



Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body to the Conference for the year 2008–09

This report on the work of the Governing Body is submitted to the Conference in accordance with section 5.5.1 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body. It covers the period since the last general session of the Conference (June 2008), i.e. the 302nd (June 2008), 303rd (November 2008) and 304th (March 2009) Sessions of the Governing Body. It focuses only on the highlights of the Governing Body's year, on the basis of the respective agendas, and does not cover any matter otherwise before the Conference.

For more extensive and detailed information on the work of the Governing Body, including the minutes of the three sessions under consideration, or the documents submitted to the committees and to the Governing Body itself, please refer to the Governing Body web site.¹

1. International Labour Conference

Matters arising from the work of the 97th Session (2008)

Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the resolution on strengthening the ILO's capacity to assist its Members' efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization

Further to the adoption by the Conference of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and its associated resolution, at its 302nd Session (June 2008), the Governing Body constituted a temporary Steering Group to ensure, on the basis of proposals presented by the Office, that all elements in the Declaration and the resolution that called for action were adequately dealt with in the appropriate form, forum and time frame and to make appropriate recommendations to the Governing Body.

The Steering Group met in November 2008 and again in March 2009. An implementation plan in the form of a road map covering all the elements of the Declaration, its annex and the resolution was considered by the Steering Group and adopted at the 304th Session (March 2009) of the Governing Body.² For all action points, the road map identified a time frame, the linkages to the Strategic Policy Framework (SPF)

and the programme and budget, the relevant governance forums and the units or teams with primary responsibility for implementation.

The Steering Group also considered the question of the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (the 1998 Declaration). The Governing Body decided at its 304th Session to place the formal review of the question as an item on the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the Conference.³

The follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization requires the ILO to introduce a scheme of recurrent discussions by the Conference. The Governing Body decided at its 303rd Session (November 2008) that employment would be the first recurrent discussion item at the 99th Session (2010) of the Conference.⁴ Concerning the second recurrent discussion item, the Governing Body decided at its 304th Session that social protection (social security) would be discussed at the 100th Session (2011) of the Conference.⁵ The Governing Body also decided at its 304th Session to adopt a seven-year cycle for the recurrent item discussions, with employment, social protection and fundamental principles and rights at work being discussed twice in the cycle; to establish a Governing Body working party on the working methods of the Governing Body and the functioning of the Conference and to request the Office to prepare a proposal for submission to the 305th Session (June 2009); and to reconvene the Steering Group at the 309th Session (November 2010) of the Governing Body to review the experience gained and lessons learned from the organization of the first recurrent item discussion on employment and such other matters as may be referred to it by the Governing Body.⁶

Follow-up to the adoption of the conclusions on skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development

The conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2008 on skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development provide guidance for strengthening skills development as a central pillar of employability for workers and sustainability of enterprises within the Decent Work Agenda.

Supporting constituents' capacity to implement the conclusions has encompassed both fresh research and tool development, especially on approaches and institutions to use labour market information and social dialogue to identify skill needs and improve the relevance of vocational training; on ways to upgrade informal apprenticeship systems in order to improve young people's access to better jobs; on the implementation and impact of national qualification frameworks in developing countries; and on targeting training and retraining to help workers and enterprises overcome skill gaps for "Green Jobs" and to boost resilience and adaptability in the face of the current economic crisis. The Office is following the direction given in the conclusions to assist constituents in adapting good practices to their own circumstances and policy objectives by providing empirical analysis of why some policies or approaches work well – under what conditions, in combination with what other policies, and with what inputs of financial and human resources. These findings are informing the development of technical cooperation projects and a new Turin Centre course on skills policies and systems.

Follow-up to the adoption of the conclusions on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction

In November 2008, the Governing Body was informed of the initiatives taken by the Office to follow up on the conclusions of the Committee on the Promotion of Rural

Employment for poverty reduction, adopted at the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference. It took note of the planning, advocacy, training and technical cooperation activities, under way or in preparation, such as the development of specific indicators for rural employment in the Programme and Budget for 2010–11 and the SPF 2010–15; an international seminar in October 2008 on strategies to promote occupational safety and health (OSH) in rural enterprises and communities, and a meeting in April 2009 on gender and rural employment jointly organized with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). To implement the resolution concerning the ILO's and its tripartite constituents' role in tackling the food crisis, also included in those conclusions and adopted by the 2008 International Labour Conference, the ILO convened a tripartite technical workshop in March 2009, well attended by various key international agencies and institutions, including the UN High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (UNHLTF).

Current follow-up work includes setting up an ILO intersectoral taskforce and an Office-wide network of focal points to strengthen coordination; developing partnerships with the FAO, IFAD, UNHLTF and other key international institutions; and undertaking a mapping and comprehensive review of the ILO's voluminous past activities on rural employment, to ascertain impact and extract lessons to inform and guide future work by the ILO and its constituents.

Follow-up to the adoption of the resolution concerning the ILO's and the tripartite constituents' role in tackling the global food crisis

Following the adoption at the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference of a resolution concerning the ILO's and the tripartite constituents' role in tackling the global food crisis, the Governing Body approved in November 2008 the holding of a tripartite technical workshop on the impact of the food price crisis on decent work. The workshop, held in March 2009, adopted a room note that included a number of recommended measures. In March 2009, the Governing Body was informed of the outcome of the workshop. The Office subsequently initiated follow-up.

Agenda of the 100th Session (2011)

In November 2009, the Governing Body had before it a document⁷ setting out proposals for an initial discussion on items for possible inclusion on the agenda of the 100th Session (2011) of the International Labour Conference and of future sessions. Following this initial discussion, six proposals were submitted to the Governing Body in March 2009 for examination and possible decision, including a recurrent discussion on social protection (social security);⁸ as noted above, the Governing Body decided to include the latter item on the agenda of the 100th Session. The Office report recalled that the 2011 agenda would include a second discussion on the item entitled "Decent work for domestic workers" with a view to the adoption of a standard. It further decided that the choice of the third technical item should be postponed until November 2009.

2. Governing Body

The global financial, economic and jobs crisis: ILO response

Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization

The Governing Body's Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization examined the impact of the financial crisis and the surge in fuel and food prices in 2007–08 on the policy challenges facing ILO constituents and the Organization as a whole at its November 2008 meeting. Coming shortly after the sharp worsening of economic conditions following a number of failures of financial institutions in September 2008, the Working Party discussed a paper on "Shaping a fair globalization: Perspectives and prospects for the Decent Work Agenda" and was addressed by Mr Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The discussion revealed great concern about a steep rise in job losses, increasing poverty, a strong risk that workers would be pushed into the informal economy, that social protection systems were inadequate, and that viable and sustainable enterprises, particularly smaller ones, would be forced out of business by the severe credit freeze.

