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Worker' delegation
Poland

Dear Mr. Director-General

Dear President of the Conference

Distinguished Delegates

On behalf of the Polish workers' delegation I would like to first make remarks on the topic of the recurrent discussion on social dialogue. Without tripartite dialogue, no Government, no employer and no trade union organization is in a position to develop and improve labor standards. Only tripartite social dialogue allows for creation of new regulations based on the principles of decent and safe work, and above all contributes to solving the problems of people covered by labour protection as well as workers in precarious situations.

In this context, I must mention negative Polish development which stands in opposition to decent work principles. Last month a new type of civil contract in agriculture was introduced to the Polish legal order. It is a contract on aid in harvesting which introduces a new category of workers - a so called agricultural helper. An agricultural helper is covered neither by the provisions of the Labor Code nor by the Act on minimum wage, and is excluded from the scope of health and safety regulations. The result is another precarious category of worker on the Polish labour market, unprotected, underpaid, and at risk of pension below basic living costs.

Moreover, not all government-related measures in Poland in the field of legislation are implemented through full cooperation and tripartite dialogue. Some legal acts are hurriedly dealt with, reaching social partners too late. Trade unions must intervene by demanding compliance with the consultation deadlines.

On the other hand, I would like to thank the Director-General for drawing attention to the situation of women in employment. In his report, the Director points out that there must be no space at the workplace for violence against and

discrimination of women. Generally binding ILO standards are particularly important in this respect. One of the basic goals of the International Labor Conference should be a broad discussion and adoption of the Convention together with a recommendation that will be entirely devoted to this topic, and here I appeal to all of you to adopt such a solution. So far, such a Convention has not been adopted, and there are undoubtedly countries in which women are used in forced labor, are discriminated against in terms of pay, violence and humiliation at work. We should not be passive in the face of such discrimination, hence the ILO's normative activity would be more than welcome in this regard.

Finally, I would like to share with you information on one issue, very important for the Polish trade union movement. In 2011, my trade union, NSZZ "Solidarność", filed a complaint to the Committee on Freedom of Association because in Poland the self-employed and other persons performing work on the basis of civil-law contracts could not join trade union. After 7 years following the recommendation of the Committee to amend the provisions accordingly, this change becomes a fact. All persons engaged in gainful employment, regardless of whether they are covered by the definition of an employee included in the Labor Code or not, will be able to take advantage of their freedom of association already this year.

I would like to thank the Director-General and all those involved in the development of tripartite dialogue, fair rules of employment and remuneration. May this year's debate serve to improve the fate of working people around the world.

Thank you for your attention.