

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)**

**INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNISED CORE  
LABOUR STANDARDS IN GABON AND  
CAMEROON**

**REPORT FOR THE WTO GENERAL COUNCIL REVIEW OF  
THE TRADE POLICIES OF GABON AND CAMEROON**

**(2 and 4 October 2007)**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Gabon and Cameroon have ratified seven and eight, respectively, of the eight international core labour standards. Gabon has not ratified Convention 138 (the Minimum Age Convention, 1973). However, there are many contradictions between the principles emanating from these binding legal instruments and those effectively applied in both countries.**

**The situation regarding freedom of association and collective bargaining is not good in either of these countries. The exercise of the right to strike is limited in Gabon. Legislation in Cameroon considers it a crime to carry out union activities without registration. The ILO's CEACR (Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations) continues to urge Cameroon to amend its legislation to make it consistent with these labour standards.**

**Women and minorities suffer open discrimination in the workplace and very few measures are implemented to tackle the situation. The ILO has been urging Cameroon continuously to establish a national policy on the promotion of equality and opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation. Gabon still lacks national legislation that bans sexual harassment.**

**Child labour is a serious problem in both Gabon and Cameroon. In Gabon the law is enforced very rarely in rural areas, while the country does not ensure access to free education and vocational training. The ILO continues, with little success, to urge the government of Gabon to provide information on the measures taken. Cameroon has a high number of displaced children in urban areas, the measures taken so far being insufficient to improve their situation.**

**Trafficking is widespread in both countries, especially in Cameroon which is a source, transit, and destination point for internationally trafficked people, women and children being the most at risk. In Gabon various categories of the population including pygmies, children and prisoners suffer from different forms of forced labour in violation of ILO conventions. The ILO continues to urge both countries to amend their legislation to make it consistent with the international core labour standards both countries have ratified.**

## **INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED CORE LABOUR STANDARDS IN GABON AND CAMEROON**

### **Introduction**

This report on the respect of internationally recognised core labour standards in Gabon and Cameroon is one of the series the ITUC is producing in accordance with the Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Singapore 9-13 December 1996) and endorsed at the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference (Doha, Qatar, 9-14 November 2001) in which the ministers stated: “We renew our commitment to the observance to the internationally recognised core labour standards”. These standards were further upheld in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work adopted by the 174 member countries of the ILO at the International Labour Conference in June 1998.

### ***Gabon***

Gabon was a founding member of the WTO on 1 January 1995. Gabon has two trade union centres affiliated to the ITUC, the Confédération Gabonaise des Syndicats Libres (CGSL) and the Confédération Syndicale Gabonaise (COSYGA).

Gabon enjoys a per capita income four times that of most sub-Saharan African countries. This has enabled a sharp decline in extreme poverty; yet, because of high income inequality, a large proportion of the population remains poor. Gabon depended on timber and manganese until oil was discovered offshore in the early 1970s. The oil sector now accounts for 50% of GDP. Gabon continues to face fluctuating prices for its oil, timber, and manganese exports. Despite the abundance of natural wealth, poor fiscal management hobbles the economy.

GDP was composed in 2006 of 5.9% agriculture, 59,7% industry and 34.4% services. The main agricultural products are cocoa, coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, cattle and fish. Its main industries are petroleum extraction and refining, manganese, gold, chemicals, ship repair, food and beverages, textiles, lumbering and plywood and cement.

The main export commodities are crude oil, timber and manganese, its main export partners being the US, China, France, Trinidad and Tobago and Thailand. Its exports rose to \$6,677 billion in 2006. Gabon’s main import commodities are machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, chemicals and construction materials, its main import partners being France, the US, the Netherlands, Cameroon and Belgium. Its imports amounted to \$1,607 billion in 2006, giving Gabon a positive balance of trade.

### ***Cameroon***

Cameroon became a member of the WTO on 13 December 1995. Cameroon has two trade union centres affiliated to the ITUC, the Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Cameroun (CSTC) and the Union des Syndicats Libres du Cameroun (USLC).