The discussions also brought out a high degree of consensus about the ways in which the ILO should respond to the crisis. This was summarized in a statement by the Officers of the Governing Body⁹ which called for urgent measures to protect people, support productive enterprises and safeguard jobs by:

- ensuring the flow of credit, and stimulating demand through public and private expenditure and investment and wage measures;
- extending social protection, training and retraining opportunities, and placement services, and enlarging emergency employment schemes and targeted income support, with particular focus on young women and men, workers in informal or precarious employment, migrant workers and the working poor;
- supporting productive, profitable and sustainable enterprises to maximize employment and decent work, particularly for small enterprises and cooperatives (the opportunity to improve the environment in increasing employment-intensive investment in infrastructure should be seized);
- ensuring that fundamental principles and rights at work are not undermined;
- furthering strong cooperation between the ILO and the multilateral system, and deepening social dialogue and tripartism between governments, workers and employers to develop policy responses and build social cohesion; and
- maintaining development aid at least at current levels and providing additional support to low-income countries.

High-level Tripartite Meeting on the Current Global Financial and Economic Crisis

The Officers also proposed that a high-level meeting on the crisis be convened by the ILO before the March Governing Body. The High-level Tripartite Meeting on the Current Global Financial and Economic Crisis took place on 22 March 2009 and was the occasion

for an intensive discussion on the causes of the current crisis, countries' policy responses and the role of the ILO in responding to its global employment and social impact. It was attended by ministers, senior government officials and business and trade union leaders from over 90 countries. The Meeting benefited greatly from a keynote address by the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr Dominique Strauss-Kahn, and a subsequent constructive exchange of views with participants. His offer of increased cooperation between the IMF and the ILO was welcomed and the Director-General was invited to follow this up actively.

The Meeting revealed a considerable degree of convergence of views, summarized in the Chairperson's conclusions.¹⁰ It underscored a strong focus in crisis response measures on the needs of working women and men, their families and communities and the sustainability of the enterprises that generate decent work opportunities.

There was strong support for making response to the crisis the main theme of the 98th Session of the Conference, which could further develop the concept of a Global Jobs Pact through discussion with its worldwide tripartite constituency. The Governing Body confirmed this by accepting the proposal that the Conference should deal comprehensively and effectively with the employment and social policy consequences of the economic and financial crisis.

Appointment of the Director-General

During the 303rd Session (November 2008), the Governing Body conducted the election of the Director-General by secret ballot in accordance with article 17 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body and the rules adopted in 1988 and reconfirmed by the Governing Body at its 301st Session.¹¹ The Chairperson reported having received one candidature, that of Mr Juan Somavia, Chile, presented by the Government of Chile on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, by the Government of South Africa and by the Workers' group of the Governing Body. Forty-three of the 56 votes of the titular members of the ILO's Governing Body were cast in favour, with 13 abstentions. In accordance with the decision of the Governing Body taken during its 301st Session (March 2008), and pursuant to article 4.6(a) of the Staff Regulations, the mandate of the Director-General was to take effect on 4 March 2009, at midnight, for a period of five years.

Composition of the Governing Body

During its 303rd Session (November 2008) the Governing Body considered proposals¹² to amend article 7 of the Constitution so as to increase the number of States of chief industrial importance, with non-elective seats at the Governing Body, from ten to 12, introducing at the same time a geographical requirement (at least two member States from each region in that group). The Governing Body decided to keep the item on its agenda for future sessions and return to it once the necessary consultations within the Government group had taken place, including in the light of the outcome of the meeting of the African Union's Labour and Social Affairs Commission in April 2009.

3. Review of annual reports under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

In March 2009, the Governing Body examined the summary note presented by the Office¹³ highlighting the manner in which the fundamental principles and rights at work had been promoted and realized in each of the cases of non-ratification. While noting that the total ratification rate of ILO fundamental Conventions had increased from 70 per cent to almost 90 per cent over the ten years following the adoption of the 1998 Declaration and its follow-up, the Governing Body mentioned that the annual reviews had been an invaluable resource for the information presented in the country baselines and had helped to develop technical cooperation as a powerful tool to forward fundamental principles and rights at work. With a view to keeping this momentum, the Office should continue to respond, as far as possible, to the tripartite constituents' requests, with a particular emphasis on ratification of the fundamental Conventions in the context of the common commitment to their universal ratification by 2015 and the strengthening of the employers' and workers' organizations' role in the promotion and realization of the fundamental principles and rights at work which form part of the four strategic objectives of the ILO. These actions needed to develop closely within the Decent Work Agenda in the light of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

4. Reports of the Officers of the Governing Body

Renewal of the Director-General's term of office

At its 304th Session (March 2009), following a report of its Officers,¹⁴ the Governing Body decided that the term of office of the Director-General could be renewed once, and instructed the Office to submit the appropriate amendment to the Staff Regulations of the ILO to the PFAC Committee during the 306th Session of the Governing Body (November 2009). The amendment could read as follows: "The Director-General shall be appointed for a period of five years. The Governing Body may renew the appointment once. The possible extension shall not exceed five years."

Ibero-American Conference

Following the decisions taken by the Ibero-American Conference, an intergovernmental organization grouping the 22 States of Spanish and Portuguese language of Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula, on the specific modalities for participation at its conference of non-member States and international organizations, the Governing Body, at its 304th Session, taking into account the close relations of the ILO with this organization, on the recommendation of its Officers, requested the Director-General to start the formal procedure for granting the ILO the status of "Observador Consultivo" to the Ibero-American Conference.¹⁵

5. Enhanced programme of technical cooperation for the occupied Arab territories

In November 2008, the Governing Body discussed the progress made over the past year in implementing the ILO programme of technical cooperation in the occupied Arab territories. The programme focuses on strengthening labour market governance and rights, enhancing employability, and supporting entrepreneurship and productivity gains. These three main pillars are facilitating a strategic repositioning of the employment agenda at the national level and the need for more consistent capacity-building efforts of the constituents.

The Workers' and Employers' groups and Government representatives underlined the importance of targeting all sectors of the Palestinian population, including workers and employers, particularly the most vulnerable who are living in isolated and dire conditions. They invited member States to contribute to the Palestinian Employment Fund.

6. Complaints under article 26 of the ILO Constitution

Observance by the Government of Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

A Supplementary Understanding was signed by the Government of Myanmar on 26 February 2007, establishing a mechanism through which victims of forced labour could seek redress. The trial period of the Supplementary Understanding had previously been extended for a 12-month period from 26 February 2008.

