
International Labour Organization

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Agenda item 2

Analyzing ethnicity-based discrimination against workers

Report of the Chair

I. Statement of the Problem

1. Racial Discrimination is the mistreatment of people based on their ethnicity, race, or personal characteristics within a race. While the ILO has placed emphasis on this issue, millions of people continue to report suffering from discrimination in various parts of the world.

2. Discrimination at work can take place in various forms, which results in the impairment of equal and fair treatment. Freedom of artisans to develop skills, pursue their aspirations, and use their talents, is therefore restricted [8]. The Federal and State law forbids the discrimination of people based on their national origin within any employment. However, these laws are not always followed or enforced. For example, ethnic groups in California, including Arab, Latino, and Asian immigrants, are treated differently just because of their race or ethnicity [3].

3. The United Nations needs to increase the security to protect people who are mistreated based on ethnicity. Increased security would be a safety measure for laborers to feel safe from discrimination.

II. History of the Issue

4. Ethnic discrimination has existed for centuries. The law forbids discrimination in any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay and benefits. It is also unlawful to harass a person based on that person's race or ethnicity [2].

5. Although not all forms of social and work force exclusion derive from discrimination, all forms of discrimination lead to exclusion. Examination of workforce exclusion provides

additional insights into the problems of poverty and unemployment. This approach has been defined as a way of analyzing how and why individuals and groups fail to have access to possibilities offered by societies and economies.

6. Throughout the fifty years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the international community has made important advances in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, and intolerance. National and international laws have been enacted and numerous international human rights laws have been changed. Treaties in the process of being adopted particularly restrict racial discrimination within the workforce. Unfortunately, not all countries enforce and track the progress of the resolutions.

III. Potential Solutions

7. This is a topic that has been addressed through multiple UN documents, such as the Time for Equality at Work [7], but is in continual need of support [3]. An ideal solution is to reinforce these documents through stronger regulation procedures. This will allow the issue to be more controlled in certain countries.

8. The International Labour Organization also address this issue through programs like the Better Work Program [5] and the Assessing and Addressing the Effects of Trade on Employment Program [5], which strive to protect the rights of workers in this growing consumer population. This issue has also been addressed by individual countries through political and social reforms. Bear in mind that the United Nations is attempting to avoid these conflicts, through diplomatic debate.

9. Decent Country Work Programs also aid countries in these areas of concern. Once again, these are dependent on a countrys situation in this area of debate [2]. Be aware of the ILOs power to place sanctions on countries. This power can only be utilized if necessary [1]. Consider creating a long term or short plan for countries that are struggling with this issue. This plan should address the ultimate goal and the steps and procedures taken to reach this goal. Countries that have experience in this issue, may choose to side with allies, blocs, or provide aid to countries in need.

IV. Position and Research Tips

10. While many countries struggle with the discrimination of laborers due to ethnicity, many westernized countries have undergone political and social reform to challenge this. Examine the history of this topic carefully and consider the placement of your country within that history. It is recommended that the delegates reference the International Labour Organization Constitution [1], its Declaration [1], the purpose of the ILO [7], and the Decent Country Work Programs [2] that concern their country. Consider these questions when researching a position for this topic:

- Where is the Country located?
- What are the ethnic minorities/majorities?
- Has the country signed the Declaration of the International Labour Organization?
- Does the country agree with the regulations the ILO has in place?
- How much, if any, control does the government have on Labor Regulations?

- Does religion affect the country's perspective?
 - What is the main source of income?
 - What are the main fields of labor?
11. If your country has undergone social or political reform, consider these questions:
- How many reforms has the country undergone?
 - Who did these reforms affect and how?
 - Are there still struggles with equality among laborers?
 - What was successful?
 - What resources did the reform movements have access to?

Useful Web Sources

12. Useful web sources include:
- <http://www.un.org/>
 - <http://www.cia.gov/>
 - <http://www.state.gov/>
 - <http://www.nytimes.com/>
 - <http://www.bbc.com.uk/>

References

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