



FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues

1. The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues met on 10 March 2008.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr L. Héthy (Hungary). The Employer Vice-Chairperson was Mr G. Trogen. Sir R. Trotman replaced Mr J. Zellhoefer, the Worker Vice-Chairperson, and acted as Worker spokesperson.
3. The Chairperson announced that the Officers had decided that there would be no oral report on item 4 concerning the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), which had also been withdrawn from the agenda of the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards.

I. Purpose, duration and composition of the activities to be held in 2008–09 and new proposals for activities in 2008–09

4. Ms Walgrave, Officer-in-Charge of the Social Dialogue Sector, introduced the paper on this subject.¹ She outlined the proposals made in paragraphs 5 and 6. She recalled her statement at the previous session of the Committee that global dialogue forums were not subject to the Standing Orders for Sectoral Meetings. Since there were therefore no rules in relation to the appointment of chairpersons for such forums she suggested that the first of these meetings, namely the global forum on commerce, be chaired by a representative selected by the Government group. The question would however be placed on the agenda of a forthcoming session of the Committee so that a decision could be taken on how this issue should be dealt with in other forums in the future.
5. Turning to paragraphs 7–13, she added that participants in the advisory body on energy and mining had made suggestions for countries for participation in the regional workshop. These were China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines and Viet Nam, all of which had a considerable mining industry and had voted for the adoption of the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176). Consultations were ongoing with regional and country offices regarding the host country.

¹ GB.301/STM/1.

6. She also informed the Committee of the discussions of the advisory body on private services. The participants had favoured a two-day tripartite workshop to: raise awareness of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181); exchange views on its benefits; present good practice; and encourage further ratifications. The Office proposed, following consultations through the advisory body, that six Workers' and six Employers' delegates would be invited to attend, in line with the budgetary allocations for a global dialogue forum. With regard to Government participation, the workshop would be open to all interested governments. A first aim would be to promote ratification of the Convention by European and other countries where the private employment agency market was developing (e.g. Australia, Argentina, China, India, Philippines, Russian Federation) and by major sending and receiving countries of migrant workers. Efforts should be made to encourage the attendance of governments that would potentially ratify the Convention, such as those from the Balkans, Africa and Asia that had already ratified the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 96), and the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), or that had requested technical assistance on Convention No. 181. With regard to the date, she suggested that the workshop be held on 20 and 21 October 2009.
7. The Employer Vice-Chairperson endorsed the proposals and noted that they reflected the discussions within the advisory bodies, which were functioning well. Regarding the workshop to promote the ratification of Convention No. 181, he said that it was important that a critical mass of participants were invited. Six participants for each group was the lowest imaginable number; eight or ten for each group would be preferable. In addition to the social partners, participation by governments was crucial, in view of their role in the ratification process. His group therefore requested the Office to encourage government participation.
8. In relation to the appointment of a chairperson for the first global forum on commerce, his group favoured the appointment of a Government participant which would help to save costs and mean that the chairperson was involved in the issues as they related to the host country.
9. The Worker spokesperson informed the Committee that the Worker Vice-Chairperson, Mr Zellhoefer, had been unable to attend as he had recently undergone an operation. However, he was already feeling much better and sent his greetings to the Committee.
10. Turning to the agenda item, he suggested that a Government participant should chair the first global forum on commerce and thus wished to hear the Government representatives express their views on this point. With regard to the workshop to promote the ratification of Convention No. 181, it was important for Governments to participate fully so that they could contribute actively to the work of the workshop. He suggested that the paper to be prepared for the workshop should focus on a small number of issues that were of concern to developing as well as developed countries, such as migrant labour. He therefore proposed the broad involvement of other units, in particular the International Labour Standards Department, the International Migration Branch and the Skills and Employability Department. The global dialogue forum on decent work in local government procurement for infrastructure provision should examine national public procurement practices and be embedded in the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94). National policies, rules and practice needed to be established to improve the respective processes. It was important that enabling legislation did not foster the creation of conflicting rules and procedures and appropriately limited the discretion given to subsidiary entities, such as districts or towns. The report to the meeting should also include a reference to the basic needs approach, which helped to avoid exploitation and fostered greater efforts, on which governments, workers and employers could build.

