

## **CELEBRATION 50 YEARS ILO/CINTERFOR**

### **Martha Pacheco – ILO/Cinterfor**

Good morning Minister Fazal Karim, dear friend Elphege Joseph, dear participants,

Let me start with words of gratitude to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, through the Ministries of Labour and Tertiary Education and our member the National Training Agency, and their staff, for hosting the 41st TCM of Cinterfor and the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Centre; both Trinidad and Tobago and Cinterfor are celebrating 50 years: the Country, its independence, the Centre its establishment. So, we have enough reasons to celebrate jointly with people from 25 countries, enjoying the cultural diversity of Trinidad and Tobago, where all of us feel at home! Thank you very much for your warm hospitality and the enthusiasm with which you have received us.

“Together we aspire, together we achieve”; this expression that all of us have read in the façade of the Parliament is also what inspire the mission of Cinterfor as a network: for 50 years together the Network has done more and better to help people to have a decent and productive work.

Cinterfor and Network of Vocational Training Institutions are inseparable expressions; Cinterfor achievements belong to the institutions that make this unique and vigorous knowledge management network, founded upon solidarity and with a great sense of belonging to the ILO, cooperating in the dissemination of knowledge, experiences and good practices for the development of human resources.

Sometimes I have been asked to define with a word the most important feature of this Network, that word is GENEROSITY; that inclination to give and share above individual interests or the benefits that could be obtained, the way with which knowledge is transferred in search of the common well-being of society. This feature has been a constant in the history of the Network, which has contributed to the enhancement of the strengths and capabilities of the countries in the region; the ILO, through Cinterfor, has been a pioneer in the South-South Cooperation, concept that has been firmly applied in the global international cooperation strategy.

Visionary leaders were those who proposed to the ILO the creation of Cinterfor, and also visionaries those who, at the ILO, responded positively to this initiative. Before the creation of Cinterfor, there had been strong partnerships; in fact, in 1952, the ILO and the Government of Brazil signed a far-reaching agreement on the development of vocational training. Thanks to this agreement, a hundred professionals from different countries were granted scholarships to study at SENAI and SENAC to become acquainted with different experiences. The results were

remarkable: Brazilian model was adopted and adapted and other training institutions were created; in 1961, they requested the creation of Cinterfor at the Seventh Conference of American States Members of the ILO.

The founding institutions, to which we want to pay tribute, were the National Industrial Training Service/SENAI, the National Commercial Training Service/SENAC, from Brazil, Labour University of Uruguay/UTU, the National Apprenticeship Service/SENA of Colombia, the National Institute of Cooperative Education/INCE of Venezuela and the National Council of Technical Education/CONET of Argentina.

The ILO Governing Body set the basis for the establishment of the Centre, which was meant to be “an instrument for the promotion of continuing and active collaboration among national organizations responsible for vocational training”, and that although the Centre would particularly work for American countries, it would also ensure that all the other countries should make the most out of the experiences of the Centre. The guidelines of the ILO Governing Body have been more than fulfilled.

All directors who preceded me and, like me, have had the honor and pride of articulating this network have reported on its enormous value; I want to quote Eduardo Carvalho, the first and twice director of Cinterfor... I'm sure we all identify ourselves with his words:

Eduardo said:

“The bonds, contacts, and even friendships that have been forged among the directors of vocational training institutions led, under the auspices of the ILO, to the establishment of Cinterfor, fifteen years ago.

In this way, a regional cooperation and mutual assistant experiment was launched in a well-defined and specific field such as that of training at and for work. The very existence of Cinterfor –a small and flexible body – evidences the efficiency that may be achieved through a mechanism targeted at promoting cooperation among developing countries. As far as I am concerned, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, no one devoted too much time to theoretical discussions or philosophical rambles –not because of a certain disdain, but because that battle had already been won by the best Latin American thinkers. What happened was that circumstances had evolved to enable a group of practical and decided men to step into action.

This horizontal cooperation experience has been observed and written about for some time now, and has even led to the coining of an acronym in English. The formula only requires the alchemy of a few financial resources, a pinch of imagination and generous doses of fraternity and solidarity”.

Address of the Director of ILO/Cinterfor – Martha Pacheco

41<sup>st</sup> Technical Committee Meeting – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Port of Spain, July 10<sup>th</sup> 2013

The nature and characteristics of Cinterfor have been maintained over half a century of existence: network, solidarity and collective construction of knowledge.

A milestone in the collective construction of knowledge in the network was the joint production of teaching materials; between 1971 and 1979, VTI specialists developed 33 Cinterfor Basic Collections (CBC) corresponding to occupations of the three economic sectors, thus preventing the spread and recurrence of similar assignments, thus saving human and financial resources.

It is in Cinterfor's DNA this effort of collective work; you have seen it at this meeting when discussing prospective, learning objects and in the multiple experiences presented along these days. All this knowledge is being generously shared.

Vocational training in the region has shown a great social and economic responsibility; also its ability to innovate and respond to the changing needs of enterprises and workers. These efforts must continue, because there are still great challenges, one of which, in my opinion and of many people that have pointed out during this meeting, is that training should be given the recognition it deserves.

I felt very proud to lead this Centre which has always had the unconditional support of the Network, of you, of my colleagues from the ILO and its staff. To all thank you very much!

I want to thank especially the Director of the ILO Office for the Caribbean and his staff for the excellent and efficient collaboration to make this meeting possible in Port of Spain.

As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, my responsibilities as Director of Cinterfor will end; I do not want to say goodbye because I hope to find you in other opportunities. I'm sure that the new direction will be received with enthusiasm and that it will count with all the collaboration that the Network has always offered.

God bless you!