Because of its modest oil resources and favorable agricultural conditions, Cameroon has one of the best-endowed primary commodity economies in sub-Saharan Africa. International oil and cocoa prices have a significant impact on the economy

GDP was composed of 45.2% agriculture, 16.1% industry and 38.7% services in 2006. The main agricultural products are coffee, cocoa, cotton, rubber, bananas, oilseed, grains, root starches, livestock and timber. The main industries are petroleum production and refining, aluminium production, food processing, light consumer goods, textiles, lumber and ship repair. Export commodities are mainly crude oil and petroleum products, lumber, cocoa, beans, aluminium, coffee and cotton, its main export partners being Spain, Italy, France, South Korea, Netherlands, the US and Belgium. In 2006, exports rose to \$4,318 billion.

Import commodities are machinery, electrical equipment, transport equipment, fuel and food, its main import partners being France, Nigeria, China, Belgium, US and Brazil. Imports rose to \$3,083 billion in 2006. In 2006, Cameroon had a positive balance of trade.

## **I Freedom of Association and the right to collective bargaining**

### ***Gabon***

Gabon has ratified both Convention 87 (Freedom of association and protection of the right to organise convention, 1948) and Convention 98 (right to organise and collective bargaining convention, 1949), on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1960 and the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1961 respectively.

The law recognises the right of citizens to form trade unions. Unions must register with the government to be recognised officially, and registration is generally granted routinely. Trade unions and confederations can freely join international bodies and participate in their activities.

The law does not expressly prohibit discrimination against trade unions. Employers who are found guilty by civil courts of having engaged in such discrimination may be required to compensate employees. However, trade unionists in both the public and private sectors are often discriminated against. They are regularly harassed or simply dismissed.

The law allows unions to conduct their activities without government interference. The law provides for collective bargaining by industry, not by firm, and collectively bargained agreements set wages for whole industries. Labour and management meet to negotiate differences, with observers from the Ministry of Labour. Agreements negotiated by unions also applied to non-union workers.

The law provides workers the right to strike; however, they may do so only with eight days' advance notification and only if arbitration does not succeed. Public sector employees' right to strike is limited if a strike could jeopardise public safety.

In 2003, following dismissal of several strike organisers and the violent dispersal of a timber workers' strike, the trade unions, government and employers signed a social truce, agreeing to a three year hiatus on strikes and establishing a 35 member mediation committee to negotiate disputes. However, some trade unions were unhappy with this measure, considering it to be a restriction of their fundamental right to strike.

On 7 March 2005, 28 strikers were sacked by the manager of the Société des cigarettes gabonaises, a subsidiary of the British group Imperial Tobacco. The protest had started a few days earlier, after the workers failed to win their dispute with an expatriate manager whose conduct they regarded as insulting and humiliating. A few days later, only some of the strikers were reinstated, despite the protests of the CSG (Confédération syndicale gabonaise), which called for the reinstatement of all the sacked workers.

On 4 April 2005, a group of Foreign Affairs Ministry employees who were blocking the main entrance to the building was violently dispersed by the police. They had been on strike since 23 March in protest at the continuous deterioration of their working conditions.

Workers from the national post office went on strike on October 31, 2005 demanding an additional 40 months' salary as severance payment in connection with reorganisation of the post office. Teachers at several public schools went on strike on November 16, 2005.

The Gabonese Confederation of Trade Unions (CGSL) reported in 2006 that there had been many cases in recent years of arbitrary arrests of CGSL members, and even of imprisonment on trumped up charges. The government also ignored the elected leadership of CGSL, appointing workers' representatives of its own choosing to tripartite bodies at both the national and international levels, including at the 2006 International Labour Conference.

## ***Cameroon***

Cameroon has ratified both Convention 87 (Freedom of association and protection of the right to organise convention, 1948) and Convention 98 (right to organise and collective bargaining convention, 1949), on the 7th of June 1960 and the 3rd of September 1962 respectively.

The law allows workers to form and join trade unions. However, the government imposes numerous restrictions. The law does not permit the creation of a union that includes both public and private sector workers, or the creation of a union that includes different related sectors. The law requires that unions register with the government, permitting groups of at least 20 workers to organise a union by submitting a constitution, internal regulations, and non conviction certifications for each group member. The law provides for prison sentences and fines for workers who form a union and carry out union activities without registration. Government officials state that the government provides union certification within one month of application. However, independent unions, especially in the public sector, find it very difficult to register. Registered unions are subject to government interference.