At its November 2008 session, the Governing Body examined the functioning of this mechanism up to 7 November 2008.¹⁶ On the basis of the discussion held, the Governing Body adopted the following conclusions:

The Governing Body discussed the reports submitted by the Office and considered the statement made by Ambassador Wunna Maung Lwin of the Government of the Union of Myanmar. Taking all of the discussion into account, the Governing Body adopted the following conclusions:

The Governing Body stresses once again the urgency of giving full effect to the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and to the subsequent decisions of the International Labour Conference. These continue to be the focus for the ILO's work for the eradication of forced labour in Myanmar.

Whilst recognizing a certain degree of cooperation to make the complaints mechanism under the Supplementary Understanding function, the Governing Body continues to be concerned at the slow pace of progress and remains convinced that much more needs to be done as a matter of urgency.

The Governing Body underlines the urgent need to raise the awareness of both the military and civil authorities as well as the general public concerning Myanmar's legislation on the prohibition of forced labour and the rights contained in the Supplementary Understanding. Translations of the relevant texts must be distributed throughout the country without any further delay and a clearly worded explanatory brochure must be produced. Those guilty of exacting forced labour, including under-age recruitment into the military, must be prosecuted and meaningfully punished, and victims must be entitled to reparation.

The Liaison Officer must be able to carry out his functions effectively throughout the country. People must have access to the ILO unhindered and without fear of reprisals.

The Governing Body expresses its condemnation of the severe prison sentences given to Su Su Nway and U Thet Way, which will further discourage the people of Myanmar from exercising their right to complain about the use of forced labour. It calls for an urgent review of their sentences and for their immediate release. The harassment and detention of persons exercising their rights under the Supplementary Understanding must cease. The Governing Body also calls for the release of all those who have been imprisoned for their pursuit of their fundamental rights including the right to freedom of association as underlined by the conclusions of the Committee on Freedom of Association.

The Governing Body again expressed its concern that an authoritative statement has not been made at the highest level that forced labour, including under-age recruitment, is prohibited and those using it will be prosecuted and meaningfully punished. It urges the Government to issue such a statement without further delay.

The Governing Body notes with appreciation the progress made on the post-cyclone relief work that has been started in line with its discussion at its 302nd Session in June 2008, and encourages the Office to continue its efforts within the framework of its mandate. This should include working to ensure that the Government's policy framework respects core labour standards and does not result in forced labour.

The Governing Body further notes that a framework in which the aims of the Supplementary Understanding can be guaranteed efficiently in the future has to be negotiated before the next Governing Body session and requests the Office and the Government to take all the necessary steps towards that end, including a work programme. The Office should continue to engage the tripartite constituents on an ongoing basis in this process, in consultation with the Officers of the Governing Body.

In March 2009, the Governing Body further reviewed the Supplementary Understanding up to 10 March 2009, and the results of the ILO's mission to Myanmar, from 24 February to 1 March 2009,¹⁷ during which a further extension of the trial period of the Supplementary Understanding was signed. The following conclusions, drawn from the discussion, were adopted by the Governing Body:

The Governing Body took note of the report of the Liaison Officer and listened with interest to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Government of the Union of Myanmar. In light of the information available, and considering the interventions made during the debate, the Governing Body concluded as follows:

Sustained measures continue to be needed for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and to ensure that the use of forced labour in Myanmar is totally eliminated.

An effective ILO presence in the country is useful and the extension of the trial period of the Supplementary Understanding (SU) for a further 12 months from 26 February 2009 is therefore welcomed.

All citizens of Myanmar should have access to the complaints mechanism established by the SU and actions to that end need to be intensified during the extended trial period. These include promoting the need for wider public understanding on the availability and use of the complaints mechanism and the guarantee of access to it without risk of any harassment or retribution. The criminal prosecution and punishment of those guilty of exacting forced labour is also essential for the credibility of the process.

The Governing Body notes certain, albeit limited, positive steps taken by the Government of Myanmar as recorded in the Liaison Officer's report. These include, amongst other things, the agreement to further and more systematic awareness raising activities including in sensitive areas, the distribution of translations of the relevant texts and the facilitation of the Liaison Officer's access to people and his freedom of movement around the country to carry out his responsibilities under the SU.

The translation of the SU trial period extension and of the Minister of Labour's public confirmation of the Government's commitment to the objective of the elimination of forced

labour and of the right of citizens to use the complaints mechanism without fear of retribution are welcomed. However, those translations as well as a simply worded publication should be made available also in minority languages and widely distributed.

The Governing Body reminds the Government that an authoritative statement at the highest level remains necessary to clearly reconfirm to the people the Government's policy for the elimination of forced labour and its intention to prosecute the perpetrators of forced labour, both civilian and military, so that they are appropriately and meaningfully punished under the Penal Code.

The release from prison of U Thet Wai, in response to the Governing Body's previous calls, is noted. However, the recent arrests and sentencing of U Zaw Htay and of his lawyer U Po Phyu, being clearly linked to the activity of the facilitation of the SU complaints mechanism, are viewed as being extremely serious. The Governing Body calls for the urgent review of these and all other similar cases and for the immediate release of the persons concerned.

The Governing Body views extremely seriously the harassment of those who make use of their right to seek redress from the use of forced labour through the ILO or the harassment of others supporting that process. Such harassment is contrary to the letter and intent of the SU and seriously affects the credibility of the complaints mechanism.

The progress reported in the rural infrastructure project underway in the cyclone affected Delta region is noted. In addition to the humanitarian and livelihood benefits arising from this activity, this project has proven to be a valuable tool providing a best practice employment model against the use of forced labour. The cooperation of the Government in this regard is also noted. The Governing Body recommends that the Liaison Officer and the Government continue to work together to identify possible modalities for the continuation of this activity, within the existing framework, in the Delta region and potentially in other parts of the country.

In line with the current ILO mandate in Myanmar, the Governing Body welcomes the Liaison Officer's acceptance of responsibility under UN Security Council Resolution 1612 for monitoring and reporting on underage recruitment and child soldiers. It calls on the Government of Myanmar to continue its cooperation with the Liaison Officer and his staff in this regard and to facilitate the presence of an additional international professional for this purpose.

The Governing Body expects to receive a report in November 2009 on substantial progress made on all of the matters referred to in these conclusions.

Observance by the Government of the Republic of Belarus of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

In November 2008, the Governing Body had before it a document for information on the issue of trade union rights in Belarus.¹⁸ The document reported that discussions with the Government were under way for setting the dates for a tripartite seminar on the implementation of the 2004 Commission of Inquiry recommendations, along the lines noted by the Conference Committee on Applications of Standards in June 2008.

