

**Kunming China Marks World Day Against Child Labour, 2009:
“Give Girls a Chance”**

Opening Remarks by Kathleen Speake, International Labour Organisation

Ge wei lingdao, ge wei laibin, zaoshang hao!

May I take this opportunity to thank our hosts, the provincial Women's Federation of Yunnan for their excellent coordination, as well as participants from various government departments, research institutes, NGOs, schools and communities who feel it is important to be here today. June 12 is World Day Against Child Labour. The theme of this year's World Day is, *Give Girls a Chance, End Child Labour*. This year, 2009, also marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of ILO Convention 182. China is a signatory to this core convention which addresses the need for action to tackle the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking.

The ILO estimates that around the world, 100 million girls are involved in child labour. 53 million are estimated to be in hazardous work, and 20 million are under 12 years of age. Boys are exploited too, but often girls endure additional hardships and face additional risks. This is because girls are less likely than boys to be enrolled in primary and secondary schools. Skills training opportunities for adolescent girls are limited, and girls in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged. Females make up 2/3 of the world's illiterate population. We also know that under difficult economic times, families may be forced to choose between educating their son OR daughter –and usually girls lose out. A potential negative impact of the global crisis could include cuts to education budgets, leading to decreased access to quality education (particularly affecting girls), and increased poverty and child labour.

Missing out on educational and training opportunities at a minimum diminishes one's prospects of finding decent work. In the worst case it results in child labour, a life time of exploitative work, and an intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Many of you are familiar with the work of the ILO and Women's Federation to prevent trafficking in women and children for labour exploitation, which began in 2000, in support of China's implementation of Convention 182. Two projects, one in Yunnan, and one in five other pilot provinces, have demonstrated that educating girls is one of the most effective ways of tackling poverty and is a first step towards ending child labour, providing access to decent work, and ensuring a productive adulthood. Further, the projects have promoted rights awareness, life skills training, vocational training, and safe migration strategies for girls and women. Government, private employers, schools, workers' associations, the Women's Federation, and communities have all worked

together to effectively address gender discrimination and promote equal access to education and services for girls and boys. In particular, Yunnan province deserves enormous credit for its trafficking prevention policy and programs which bring together an array of government bureaus and agencies to effectively address this multi-dimensional problem in a coordinated and strategic manner.

The World Day Against Child Labour aims to promote awareness and action to tackle child labour. Support for the World Day has been growing each year, with involvement from governments, employers, workers associations, and UN agencies. Last June 12, the *China Daily* proclaimed that, "The whole nation must strive for children to enjoy their childhood, playing, learning and preparing for a decent work life as adults and parents". On that same day, Yunnan province held an awareness raising event echoing these themes. This June 10-12, you in Yunnan are organising an information forum and campaign for children and communities most at risk. Many advocacy and education activities are happening around the world today. You are adding your voice to the world community that aims to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016. The goal is in reach, yet challenges remain. The ILO stands ready to support your continued efforts. I applaud your commitment, and look forward to participating in today's forum.

中国云南省2009年“世界消除童工日”宣传活动：“给女童一个机会”
开幕致词，史开灵，国际劳工组织

各位领导，各位来宾，早上好！

我谨借此机会感谢活动的主办方，云南省妇联对此次活动的大力支持，感谢倾力前来参加此次活动的各政府部门、研究机构、民间组织、学校和社区。6月12日是“世界消除童工日”。今年世界消除童工日的主题是“给女童一个机会，消除童工”。同时，今年的6月12日也是国际劳工组织第182号公约《禁止和立即行动消除最恶劣形式的童工劳动公约》批准实施10周年纪念日。182号公约提出，必须采取行动消除包括拐卖童工在内的最恶劣形式的童工劳动。中国是这一重要公约的签署国。

据国际劳工组织估计，全世界有1亿名女童从事童工劳动。其中，5300万女童从事着危险工作，另外有超过2000万的女童年龄不满12岁。虽然男童也同样遭受劳动剥削，但是女童要承受更多的艰辛，面临更多的危险。这是因为，与男童相比，女童接受小学和中学教育的机会更少。少女接受技术培训的机会有限，农村地区的女孩尤其处于不利地位。全世界文盲人口中有2/3为女性。我们也知道，在经济困难时期，各个家庭可能被迫做出让男孩还是女孩接受教育的选择——这个时候往往女孩会落选。全球经济危机可能带来的一个负面影响是教育经费的减少，这就进一步导致接受优质教育的机会的减少（尤其是影响到女孩接受教育的机会），以及贫困的加深和童工的增加。

错失一点接受教育和培训的机会，就会减少一个人找到体面工作的机会。最坏的结果就是童工劳动，一辈子受剥削的工作，以及一代又一代人受贫穷所累的恶性循环。

在座的诸位当中有许多人都知道，自2000年起，国际劳工组织和妇联一直在支持中国履行第182号公约，预防对妇女儿童拐卖和劳动剥削。在云南省和其他五个试点省份开展的两个项目都表明，让女童接受教育是解决贫穷问题最为有效的方式之一，同时也是消除童工劳动，提供体面工作的就业机会，以及确保儿童成长为有用之材的第一步。此外，项目还提高了女童和妇女的权利意识，为她们提供了生活技能培训、职业培训，以及实现安全流动的策略。为了有效地解决性别歧视以及促进女孩和男孩的教育平等，政府、雇主、学校、工会、妇联和社区合作起来，共同努力。尤其值得赞扬的是，云南省的预防拐卖政策和行动计划调动了各个政府部门和机构，以多部门合作的战略的方式切实解决拐卖这一涉及多层面的问题。

“世界消除童工日”旨在提高反对童工劳动的意识，并倡导立即采取行动来应对童工问题。政府、雇主组织、工会和联合国机构对“世界消除童工日”的支持逐年增加。去年6月12日，《中国日报》报道称，“整个国家必须努力，确保孩子们能够享受童年，使他们能够正常玩耍和学习，为将来成为拥有体面工作的成年人和父母亲做好准备。”同一天，云南省还举办了一场响应这些主题的意识提高

活动。今年6月10日至12日，各位又在为那些面临高风险的儿童和社区举办研讨交流和宣传倡导活动。今天，世界各地都在举办各种有关消除童工的宣传和教育活动。各位的行动为全世界实现在2016年之前消除最恶劣形式的童工的目标迈出了重要的一步。目标一定会实现，但是挑战仍然存在。国际劳工组织随时准备为各位的继续努力提供支持。我非常感谢大家的支持，也期待着参与今天的论坛。