The government is reviewing its Labour Code dating from 1992, and it is feared that proposed amendments will restrict further many aspects of workers' freedom of association and right to collective bargaining through restrictive registration procedures. The new code stands to give the Registrar of Trade Unions broad powers to cancel trade union certification and to provide less effective protection for trade union officials.

The government interferes in trade union activities in several ways. It has a reputation for favouring those workers' organisations it sees as easier to control and has used union registration requirements as a means to withhold recognition from trade

unions that it considers to be too independent. Some sections of labour law have no force or effect because the presidency has not issued implementing decrees yet.

The government normally chooses the unions with which it would negotiate in social dialogue arrangements; some independent unions have accused the government of creating small non representative unions amenable to government positions and with which it could negotiate more easily. One of the major union confederations says that social dialogue does exist, but that the outcome of the negotiations is rarely honoured.

In 2005 there were cases of restriction of civil rights to union leaders by the government. The constitution and law prohibit antiunion discrimination and employers that are found guilty of such discrimination are theoretically subject to fines. Nevertheless, employers that are found guilty are not required to compensate the workers for discrimination or to reinstate fired workers. Although the Ministry of Labour does not publish any report on antiunion discrimination, there are credible press reports of harassment of union leaders.

The government often demands that workers setting up a union produce job descriptions signed by the employer before a union can be registered. This makes it impossible for workers in informal employment relationships and independent or self-employed workers to form a union.

The CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) of the ILO recalls that legislation under which the existence in the law of a trade union or occupational association of public servants is subject to prior approval by the Minister for Territorial Administration and other laws, under which persons establishing a trade union which has not yet been registered and who act as if the said union has been registered shall be liable to prosecution, are not consistent with the convention. In 2007 the Committee urged the government once again to take the necessary measures to bring legislation into conformity with the convention. The Committee further pointed out that legislation that provides that trade unions or associations of public servants may not join a foreign occupational organisation without prior authorisation from the minister responsible for supervising public freedoms is inconsistent with the convention.

The right to collective bargaining is recognised, but the legal mechanisms for applying collective agreements are ineffective. In practice, collective bargaining does not exist, shown by the fact that there have been no formal collective bargaining negotiations since 1996.

The labour code expressly recognises workers' right to strike but only after mandatory arbitration. Arbitration decisions are legally binding, but often unenforceable. The provision of the law allowing persons to strike does not apply to civil servants, employees of the penitentiary system, or workers responsible for national security. Certain sectors have to provide a minimum service, including transport which the ILO does not consider an "essential" service (i.e. those the interruption of which would endanger the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population), thus contravening ILO conventions.

Firms operating in EPZs are exempt from certain aspects of the Labour Code, but must comply with international labour standards. However, an official note from the National Office for Industrial Free Zones contains a list of incentives which states that employers enjoy flexibility in hiring/ firing workers.

On 19 May 2005, the agricultural workers' union in the department of Mfoundi was banned from all its activities at the agricultural machinery research and testing centre (CENEEMA) by the Registrar of Trade Unions at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The National Federation of agricultural and fisheries workers (Fédération nationale des syndicats de l'agriculture, de l'élevage et des pêches du Cameroun, FESTAPEC), of which the banned union is a member, denounced this blatant violation of Conventions 87 and 98. FESTAPEC maintains that officials at the Registry of Trade unions and certain officers from CENEEMA concocted this measure in order to bar the way of the legitimate candidates presented by CENEEMA for the union delegation elections that were to be held on 30 May.

In January 2006, some 163 people working on the road connecting Yaoundé in Cameroon and Moundou in Chad were fired for organising a strike. The workers had gone on strike to protest against their working conditions and to demand an accommodation allowance. The spokesperson of the 163 road construction workers was arrested in Yaoundé on 22 May 2006. His arrest followed a visit to the site where the workers had been fired.

Also in 2006, Barnabé Paho, of the Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Cameroun (CSTC) was accused by his former employer DTP Terrassement, part of the French group Bouygues, of forgery. He was transferred to Tchollire, more than thousand kilometers from where he was arrested and was held in detention for one week without questioning. He was then released.