In March 2008, the Governing Body had before it a further document for information providing details on the outcome of this tripartite seminar organized by the International Labour Office and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Belarus in January 2009.¹⁹ In particular, the document underlined the participation of representatives of all trade unions and employers' organizations in the country, the Ministry of Justice, judges and representatives of the Office of the Public Prosecutor, as well as the contribution of representatives of the Office, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), which allowed an open and frank

discussion on the situation of trade unions which have alleged violations of their rights. Finally, the document reported that as a result of the seminar, a plan of action to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, including through providing for a strengthened mechanism where trade unions could raise and discuss their concerns, particularly those relating to trade union registration and protection against anti-union discrimination, had been formally adopted by the tripartite National Council on Labour and Social Issues on 20 February 2009.

Observance by the Government of Zimbabwe of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

At its November 2008 session, the Governing Body had before it a document for decision with regard to two complaints of non-observance by Zimbabwe of Conventions Nos 87 and 98 lodged against the Government of Zimbabwe by the Workers' and Employers' delegates at the 97th Session of the International Labour Organization under article 26 of the ILO Constitution.²⁰ On that occasion, the Governing Body decided to appoint a Commission of Inquiry in respect of these complaints.²¹ In accordance with the established practice, the relevant matters before the various ILO supervisory bodies were referred to that Commission.

7. Representations under article 24 of the ILO Constitution

Report of the Committee set up to examine the representation alleging non-observance by Japan of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159), made under article 24 of the ILO Constitution by the National Union of Welfare and Childcare Workers

In March 2009, the Governing Body approved the report adopted by the tripartite committee established to examine the representation submitted by the National Union of Welfare and Childcare Workers, made under article 24 of the ILO Constitution, alleging non-observance by Japan of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159).²²

The Governing Body entrusted the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations with following up the questions raised in the report with respect to the application of Convention No. 159, and decided to make the report publicly available and close the procedure.

Report of the Committee set up to examine the representation alleging non-observance by Brazil of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), made under article 24 of the ILO Constitution by the Union of Engineers of the Federal District (SENGE/DF)

In March 2009, the Governing Body approved the report of the tripartite committee set up to examine a representation alleging non-observance by Brazil of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).²³ The Governing Body requested the Government to adopt the measures needed to complement the consultation process concerning the impact of timber concessions envisaged in the Act concerning the administration of public forests, in particular the relevant regulatory and practical measures to implement the consultation process set out in Article 15(2) of the Convention before licences are granted for timber exploration and/or exploitation under the Act; in relation to indigenous lands at various stages of the registration process, if they are lands that the indigenous peoples concerned occupy or otherwise use, to ensure that the consultation process under Article 15 of the Convention is implemented. It also invited the Government, pursuant to Article 7 of the Convention, to guarantee the participation of indigenous peoples in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of plans and programmes related to the logging activities. Furthermore, the Government was requested to: ensure studies are carried out, in cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, in accordance with Article 7(3); ensure that indigenous peoples affected participate in the benefits of logging activities and receive fair compensation; ensure that logging activities do not affect the rights of ownership and possession laid down in Article 14; and adopt special measures to safeguard the persons, institutions, property, labour, cultures and environment of the peoples affected by logging activities.

The Governing Body recommended that the Government request ILO technical assistance and cooperation, if it considered it appropriate, in order to implement, in cooperation with the social partners, the recommendations in the report, and to promote dialogue. The Governing Body entrusted the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations with following up the questions raised in the report with respect to the application of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and decided to make the report publicly available and close the procedure initiated by the complainant alleging non-observance by Brazil of Convention No. 169.

Report of the tripartite committee set up to examine the representation alleging non-observance by the Government of Mexico of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), submitted pursuant to article 24 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization by the National Union of Federal Roads and Bridges Access and Related Services of Mexico, the Trade Union of Telephone Operators of the Republic of Mexico, the National Union of Metlife Workers, the Trade Union Association of Airline Pilots of Mexico, the United Trade Union of Workers in the Nuclear Industry, the Independent Union of Workers in the Automotive Industry, similar and related “Volkswagen of Mexico”, the Union of Workers of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and the United National and Democratic Union of Workers of the National Bank of Foreign Trade

In March 2009, the Governing Body approved the report of the tripartite committee set up to examine a representation alleging non-observance by the Government of Mexico of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), submitted pursuant to article 24 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization by the National Union of Federal Roads and Bridges Access and Related Services of Mexico and seven other trade unions.²⁴

The Governing Body invited the Director-General to extend the Governing Body’s condolences to the members of the families of the 65 miners who lost their lives as a result of the accident that occurred in Unit 8 of the Pasta de Conchos Mine in Coahuila, Mexico on 19 February 2006.

The Governing Body invited the Government, in consultation with the social partners, to continue to take the necessary action in order to: (i) ensure full compliance with Convention No. 155, and, in particular, continue to review and periodically examine the situation as regards the safety and health of workers, in the manner provided for in Articles 4 and 7 of Convention No. 155, with particular attention given to hazardous work activities such as coalmining; (ii) conclude and adopt the new regulatory framework for OSH in the coalmining industry, taking into account the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176), and the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Underground Coal Mines, 2006; (iii) ensure, by all necessary means, the effective monitoring of the application in practice of laws and regulations on OSH and the working environment, through an adequate and appropriate system of labour inspection, in compliance with Article 9 of Convention No. 155, in order to reduce the risk that accidents such as the accident in Pasta de Conchos occurs in the future; and (iv) monitor closely the organization and effective operation of its system of labour inspection taking due account of the Labour Administration Recommendation, 1978, (No. 158), including its Paragraph 26(1).

The Governing Body invited the Government to ensure, considering the time that had lapsed since the accident, that adequate and effective compensation be paid without further

delay to all the 65 families concerned and that adequate sanctions are imposed on those responsible for this accident.

The Governing Body invited the Government, in consultation with the social partners, taking into account the relevance of the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), to review the potential that this Convention provided to support the measures the Government was taking in order to strengthen the application of its laws and regulations in the area of OSH in mines.

The Governing Body decided to entrust the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations with following up the questions raised in the report with respect to the application of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and decided to make the report publicly available and to close the procedure initiated by the representation alleging non-observance by Mexico of the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170).

