The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the International Labour Organization and has the honour to transmit herewith a letter from H.E. Dr. Diala El-haj Aref Minister of social Affairs and Labour in Syria to H.E Mr. Juan Somavia, Director-General.

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the International Labour Organization the assurances of its highest consideration.

International Labour Organization
4, route des Morillons
1211 Geneva 22
Syria Arab Republic
Ministry of social affairs and labour

29th July, 2005

Mr. Juan Somavia,
Director-General
International Labour Organization

Your Excellency

Subject: Syrian becoming a lead country of the Youth Employment Network

Further to the recent declaration made by His Excellency, the Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations in Geneva during the YEN side-event at the 93rd session of the International Labour Conference, in addition to a subsequent letter from His Excellency, President Bashar AL-Assad to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Anan I am delighted to confirm to you that Syria has stepped forward to become a YEN lead country.

This announcement comes in the light of a new national initiative that has been launched to promote the creation of decent employment opportunities for young Syrian women and men, through the development and implementation of a national strategy for youth employment. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the ILO for its ongoing valuable participation and input to this initiative, particularly to you Mr. Somavia and to the regional office for Arab states, as well its encouragement and support for this new announcement.

I look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation as we strive to set examples in tackling the youth employment challenge and realize our new commitments as a lead country of the YEN.

with my best regards,

yours Sincerely

Dr. Diaa El-haj Aref
Minister of Social Affairs and labour
Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 22 August 2005 in which you confirmed your Government’s decision to volunteer the Syrian Arab Republic as one of the lead countries in the Youth Employment Network (YEN).

By volunteering to be a lead country, Syria has reaffirmed its Government’s commitment to youth employment at the highest level and has agreed to prepare a national review and action plan on youth employment, to share experiences within the wider Network and to take political leadership on youth employment within the international community and within the broader development agenda. You have already taken important steps in this direction through the development and implementation of a national strategy for youth employment.

Our joint collaboration is needed to meet the aspirations of young men and women everywhere, and to improve their economic and social circumstances. We are convinced that youth employment is essential to the agenda for international development and collective security embodied in the Millennium Declaration. We are ready to build on our ongoing dialogue to explore how best to support your leadership in the YEN and to build a broad-based movement for youth employment. We now look forward to the next stage and offer support for your efforts to begin to implement your national review and action plan on youth employment as called for in the two UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/57/165 and A/RES/58/133.

Her Excellency
Dr. Diala El-haj Aref
Minister of Social Affairs and Labour
DAMASCUS
We would be grateful for the designation of a focal point within your Government to lead the process. We shall request the Youth Employment Network Secretariat to make contact in order jointly to explore how best to move forward.

In closing, may I thank you once again for taking this important initiative. Syria's leadership within the Youth Employment Network is essential to catalyse similar initiatives on the part of other Heads of State and Government in order to address the huge challenge on youth employment effectively.

Yours sincerely,

Juan Somavia