

Conclusions

1. The Committee had before it the observations of the Committee of Experts and the report from the ILO Liaison Officer a.i. in Yangon which included the latest developments in the implementation of the complaint mechanism on forced labour that was established on 26 February 2007. The Committee noted the decisions of the Governing Body of March 2007. It also listened to the statement of the Government representative.
2. The Committee expressed its profound concern at the forced labour situation in Myanmar, as reflected in the observation of the Committee of Experts. It concluded that none of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry had yet been implemented, and the imposition of forced labour continued to be widespread, particularly by the army to which specific instructions should be issued. The situation in Kayin (Karen) State and northern Rakhine (Arakan) State was particularly serious. The Committee strongly urged the Government to take all the necessary measures to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.
3. The Committee took due note of the fact that the complaint mechanism on forced labour continued to function, and that the authorities were investigating the cases referred to them by the Liaison Officer and taking action against those officials found to have illegally imposed forced labour. It was observed, however, that in a number of cases the action taken had been limited to administrative measures rather than the required criminal penalties. It was also observed that the mechanism had to be assessed against the ultimate goal of eliminating forced labour, and it remained to be seen what the impact would be, particularly in the border areas.
4. The Committee underlined the need for the Liaison Officer to have sufficient staff resources available to him as provided for in the Supplementary Understanding and requested by the Governing Body in March 2007. It noted with concern that the

Government had not yet agreed to the appointment of an international staff member to assist the Liaison Officer, even though the workload continued to increase, and urged that the necessary cooperation and facilities be given without delay. The Committee requested the Myanmar authorities to give full cooperation to the ILO and extend to the new Liaison Officer all the facilities necessary under the agreement and appropriate under usual diplomatic practice.

5. The Government of Myanmar was requested to provide full information to the Committee of Experts in time for its session later this year, including concrete and verifiable evidence of action taken towards the implementation of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations.
6. Finally, the Committee welcomed the appointment of Mr Steven Marshall as the new ILO Liaison Officer in Yangon and expressed its deepest appreciation for the work carried out by the outgoing ILO Liaison Officer a.i., Mr Richard Horsey.