8. Freedom of association

During the past year, the Committee on Freedom of Association examined 181 cases, and in 172 cases followed up the measures taken by member States to give effect to its recommendations. While observing an important increase in the number of complaints against alleged violations of freedom of association submitted to the special procedure, the Committee continued to note with interest significant positive developments in the matters before it, including the release of detained trade union leaders and members. In November 2008 and March 2009, the Governing Body took note of the introduction to the 351st, 352nd and 353rd Reports of the Committee on Freedom of Association, and adopted the recommendations of the Committee on Freedom of Association on each case, as reflected in its 351st, 352nd and 353rd Reports.²⁵

9. Programme, financial and administrative issues

Use of Special Programme Account

In March 2009, the Governing Body decided to allocate US\$6 million from the Special Programme Account to support ILO technical work, technical programmes in countries, and crisis response activities.²⁶

Evaluations

In November 2008, the Governing Body took note of the Annual Evaluation Report for 2007–08 and requested the Director-General to continue to strengthen the evaluation function in accordance with the findings of the report. It noted and agreed with the implementation priorities for 2009, and requested that this implementation contain provisions for analysis of Decent Work Country Programmes in light of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The Governing Body also requested the Director-General to take into consideration the findings and recommendations contained in the papers summarizing the results of an independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy to support member States to improve the impact of international labour standards, the

independent evaluation of the ILO's programme for Zambia and Jordan, and the independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy to improve the protection of migrant workers.

ILO accommodation

The Building Subcommittee of the Programme, Finance and Administrative Committee met in November 2008 and March 2009. The Building Subcommittee received reports on ILO accommodation worldwide and ongoing renovation work on the headquarters building. In November 2008, the Governing Body earmarked an amount of 500,000 Swiss francs (CHF) in the Building and Accommodation Fund to be used for urgent repairs and maintenance of ILO-owned buildings. In March 2009, the Governing Body considered several alternatives for financing renovations to the headquarters building and approved the possible sale of the plot referred to in the appendix of the Office document ²⁷ as plot 3844, on terms to be negotiated by the Director-General. The Governing Body approved the charging of up to CHF350,000 to the Building and Accommodation Fund for the urgent replacement of two boilers at headquarters.

Information technology

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Subcommittee of the Programme, Finance and Administrative Committee met in November 2008. The Governing Body noted the progress in specific areas of the Information Technology (IT) Strategy for 2007–09, and the progress on implementing IRIS in the regions. It was noted by Subcommittee members that the future role of the ICT Subcommittee could be examined in the context of a governance review, as stipulated by the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

Strategic Policy Framework for 2010–15

In November 2008, the Governing Body reviewed a preliminary paper on the SPF 2010–15 and preview of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2010–11. ²⁸ In March 2009, the Governing Body endorsed the SPF for the period 2010–15 with the overall aim of “making decent work happen”, taking into account the views expressed during its discussion in the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. While commending the overall improvement in results orientation and clarity, the Committee called for continued efforts towards a reinforced approach to results measurement.

Programme and Budget proposals for 2010–11

In March 2009, the Governing Body considered the Programme and Budget proposals for 2010–11. ²⁹ The proposals specify the targets under the outcomes and indicators included in the SPF, as well as implementation strategies, measurement of results and the capacities required. The outcomes are centred on the following programme priorities: employment promotion, skills development, sustainable enterprises, social security, working conditions, OSH, labour migration, HIV/AIDS, employers' organizations, workers' organizations, labour administration and labour law, social dialogue and industrial relations, decent work in economic sectors, freedom of association and collective bargaining, child labour, forced labour, discrimination at work, international labour standards, and mainstreaming decent work.

Resource proposals for the regular budget were complemented by estimates of extra-budgetary and RBSA expenditure. Balancing the key role of the ILO in responding to the

global economic crisis with the severe constraints it places on public resources in member States, a zero real growth budget was endorsed for onward submission to the 98th Session of the International Labour Conference.³⁰ The budget stresses the need to manage for results with emphasis on the highest priorities of the Organization, strengthened capacity to provide services to constituents, new methods of work built around collaboration and teamwork across the Office, further streamlining of structures including in the field, and improving efficiency and effectiveness.

Field structure review

In March 2009, the Governing Body invited the Director-General to take the necessary steps to implement the proposed two-tier field structure to strengthen the ILO's capacity to service its Members globally, in regions and countries, in line with the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The Governing Body also requested the Director-General to develop clear indicators to measure the performance of the field structure in meeting the strategic objectives and needs of constituents.

Audits

In March 2009, the Governing Body received the first report of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee. The Governing Body noted the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 2008, the report on follow-up action taken by the Office on the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 2007 and the report on follow-up action by the Office on the report of the External Auditor on the accounts for 2006–07.

International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS): Changes to the Financial Regulations

In March 2009, the Governing Body considered proposed changes to the Financial Regulations and proposed their amendment to the International Labour Conference at its 98th Session (June 2009).

Human resources management

In November 2008, the Governing Body received a status report on the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy. The Governing Body approved amendments to the Staff Regulations concerning performance management and adoption leave. Reports were also received relating to recommendations of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on Common System entitlements which were approved by the Governing Body.

10. Legal issues and international labour standards

Legal and practical measures relating to the representation of Employers' and Workers' delegates at the International Labour Conference

The Credentials Committee of the 96th Session (2007) of the International Labour Conference had requested the Governing Body to examine the reasons for the discrepancy between the number of accredited Employers' and Workers' delegates and the number of those who actually registered at the Conference. During its 303rd Session, on the basis of proposals presented to it, the Governing Body supported measures to restrict the practice of allowing permanent missions to collect Conference badges for the whole delegation, and to request them not to collect badges for the Employers' and Workers' delegations, unless they had been specifically authorized in writing by the Employers and Workers concerned. The Governing Body further encouraged the Office to continue the practice of issuing, at the end of the second week of the International Labour Conference, an electronic version of the list of all delegates and their substitutes who were attending the Conference and entitled to vote. It also requested the Office to prepare, in light of the guidance provided during the debate of the Committee, a document for its 304th Session reflecting the proposals formulated in the reference document ³¹ to address situations in which Employers' or Workers' delegates are prevented by member State authorities from attending the Conference.

During its 304th Session, the Governing Body further considered proposals on the subject in the form of possible amendments to the Standing Orders that would introduce a new type of submission to the Credentials Committee, a "petition", to enable the Committee to review cases in which a delegate or adviser accredited by a government was allegedly prevented by that government from attending the Conference. The Governing Body decided to defer the item to its 306th Session and requested the Office to conduct intense consultations on the basis of the document presented and the views expressed by the Committee in order to present a further document on the matter.

Revision of the Rules for Regional Meetings: Introductory note

During its 303rd Session, the Governing Body approved the revised Introductory note ³² and decided to publish it together with the Rules for Regional Meetings (2008), the amendments to which were drawn up by the Governing Body during its 301st Session and confirmed by the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference.