In June 2006, Jean Marie N'Di, the General Secretary of the Fédération des Syndicats de la Santé, Pharmacies et Assimilés (health and pharmaceutical workers' union FSESPAC), was fired by the Fondation Medicale AD-LUCEM because of his trade union activities.

**Conclusions:** *Despite the fact that both Gabon and Cameroon have ratified both Conventions 87 and 98, there are many restrictions to the exercise of the rights these internationally binding conventions foresee. Likewise, the right to strike is limited in both countries. Undue restrictions apply to the administrative requirements for the registration of unions. The government of Cameroon is reviewing the labour code at present and there are fears that the proposed amendments restrict even more the rights of workers. In practice, collective bargaining has not taken place for ten years in Cameroon and firms operating in the export processing zones of the country enjoy many flexibilities and incentives such as hiring or firing workers as they wish. The CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) of the ILO has frequently called on the government of Cameroon to amend its legislation to make it consistent with the international labour conventions it has ratified.*

## **II Discrimination and equal remuneration**

### ***Gabon***

Gabon has ratified both Convention 100 (Equal remuneration convention, 1951) and Convention 111 (Discrimination (employment and occupation) convention, 1958), on the 13th of June 1961 and the 29th of May 1961 respectively.

The law provides women with rights to equal access in education, business and investment, but in practice women continue to face considerable societal and legal discrimination, particularly in rural areas.

There is no law that prohibits sexual harassment, and this constitutes a problem. The government and NGOs report often cases of female domestic workers who are sexually molested by employers.

Pygmies suffer societal discrimination, often live in extreme poverty and do not have easy access to public services. They are often paid much less than the minimum wage.

### **Cameroon**

Cameroon has ratified both Convention 100 (Equal remuneration convention, 1951) and Convention 111 (Discrimination (employment and occupation) convention, 1958), on the 25th of May 1970 and the 13th of May 1988 respectively.

Despite constitutional provisions recognising women's rights, women do not enjoy the same rights and privileges as men. Some points of civil law are prejudicial to women.

The law prohibits sexual harassment, but very few cases are generally reported or prosecuted during the year. The government has not conducted any public education campaigns on the subject.

The CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) has often expressed its concern about the absence of a national policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation. The committee notes in an individual observation in its 2007 report that the government does not provide new information on the finalisation of the national policy on equality and continues to refer to the prohibition of discrimination as set out in the national legislation. The committee recalls that while the affirmation of the principle of equality in national legislation is an important step in the implementation of the convention, it is not sufficient in itself to constitute a national policy within the meaning of article 2 of the convention.

There are reports of discrimination in the Northern provinces, mainly in rural areas, by Muslims against Christians and persons who practice traditional indigenous religions.

**Conclusions:** *Gabon and Cameroon have both ratified Conventions 100 and 111 on discrimination and equal remuneration. However, in both countries discrimination takes place, particularly in rural areas. In the case of Cameroon, the ILO's CEACR continues to express concern about the lack of national policy on the promotion of equality and opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation. In Gabon, there is no law prohibiting sexual harassment. Pygmies suffer from discrimination in different aspects of life such as payment of the minimum wage, education and access to public services.*

### **III Child Labour**

#### ***Gabon***

Gabon ratified Convention 182 (Worst forms of child labour convention, 1999) on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2001. Gabon has not ratified Convention 138 (Minimum age convention, 1973).

The Constitution and labour code protect children against exploitation. Although children below the age of 16 may not work without the express consent of the ministries of labour, education, and public health, child labour is a serious problem in Gabon.

The Ministry of Justice is responsible for implementing and enforcing child labour laws and regulations. Inspectors from the Ministry of Labour are responsible for receiving, investigating and addressing child labour complaints. However, violations are not systematically addressed because the inspection force is inadequate and complaints are not investigated routinely.

The law stipulates fines and prison sentences for violations of the minimum age for work. The ministries rigorously enforce this law in urban areas and few citizens under the age of 18 work in the formal wage sector; however, child labour occurs in rural areas very frequently, where the law is rarely enforced.

An unknown number of children, primarily foreign minors, perform work in marketplaces or carry out domestic duties; many of these children are reportedly victims of child trafficking. These children generally do not attend school, receive only limited medical attention, and often are exploited by employers or foster families. A 2001 ILO study estimated that 20,000 children between 10 and 14 years old were economically active, but the actual number was probably considerably higher since most children work in informal economic activities.

