



Brussels, 12/08/2022

## Position Paper

### **International Labour Conference adds safety and health to Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**

EurECCA welcomes the landmark decision that all ILO Member States commit to respect and promote the fundamental right to a safe and healthy working environment, whether or not they have ratified the relevant Conventions.

GENEVA (ILO News) – Delegates attending the International Labour Conference (ILC) have adopted a resolution to add the principle of a safe and healthy working environment to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Until now there have been four categories of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work:

- freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;
- the effective abolition of child labour;
- the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

### **The decision by the Conference means that Occupational Safety and Health will become the fifth category.**

The Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work were adopted in 1998 as part of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Under the Declaration, ILO Member States, regardless of their level of economic development, commit to respect and promote these principles and rights, whether or not they have ratified the relevant Conventions.

Each of the fundamental principles is associated with the most relevant ILO Conventions. The new fundamental Conventions will be the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No.155), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

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The ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder **said**: 'By elevating OSH to a fundamental right, the International Labour Conference would express its determination that health and safety at the workplace offers significant human and economic benefits, supports inclusive economic growth, and is crucial to a human-centred recovery and the future of work'.

Occupational Safety and Health becomes the fifth category of Fundamental Principles and Rights at work, completing the existing four categories: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Contrary to Conventions – which are subject to ratification by individual Member States to be applicable, all Member States (187 Members) are expected to respect, promote and realize Fundamental Principles and Rights . Up to now, the ILO has focused on the right to decent, safe and health working conditions with the adoption of Conventions and Resolutions. OSH appears already in the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice and a Fair Globalization. According to the ILO itself, half of their Conventions and Recommendations are either wholly or partly concerned with OSH related issues.

Each of the Fundamental Principles is associated with the most relevant ILO Conventions. For OSH, the Conventions C-155 and C-187 will now be considered as **Fundamental Conventions**. The Occupational Safety and Health Convention (**C-155**) includes, in particular, the obligation for employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the workplaces, machinery, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health. It is important to stress that ILO has always had a broad understanding of workers' health, as not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It also includes 'the physical and mental elements affecting health which are directly related to safety and hygiene at work' (art.3). With the Promotional Framework for OSH Convention (**C-187**), ILO Members commit to promote continuous improvement of OSH to prevent occupational injuries, disease and death, by the development, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, of a national policy, national system and national program.

This decision gives EurECCA one more opportunity to ask the Commission to fulfill and to promote the adoption of a "individual" Directive under Article 16 of the framework [Directive 89/391/EEC](#)<sup>1</sup> on health and safety at work that is specific to inflight workplaces for cabin crews we are subject to specific working conditions that cannot be compared to those of any other profession.

Scientific research has shown over the years that the artificial environment on board is penalizing for its occupants and has a strong impact on the crew members' health, both in terms of physical and mental health.

Currently the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) framework Directive 89/391/EEC covers all workplaces, but this is only a supporting legal structure around which others "specific Directives" at European level should be available, considering specific workplaces, especially when it comes to unique environments such as the inflight one.

Sources: ILO and ETUI

## **EurECCA represents, protects and develops the rights and needs of all cabin crew all over Europe**

About EurECCA: established in Brussels in 2014, the European Cabin Crew Association, EurECCA, represents, protects and develops the rights and needs of cabin crew all over Europe. It is composed of cabin crew unions from European Union Member States as well as accession and bordering states and represents some 33,000 cabin crew accounting for 70% of all organized cabin crew in Europe. EurECCA has no political connections. EurECCA's work is around Cabin Crew working conditions, wages, social protection and health and safety at work.

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<sup>1</sup> [Link to Directive 89/391/EEC](#)