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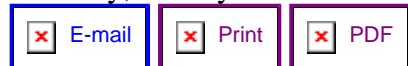
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Journos undergo training on labour, social issues

Saturday, 30 July 2011 22:40 Local News



From John Manzongo and

Wenceslaus Murape in Turin, Italy

FIFTEEN journalists from 12 African countries are undergoing a week-long training programme on communicating labour rights at the International

Labour Organisation Training centre (ITCILO) here.

The training course is aimed at improving the way journalists cover labour and social issues.

In a keynote address to the participants, ILO Director of Communications Ms Corinne Perthuis said the media were playing a crucial role in improving labour standards and awareness.

“Africa is one of the most culturally, ethnically, religiously and economically diverse regions in the world. It is also experiencing an exceptional rate of economic and social change.

“The training has been necessitated by the quest for social justice by labour partners in pursuit of 1919 declaration on labour standards,” she said.

Ms Perthuis said countries in Africa were supposed to deal with serious questions on how they wished to develop and the type of society they wished to belong to.

She said issues of the current economic crisis and employment added new elements to the course programme.

ILO programmes manager Mr Alessandro Chiarabini said 10 000 people from all over the world were participating in ILO facilitated courses in different regions of the world.

“The course for journalists has been running since 2007. We have decided to train journalists on a regional basis because of different needs of the regions.

“Last October the programme was for Asian countries and now it is for Africans. In September it will for Caribbean countries,” he said.

Mr Chiarabini said the journalists’ training would enable ILO to reach out to the community and to raise awareness on how to apply international labour standards.

Some of the issues covered in the training programme include international labour standards, the rights of the indigenous and tribal peoples, HIV and Aids and the world of work and child labour.

Participating journalists are from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Cote D’Ivoire, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Madagascar, Cameroon, Senegal and South Africa.

Meanwhile, the ILO has said journalists are also workers who are entitled to protection against victimisation for writing to promote the recognition of workers’ rights.

“When journalists do their work, they should not be punished for informing or pushing for the implementation of international labour standards,” said ILO.

ILO’s Convention number 169 deals with correcting historical injustices thereby enabling African people to determine and participate in defining their destiny. The convention also deals with reducing socio economic disparities and recognition of cultural identities, lifestyles and traditional institutions to build self-esteem and pride in the Africans’ culture once considered as savage.

Article 4 of the convention mentions the role of journalist in highlighting African peoples’ rights.

“Journalists contribute to the establishment of national standards on the rights of indigenous people. They also monitor the implementation of domestic and international standards on indigenous people.

“Journalists contribute to changing attitudes and prejudices of national populations towards indigenous peoples,” said ILO.-The Sunday Mail

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