The status of privileges and immunities of the International Labour Organization in member States

During its 304th Session, the Governing Body, in view of the lack of new accessions to the UN Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies (1947 Convention) since its last review, reaffirmed the importance of the resolutions concerning the privileges and immunities of the ILO and concerning the interim arrangements in regard to the privileges and immunities of the ILO, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 31st Session (1948), and encouraged member States, which had yet to do so, to accede to the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and apply its Annex I relating to the ILO. It

further requested the Office to continue to report periodically on the status of the privileges and immunities of the ILO in the member States, and to include in the next such report consideration of relevant practices of other UN agencies, with a view to taking further measures; and requested the Director-General to renew the invitation, on behalf of the Governing Body, to concerned member States to accede in the very near future to the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and apply Annex I relating to the ILO.

Standing Orders of the Conference: Practical arrangements for the discussion, at the 98th Session (June 2009) of the International Labour Conference, of the Global Report prepared under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

During its 304th Session, the Governing Body decided to invite the Conference, at its 98th Session, to adopt the provisional ad hoc arrangements³³ concerning the discussion of the Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Noting that the arrangements had previously taken effect over a four-year cycle ending with the 97th Session (June 2008) of the Conference, the Governing Body limited its proposal for extension to the 98th Session of the Conference, taking into account the possible impact of the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on the follow-up to the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body: Proposals for revision, including to promote gender equality

During its 304th Session, the Governing Body considered possible revisions to the *Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body* which had been developed at the request of the Governing Body in 2006. On the basis of the proposals presented, the Governing Body decided that, following any revision by the Governing Body or the Conference, texts in the *Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body* should be routinely updated by the Office, both electronically and, at appropriate intervals, in print; and requested the Office, in light of the discussion in the Committee, to submit more detailed proposals to the next session of the Governing Body for possible improvements to the *Compendium*, including revisions to the Standing Orders of the Governing Body in relation to promoting gender equality.

Improvements in the standards-related activities of the ILO

Possible implications of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization

In November 2008, the LILS Committee began its examination of the implications of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization on the standards strategy approved in 2005.³⁴ Following this discussion, the Governing Body invited the Office to: launch a promotional campaign for the ratification and effective implementation of standards that were the most significant from the viewpoint of governance; prepare an

evaluation of the grouping of Conventions by subject for reporting purposes that was introduced in 2003; and propose new options for a global approach to streamlining reports, taking into account the decisions taken by the Governing Body at the November 2008 and March 2009 sessions relating to the follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (a progress report in March 2009 and the final report in November 2009). It also invited the Office to: report on the consultations concerning Convention No. 158 and Recommendation No. 166 on termination of employment; make arrangements with a view to holding consultations on standards policy not later than March 2009; and report in March 2009 on the next steps taken for the implementation of the interim plan of action. Finally, it invited the Office to submit a progress report in November 2009 on the review of the article 22 report forms.

In March 2009, the LILS Committee examined a document answering to these requests, and held a second discussion on the implications of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.³⁵ On the basis of the Committee's recommendations, the Governing Body requested the Office to prepare a report in the context of the follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization setting out a final plan of action for the implementation of the standards strategy, including: a specific plan of action for a promotional campaign for the ratification and effective implementation of the standards that were the most significant from the point of view of governance; the various components of the standards strategy concerning the supervisory system; and standards policy options, in the light of the tripartite consultations. It also asked the Office to prepare a document on the interpretation of international labour Conventions; and to organize a meeting of a tripartite working group of experts to examine the Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158), and the Termination of Employment Recommendation, 1982 (No. 166).

Improving the coherence, integration and effectiveness of the supervisory system through a better understanding of its dynamics (further study from a substantive and practical standpoint)

In November 2008, a document setting out the second part of the study of the dynamics of the supervisory system was submitted to the LILS Committee, in the context of the discussion on the implementation of the standards strategy.³⁶ This document provided an historical and procedural overview of the supervisory procedures and examined the way in which the various supervisory procedures had interacted in seven case studies and the effect of the interactions on the observance of ratified Conventions. The principal aim of the study of the supervisory procedures was to provide the basis for an informed discussion by the Governing Body on the functioning of the supervisory system with a view to strengthening its impact. The Governing Body took note of the second part of the study and requested that the overview of the functioning of the supervisory system should include a study on the interpretation of international labour Conventions to be presented to its session this coming November.

Choice of Conventions and Recommendations on which reports should be requested under article 19 of the Constitution

In November 2008, the Governing Body stated its preference for a General Survey concerning employment instruments, as a subject aligned to the recurrent discussion that would take place at the 2010 Conference, in light of the Declaration on Social Justice for a

Fair Globalization. It therefore requested governments to submit reports under article 19 of the Constitution concerning employment instruments for 2009, and approved the report form concerning these instruments, as revised.³⁷

In March 2009, the Governing Body chose social security as the subject for the General Survey, which would moreover be the theme of the recurrent discussion placed on the agenda of the 2011 Conference. It therefore requested governments to submit reports under article 19 of the Constitution concerning social security instruments for 2010, and approved the report form concerning these instruments, as revised.³⁸

11. Multinational enterprises

In November 2008, the Governing Body took note of the discussion held in the Subcommittee on Multinational Enterprises concerning updates on strategic priorities on: (i) establishing a helpdesk to provide expert advice on the realization of international labour standards and the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration); (ii) field testing of an alternative modality to evaluate the effect given to the MNE Declaration; (iii) providing training on the implementation of the MNE Declaration; (iv) working closely with other intergovernmental organizations that may help raise awareness of the MNE Declaration; and (v) promoting the MNE Declaration at the country and regional levels.

With regard to the first point, the helpdesk was officially launched during the March 2009 Governing Body. The Office has developed promotional materials and integrated information in training packages, particularly those developed by the International Training Centre of the ILO.

In Argentina and Ghana, the Office is testing the newly developed methodology, as well as ensuring that the exercise informs ongoing dialogue among constituents on the role of multinational enterprises with regard to topic areas of the MNE Declaration.

With regard to the other strategic priorities, notable work includes: (a) in June 2008, the OECD and the ILO jointly organized a high-level Conference on employment and industrial relations: Promoting responsible business conduct in a globalizing economy; (b) the Office has been developing and delivering training to ILO staff and constituents on the implementation of the MNE Declaration, in close collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO; and (c) recently conducted a tripartite multi-forum, using the MNE Declaration as a key source, with approximately 300 participants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, including a number of MNEs.

12. Employment and social policy

In November 2008, the Governing Body took note of the discussion held in the Committee on Employment and Social Policy on the following items which were on the agenda: (i) Implementation of the Global Employment Agenda: An update; (ii) Employment and labour market implications of climate change; (iii) Presentation of the first issue of the global wage trends report; and (iv) Social security standards and the ILO campaign for the extension of social security.