The ILO CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) notes that the government has not provided any information on the matter of ensuring access to free basic education and vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour. The committee recalls that education is one of the most effective means of combating child labour, and particularly its worst forms. The committee urges the government to provide information on the measures established in the context of IPEC/ LUTRENA (sub regional project to combat labour exploitation in West and Central Africa) to enable child victims of trafficking who are removed from this worst form of child labour to have access to free basic education and vocational training.

#### ***Cameroon***

Cameroon has ratified both Convention 182 (Worst forms of child labour convention, 1999) and Convention 138 (Minimum age convention, 1973), on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2002 and the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2001 respectively.

The law provides for a child's right to education, and schooling is mandatory up to the age of 14 and free in public primary schools. Parents have to pay uniform and book fees for primary schools. Tuition and other fees for secondary education remain costly; therefore, secondary education is largely unaffordable for many children.

Child labour remains a problem in Cameroon. The country has significant number of displaced or street children, most of whom reside in urban areas such as Yaoundé and Douala undertaking informal work.



The Ministry of Social affairs and the Ministry of Labour are responsible for enforcing child labour laws through site inspections of registered businesses; however, the government does not allocate sufficient resources to support an effective inspection program. In 2005, for example, the government employed 58 general labour inspectors to investigate child labour cases.

The government has taken some measures to improve access to schools, such as the construction of new classrooms, recruitment of new teachers, and provision of water fountains. The low level of educational enrolment is attributed to socio-cultural prejudices, early marriage, sexual harassment, unwanted pregnancy, and domestic chores.

**Conclusions:** *Gabon has ratified Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour but has not ratified Convention 138 on minimum age. Cameroon has ratified both conventions. Child labour is a serious problem in Gabon, mainly in the rural areas where the law is enforced very rarely. Labour inspection is very weak in the country. The CEACR of the ILO has noted that Gabon has not provided any information on the matter of ensuring access to free education and vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour. Child labour is a serious problem in Cameroon too. The country has a significant number of displaced children who mainly live in urban areas undertaking informal work. Although the government has taken some measures, the educational attendance rate is still very low.*

## IV Forced Labour

### **Gabon**

Gabon has ratified both Convention 29 (Forced labour convention, 1930) and Convention 105 (Abolition of forced labour convention, 1957), on the 14th of September 1960 and the 29th of May 1961 respectively.

The law prohibits forced or compulsory labour; however, there are reports that such practices occur, including by children. Prisoners are often placed at the disposal of private individuals.

Pygmies are sometimes employed under conditions tantamount to slavery and without effective recourse to the judicial system.

The CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) noted in 2007 that the government's report contains no reply to its previous comments on prison labour. The committee draws attention to the provisions of the convention under which prisoners may not be hired or placed at the disposal of private individuals, companies or associations. This would require the voluntary consent of the prisoner and ensure certain other guarantees and safeguards covering the essential elements of an employment relationship, such as the existence of an employment contract, the application of labour legislation and the payment of wage and social security coverage.

### **Cameroon**

Cameroon has ratified both Convention 29 (Forced labour convention, 1930) and Convention 105 (Abolition of forced labour convention, 1957), on the 7th of June 1960 and the 3rd of September 1962 respectively.

An Anti-Child Trafficking law, drafted by the government in cooperation with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) took effect in December 2005. Other than that the law does not specifically prohibit trafficking in persons, but the law expressly does prohibit slavery, prostitution, forced labour, and other crimes related to trafficking in persons and establishes minimum age requirements for workers. However authorities continue to allow prison inmates to be contracted out to private employers or used as communal labour for municipal public works. Money generated from these activities is usually pocketed by prison administrators and not given to detainees.

Trafficking remains a serious problem. The country is a source, transit, and destination point for internationally trafficked persons. Trafficking also happens within the country. The Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Insurance is primarily responsible for fighting trafficking; however, the ministry is severely short of resources.

Women and children traditionally have faced the greatest risks of trafficking and have been trafficked most often for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour. Most trafficking in children occurs within the country's borders, while most trafficked women are transported out of the country. Girls are internally trafficked from the Adamawa, North, Far North, and Northwest provinces to Douala and Yaoundé to work as domestic servants, street vendors, or prostitutes. Children are equally internally trafficked to work on cocoa bean plantations.

