

Gilles de ROBIEN

France's candidate for the position of Director-General of the ILO

Gilles de Robien, French Ambassador for the Promotion of Social Cohesion, has been the Government Delegate of France to the ILO Governing Body since August 2007.

Since his appointment to the ILO Governing Body, he has been firmly committed to promoting the ILO's role in shaping the social face of globalisation. In particular, he chaired the 99th International Labour Conference in June 2010. In addition to these responsibilities, he represents the French Government in international ministerial conferences and meetings (ASEM Labour/Employment, G20 Labour/Employment, etc). At the request of the President of the French Republic, he was tasked with preparing the social pillar of the G20 under the French Presidency. He also regularly conducts field missions on technical cooperation, developed pursuant to the relevant agreement between France and the ILO.

The energy Mr de Robien has brought to the International Labour Organization's activities is underpinned by a distinguished political career in France spanning more than 20 years, during which he was a Member of Parliament and Government. In 1986, he was elected Deputy for the Somme to the French National Assembly and was subsequently re-elected to this office four times. He was chairman of his parliamentary group and served as Vice-President of the French National Assembly from 1993 to 1998. In his terms of office, he focused in particular on employment policy, combating exclusion and a negotiated shorter working week, heading up a National Assembly fact-finding mission on this last subject. In 1996, he proposed an act that was passed to enable management and labour to negotiate shorter working weeks for staff.

He was a member of the French Government from 2002 to 2007, holding two important ministerial positions in turn. As Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Housing, Tourism and the Sea (2002-2005), he promoted a housing construction stimulus measure; a road, sea and home safety policy; and a railway (high-speed rail), motorway and waterway development plan. As Minister for National Education, Higher Education and Research (2005-2007), his policy improved the learning of basic skills, reinvigorated priority education and introduced the Research Pact.

From 1989 to 2007, he served as Mayor of Amiens (city of 135,000 inhabitants and capital of the Picardie region in northern France) and President of the Urban District Community (18 municipalities). His terms as city mayor in charge of 3,000 staff honed his human resources and budget management skills, and his sound city management earned him the *Challenges* magazine ranking as best mayor in France in 2008. He made Amiens a pilot city for local democracy, for which he received a national award (Marianne d'Or in 1999).

Gilles de Robien studied law and started out in working life in the private sector, where he enjoyed a long career as an insurance broker. He held national responsibilities in the professional organisation of the insurance sector through to 1986, when he entered national political life./.