With regard to item (ii), the Committee endorsed the view that responding to the climate change was core ILO work, given that dealing with transitions brought about by changes in economies and labour markets fell within its mandate. Suggestions and guidance were given by the Committee regarding the areas of ILO focus and follow-up

activities. Concerning item (iii), there was a broad consensus on the value of the work on wages being carried out by the Office and on the need to continue collection and analysis of wage statistics. A consensus was also reached for item (iv) in supporting the mandate of the campaign. The Office was requested to hold a tripartite technical meeting of experts in 2009 to guide improvements in social security coverage.

In March 2009, the Governing Body took note of the discussion of the items which were on the agenda. The Office presented the paper entitled “The financial and economic crisis: A Decent Work response”, which was also presented and discussed at the Governing Body’s High-level Tripartite Meeting on the Current Global Financial and Economic Crisis. The Committee noted the wide support for the ILO’s involvement at the G20 meetings, as well as for the Office proposal on the Global Jobs Pact and a Global Jobs Fund. The Office took note of the various suggestions from the constituents that would guide the future work of the ILO.

During the March session, the Committee discussed the “Impact of the Social Justice Declaration on the implementation of the Global Employment Agenda (GEA)”. Recognizing that the adaptation of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the current economic crisis affected the GEA implementation strategy, the Committee noted the various efforts being made by the Office towards better identification of constituents’ demand and towards devising greater synergies between the four strategic objectives of Decent Work. The Office was requested to continue its dialogue with the constituents on the various points raised for effective and refined use of the GEA and its implementation.

13. Sectoral and technical meetings and related issues

In response to the resolutions adopted by the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference, the ILO has prepared guidelines to assist countries to implement their responsibilities in connection with inspections of ships for compliance with the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006. Two meetings of experts were held in September 2008: the Tripartite Expert Meeting to Adopt Guidelines on Flag State Inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (Geneva, 15–19 September 2008) and the Tripartite Expert Meeting to Develop Guidelines for Port State Control Officers Carrying Out Inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (Geneva, 22–26 September 2008). The publication of the Guidelines, in English, French and Spanish, was authorized by the Governing Body at its 303rd Session (November 2008).

The Office is also following up on other resolutions adopted by the 94th and 96th Sessions of the Conference concerning its work with respect to seafarers and fishers within the ILO’s programme and budget and through externally funded projects.

In accordance with the Governing Body decision of November 2007, a Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in Local Government Procurement for Infrastructure Provision was held in February 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to provide knowledge about different aspects of procurement in construction; explore the feasibility of using contractual provisions to ensure compliance with social requirements in procurement, and discuss some practical methods of ensuring this compliance, with a view to obtaining recommendations for practice. The Forum was an opportunity for the participants to convey ideas and suggestions to the World Bank regarding labour standards in its procurement practices. In addition, the Forum participants agreed on the need for capacity building to ensure sound implementation of legislation and good contract compliance.

The ILO convened an emergency two-day tripartite global dialogue forum on 24–25 February 2009 to review the impact of the financial and economic crisis on finance workers, and suggest policy options to address the effects of the crisis on employment in the sector. It also adopted a set of conclusions calling on the ILO to monitor the evolution of the crisis, and underlined the need to restore confidence in banks and fix the ongoing problems in the financial systems as a first step in relaunching the global economy towards recovery. The conclusions further stressed the need for the ILO and its constituents to have a voice in discussions on the financial crisis in different forums; and the importance of ILO assistance for a continuous process – involving the social partners – to monitor the impact of the crisis and the reforms on employment and the social and labour dimensions in the financial sector. The role of social dialogue as a key tool in mitigating the effects of the crisis and developing solutions was emphasized. Exploring alternatives to redundancies was emphasized, with this option used only as a last resort, and in full respect of contractual commitments to workers.

14. Technical cooperation

In November 2008, the Committee on Technical Cooperation discussed the following issues: follow-up to the resolution on technical cooperation, adopted by the 95th Session (2006) of the International Labour Conference; the implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes; and the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Technical cooperation priorities and action plans regarding freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. It was also briefed orally on the field structure review.

In March 2009, the Committee discussed trends in international development cooperation. The Governing Body adopted the Committee's recommendation to request the Director-General to continue to promote efforts to engage the ILO in international development trends, in particular aid effectiveness and UN reform. It also requested the Office to prepare a paper to be submitted to the Committee on Technical Cooperation at the 306th Session (November 2009) of the Governing Body on:

- issues, lessons learned and challenges experienced by the ILO constituents in the “Delivering as One” pilots to develop a strategy for ensuring attention to employment and decent work and better involvement of tripartite constituents in the UN reform process;
- further developing, in this connection, a capacity-building plan and resource strategy, to prepare ILO constituents and staff for the 90 UNDAFs planned over the next three years, fully taking into account the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the priorities of the Decent Work Country Programmes, and the SPF 2010–15;
- enhancing the ILO's technical cooperation strategy, including in relation to resource mobilization, to ensure that donor funding is aligned with the decent work outcomes and priorities as set out in the SPF and programme and budget, and that, where possible, it is predictable and easily allocated to areas of greatest need, and with appropriately harmonized reporting requirements.

The Committee also examined a paper on the ILO's technical cooperation programme 2007–08. The Governing Body adopted its recommendation to encourage the Director-General to continue to strengthen the ILO's technical cooperation programme to ensure that it effectively discharged the role foreseen in the implementation of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The Committee was briefed orally on the 18th meeting of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

International Steering Committee (ISC) on 16 March 2009, and also discussed the implementation of the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia. The Committee members noted progress under the Tripartite Agreement, but expressed concern about continuing problems of violence against trade union leaders and impunity of perpetrators.

15. Supplementary reports of the Director-General

XVIII World Congress on Safety and Health and Safety and Health Summit

(Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 June–2 July 2008)

At its November 2008 session, the Governing Body took note of a report³⁹ on the outcome of the XVIII World Congress on Safety and Health and the Safety and Health Summit (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 June–2 July 2008). The World Congress provided an outstanding opportunity for safety and health dialogue for over 4,500 participants, 1,800 of whom were from international backgrounds. The high-level summit provided a platform for debate on ways to further promote OSH worldwide and it resulted in a political accord on the value of safe and healthy workplaces in the form of the Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work. The Declaration places OSH high on national and international agendas.

Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work

(Geneva, 8–10 September 2008)

In November 2008 the Governing Body considered a report of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work, held in Geneva from 8 to 10 September 2008.⁴⁰ The report provided detailed recommendations on the measurement of decent work through country profiles. Governing Body members requested the Office to bring the item to the Governing Body in November 2009 to review progress on a number of pilot profiles. In March 2009, the Governing Body again reviewed this work on the basis of the report of the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) held from 24 November to 5 December 2008 in Geneva.⁴¹ The ICLS adopted a resolution on the subject of measuring decent work.

