

social security, women's work, juvenile employment, occupational safety and health, labour statistics, co-operation, etc.; every year groups of experts meet to study urgent problems in some of these areas. The most important conclusions of these bodies are eventually referred to the annual Conference for more thorough discussion, with a view to the adoption of conventions and recommendations.

By the end of 1979, the International Labour Conference had adopted new or revised conventions and 157 recommendations. The ILO had reviewed its classification of conventions and recommendations and adopted a new categorization which prioritized for ratification and implementation 78 conventions and 76 recommendations, suggested for revision 16 conventions and 14 recommendations, leaving as "other instruments" some 63 conventions and 81 recommendations. In addition, the ILO has, in this review process, identified 43 subjects for research for possible new instruments. By the end of 1979, member countries of the ILO had registered close to 4,800 ratifications of conventions. Each ratification obliges the member country to maintain its legislation in the particular field at the standard laid down by the convention and to report every two years to the ILO on its implementation. A ratification is thus not only a commitment by a member

country to meet a particular standard of social policy but also a commitment to international law.