A 2000 ILO study conducted in Yaoundé, Douala, and Bamenda reported that trafficking accounted for 84 percent of child labourers in those three cities. The report indicated that the country is a transit country for regional traffickers, who transport children between Nigeria, Benin, Niger, Chad, Togo, the Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic for indentured or domestic servitude, farm labour, and sexual exploitation.

The ILO's CEACR has continued to draw the attention of the government to the need to amend legislation that allows imposing work "in the general interest" on citizens aged between 16 and 55 years for 24 months, with penalties of imprisonment for refusal. The committee equally notes that in order to be deemed compatible with the requirements of the convention, work done by convicted prisoners for private enterprises or individuals must be subject to the formal consent of the persons concerned and must be accompanied by guarantees covering the essential elements of a free labour relationship.

The CEACR has been drawing the attention for many years to the government to certain provisions of the penal code which provide for sentences of imprisonment involving compulsory labour. The committee is continuing to request the government to indicate the measures taken or envisaged to ensure that the persons protected by the convention, particularly with regard to the expression of opinions by the press and political activities, the right of association and the right of assembly, may not be subjected to penalties involving compulsory labour. The committee equally requests the government to provide full particulars on the application of these provisions in practice, including the number of convictions for violations of these provisions and copies of judicial decisions which may define or illustrate their scope.

**Conclusions:** *Gabon and Cameroon have both ratified Conventions 29 on forced labour and 105 on abolition of forced labour. Despite the fact that the legislation in Gabon prohibits forced or compulsory labour, there are reports that these practices occur, including by children, by some minorities such as Pygmies, and by prisoners.*

*The CEACR (Committee of Experts on the application of conventions and recommendations) of the ILO continues to note that the government of Gabon has not replied to any comments on prison labour. In Cameroon, trafficking of people to undertake work is a serious problem. The country is a source, transit, and destination point for internationally trafficked people, particularly affecting women and children. The authorities continue to allow prison inmates to be contracted out to private employers or used as communal labour for municipal public works.*

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## Recommendations

1. The government of Gabon must ratify ILO Convention 138 (minimum age convention, 1973).
2. Both governments of Gabon and Cameroon must amend their legislation to eliminate illegitimate government restrictions for official registration of a union. Cameroon must equally amend its criminal code to decriminalise union activities without prior registration.
3. The government of Cameroon must implement measures to enable the practice of collective bargaining in the country. Equally, Cameroon must follow the recommendations of the CEACR of the ILO to amend legislation to comply with the conventions ratified. It must work with the ILO to ensure that its new Labour Code is in full compliance with ILO Conventions.
4. Export processing zones in Cameroon must be ruled by the same labour law in force in the country, based on the principles of the ILO core labour standards the country has ratified.
5. The governments of both Gabon and Cameroon must ensure that freedom of association is effective by the enactment of adequately dissuasive penalties against employers engaged in anti-union actions. Gabon should amend its legislation to allow all workers to exercise their right to strike.
6. Gabon must take measures to tackle discrimination against women and minorities. The government of Cameroon must implement a national policy on the promotion of equality and opportunity as recommended by the CEACR of the ILO.
7. Gabon must prohibit by law sexual harassment in the country
8. Both countries must deploy more resources to tackle the serious problem of child labour in their countries, strengthening cooperation with the ILO and providing information and receiving guidance by the ILO as requested.
9. Urgent measures are needed in both countries to tackle forced labour affecting children, minorities or prisoners. In that regard, both countries must implement all the recommendations addressed to them by the CEACR of the ILO.
10. In line with the commitments accepted by Gabon and Cameroon at the Singapore WTO Ministerial Conference and their obligations as members of the ILO, their governments should provide reports to the WTO and the ILO on their legislative changes and implementation programmes with regard to the above areas.
11. The WTO should draw to the attention of the authorities of Gabon and Cameroon the commitments they undertook to observe core labour standards at the Singapore and Doha Ministerial Conferences. The WTO should request the ILO to intensify its work with the government of both countries in these areas and provide a report to the WTO General Council on the occasion of their next trade policy review.

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