World Day for Safety and Health at Work: 28 April 2012

The International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) calls for concerted actions for advancing occupational health and safety programmes meeting the changing needs at the workplace in globalizing economy

Coherent and comprehensive occupational health and safety programmes should be developed to address both traditional and emerging risks at work in increasingly diversifying work situations. We fully support the ILO action to ensure sustainable development built upon sound economic growth, social equity and environmental protection. The theme of the 2012 World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the promotion of safety and health in a green economy, is timely in line with the international collaboration in this direction.

The participants of the 30th International Congress on Occupational Health, held in Cancun in March 2012, adopted the Cancun Charter on Occupational Health for All. The Charter calls the international organizations, governments and other international and national bodies to give higher priority to occupational health on the international and national policy agendas, through the development of occupational health services, training and education and research programmes. The Charter encourages social partners to improve health and well-being of working people, particularly those in need and in high-risk groups, and to support the development of healthy and productive sustainable economies.

This renewed call for international joint actions is based on the awareness that the limited and unequal implementation of international instruments and programmes leaves uncovered and unattended those most in need, the small-scale and microenterprises, the self-employed, informal sector and domestic workers and high-risk groups. We must ensure availability of adequate infrastructures for providing occupational health services for all workers particularly to the currently non-served workers. The Basic Occupational Health Service approach needs to be developed in connection with primary health care and other grassroots level services.

ICOH and its members pledge to join forces for equalizing the conditions of work and right to health and safe work and work environment for every working individual. There is an urgent need to ensure proactive risk assessment and control and competent occupational health services for all workers. Sustained international collaboration is essential toward this common aim, including the urgent coordinated efforts to achieve a global ban on production and use of all forms of asbestos and the elimination of asbestos-related diseases.

ICOH expresses warm congratulations on the 93rd Anniversary of the ILO and its leadership role in the improvement of conditions of work and social justice throughout the world. We join our efforts for ensuring every working individual in the world the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of occupational health as part of their basic human rights.

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