaboration and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour on the economic and social perspective of the re-foundation of Haiti as well as on the Government’s vision on social protection and in particular on the SPF initiative considered in the Plan of Action. All presentations were followed by lively discussions.

The launching of the Meeting was extensively covered by local media. The Minister of Labour offered an informal press conference during which he supported once more the SPF initiative and welcomed ILO’s as well as other UN agencies for their collaboration.