Draft guidelines to improve the functioning of Governing Body meetings

Further to a Government group statement, endorsed by the Governing Body in March 2008, the Office prepared a document for the November 2008 session of the Governing Body containing a set of draft guidelines to improve its functioning.⁴² The document set out practical steps aimed at meeting the expectations and needs of members, to enable them to make the best use of the limited time available for the meetings of the Governing Body, and outlining ideas for improving the functioning of the Governing Body in each key area. Governing Body members were then invited to make their comments on the document and further suggestions through an online discussion forum. In March 2009, the Governing Body decided to establish a working party on the working methods of the Governing Body and the functioning of the Conference.⁴³

ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2008–09

A stocktaking report on implementation of the Action Plan – designed to operationalize the ILO’s 1999 gender equality policy – was presented in March 2009 to the Governing Body.⁴⁴ Governments stated that the report gave useful insights, and Governing Body members voiced their opinion that constituents were the Action Plan’s ultimate beneficiaries. The Worker spokesperson highlighted the importance of developing staff training modules, working toward parity in professional posts by 2010, and emphasizing more the four key gender equality Conventions⁴⁵ and their links to freedom of association and collective bargaining. The next Action Plan should focus more strongly on Decent Work Country Programmes and incorporate guidance from the relevant June 2009 International Labour Conference general discussion. The Employers stated that they needed to be convinced that constituents were the Action Plan’s ultimate beneficiaries. Future assessments needed to show the Action Plan’s impact, identify good practices and how challenges were being overcome.

Achievement of global interoperability for the seafarers’ identity document

In March 2009, the Governing Body was informed⁴⁶ of a further milestone in the testing of biometric products for conformity with the technical requirements relating to the biometric element of the seafarers’ identity document, established by the Seafarers’ Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185). These technical requirements are set out in the Convention itself and in the standard ILO SID-0002 approved by the Governing Body in accordance with the resolution concerning the development of the global interoperable biometric that was adopted by the Conference at the same time as Convention No. 185. Since 2004, four series of tests have been carried out on different biometric products to make sure that they not only individually meet the ILO performance requirements, but also maintain an acceptable performance when working interoperably with each other. With the most recent testing, carried out towards the end of 2008, the number of products passing the test increased to 12. Countries designing systems for implementing Convention No. 185 thus now have a choice between products available from several different sources, to enable devices to authenticate the holder of a SID on the basis of his or her biometric template or to generate the biometric templates for the country’s SIDs.

16. International Institute for Labour Studies

Report of the 50th Session of the Board

In October 2008, the International Institute for Labour Studies launched the *World of Work Report 2008*, with income inequalities as the overarching theme. At its meeting of November 2008, the Institute’s Board welcomed the report and encouraged the Institute to move forward with this new annual flagship publication.⁴⁷ The Governing Body subsequently took note of the Board’s report.

The Board expressed interest in further analyses on the global crisis. In response, the Institute, in cooperation with the Office, produced a report entitled *The financial and economic crisis: A decent work approach*. The Institute’s Director presented the report at the March 2009 Governing Body.⁴⁸ This report, now available in hardcover form, examines crisis responses in 40 countries. The report provides analytical foundation for a Global Jobs Pact centred around jobs and social protection as crucial drivers of the

recovery. The strategy put forth also addresses imbalances in the globalization process that led to the crisis.

Nobel prize-winning economist, Professor Joseph Stiglitz, addressed a special sitting of the March 2009 Governing Body on the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. He was presented with the 2008 ILO Decent Work Research Prize by the ILO Director-General, who praised his call for a more balanced globalization and stronger regulation of financial markets.

17. Regional meetings

Report and conclusions of the Eighth European Regional Meeting (Lisbon, 9–13 February 2009)

In March 2009, the Governing Body had before it the report of the Meeting with four appendices, which included the conclusions of the Meeting – “Working out of crisis: Strategies for decent work in Europe and Central Asia”, the summary of the Prime Ministers’ panel discussion “Confronting the crisis: Delivering decent work in Europe and Central Asia”, the summary of the Informal Ministerial Meeting and the report of the Credentials Committee of the Meeting.⁴⁹

The Meeting, which was the first Regional Meeting addressing the crisis, benefited from the excellent organizational and financial support of the Government of Portugal.

The report and the conclusions were adopted by the Governing Body at its March 2009 session and sent to the constituents.

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Notes

¹ Visit www.ilo.org and follow the link to the Governing Body.

² GB.304/SG/DECL/1(Rev.).

³ GB.304/2/1, paragraph 8.

⁴ GB.303/3/1, paragraph 12.

⁵ GB.304/2/2, paragraph 9.

⁶ GB.304/7, paragraph 19.

⁷ GB.303/3/2.

⁸ GB.304/2/2.

⁹ For this text, visit www.ilo.org and follow the link to the Governing Body page.

¹⁰ GB.304/4.

¹¹ Reproduced in the appendix to document GB.301/7.

¹² GB.303/5.

¹³ GB.304/3.

¹⁴ GB.304/15/1.

¹⁵ GB.304/15/4, paragraph 6.

¹⁶ GB.303/8/1 and GB.303/8/2.

¹⁷ GB.304/5/1(Rev.).

¹⁸ GB.303/19/2.

¹⁹ GB.304/14/3.

²⁰ GB.303/20/1.

²¹ GB.303/19/8.

²² GB.304/14/6.

²³ GB.304/14/7.

²⁴ GB.304/14/8.

²⁵ GB.303/9/1, GB.303/9/2 and GB.304/6, respectively.

²⁶ GB.304/PFA/4 and GB.304/PFA/4(Add.).

²⁷ GB.304/PFA/BS/2.

²⁸ GB.303/PFA/2.

²⁹ GB.304/PFA/3.

³⁰ Draft Programme and Budget for 2010–11 and other financial questions, Report II, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, 2009.

³¹ GB.303/LILS/1(Rev.).

³² Appendix to GB.303/12.

³³ Appendix to GB.304/9/1.

³⁴ GB.303/LILS/4/1 and GB.303/12.

³⁵ GB.304/LILS/4 and GB.304/9/2.

³⁶ GB.303/LILS/4/2 and GB.303/12.

³⁷ GB.303/LILS/6 and GB.303/12.

³⁸ GB.304/LILS/5 and GB.304/9/2.

³⁹ GB.303/19/1.

⁴⁰ GB.303/19/3.

⁴¹ GB.304/STM/5.

⁴² GB.303/19/5.

⁴³ GB.304/7.

⁴⁴ GB.304/14/2.

⁴⁵ Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); and Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

⁴⁶ GB.304/14/9.

⁴⁷ GB.303/18.

⁴⁸ GB.304/ESP/2 and HTM/1.

⁴⁹ GB.304/14/4(Rev.).

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