11. The representative of the Government of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of IMEC, supported the point for decision as drafted. He recalled IMEC's statement at the November 2007 session on the ILO Sectoral Activities Programme. At that time, he had called for an appendix to be included that would provide a comprehensive overview of all activities decided upon by the Committee. He was pleased to see that such an overview had been updated and annexed to the paper before the Committee, but regretted that it did not include budgetary information. He also regretted that the paper had only been made available online five days before the present session. He endorsed the proposals and reiterated that it was crucial for the workshops to run well. The preparatory work should form a solid basis on which the problems posed by ratification could be identified and addressed.
12. The representative of the Government of Australia indicated that his country was interested in taking part in the regional tripartite workshop on improving safety and health in mining. Australia was an important mining country and was currently undertaking consultations with the social partners and other stakeholders on the ratification of the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176). A law and practice report would be produced for that purpose.
13. The Worker spokesperson added that his group supported the holding of the regional tripartite workshop on improving safety and health in mining for selected Asian countries. His group approved the positive approach set out in paragraph 8 and fully endorsed the useful suggestions in paragraph 11. Regarding the workshop to promote ratification of Convention No. 181, his group asked the Office to exercise caution in relation to the statement in paragraph 15 that the Convention "encourages reliable professional human resources service providers to predominate". The language seemed judgemental and unclear. It was crucial that agencies were certified and inspected, but it was difficult to determine the grounds on which one agency should be given preferential treatment over another. In particular, in many developing countries it was important that agencies complied and continued to comply with the rules and that they were not used to bypass the employment relationship to the detriment of workers. The workshop should serve to reduce ambiguities and provide a sound basis for fair and non-discriminatory practices, the improvement of inspection and the furthering of labour standards.
14. In response to the discussion, Ms Walgrave indicated that, due to the less formal nature of global dialogue forums and workshops, in-depth reports would not be produced by the Office. Contributions from participants would, however, be welcome. In her understanding, both workshops should allow the participants to gain a clearer idea of the measures that could be taken for the ratification of the Conventions.
15. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body endorse:*
 - (a) *the composition, duration and dates of the global dialogue forum on decent work in local government procurement for infrastructure provision as proposed in document GB.301/STM/1 as follows:*
 - (i) *that it be held for two days on 17 and 18 February 2009;*
 - (ii) *that six Employer and six Worker representatives be invited to attend the forum; and*
 - (iii) *that all member States be invited to nominate participants to attend the forum;*

- (b) the proposal to hold a regional tripartite workshop on improving safety and health in mining for selected Asian countries; and*
- (c) the proposal to hold a workshop to promote ratification of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), in Geneva on 20 and 21 October 2009.*

II. Interim report on action programmes in 2006–07 in the health services, public services and telecommunication services sectors

16. Ms Walgrave introduced the paper.² She noted that the proposed framework for monitoring and evaluating future action programmes included in the paper was based on effective evaluation methodologies and lessons learnt from earlier evaluation work on action programmes. A self-evaluation approach was appropriate to the limited budgets of action programmes and included three elements: a results-based monitoring framework based on the change pathway; a checklist for contribution to the ILO's operational objectives and immediate outcomes; and a stakeholder questionnaire for self-evaluation. Ms Walgrave invited the members of the Committee to comment on the document and on the best ways of overseeing future action programmes, considering the new orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme. Due to the ongoing follow-up to the action programmes in health, public services and telecommunications, the final evaluation would be carried out in 2009 rather than in early 2008, so that a more comprehensive report could be submitted.
17. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed Sir Roy Trotman and hoped that the Worker Vice-Chairperson, Mr Zellhoefer, would recover rapidly. He noted the positive results achieved in the health services and telecommunications action programmes. The health services action programme had kept its promises and positive outcomes had been noted in five countries. The telecommunications action programme had had positive achievements. He had been involved in the programme and was impressed by the wide array of subjects covered. With regard to the public services action programme, his group had not been involved much, but he congratulated the Office on the preliminary results and reported that he had received positive comments from the Ukraine on the two seminars held. On the monitoring and evaluation framework, he acknowledged the sound approach adopted by the Office and the useful instrument developed. His group would ensure that feedback was provided to the self-evaluation questionnaires.
18. The Worker spokesperson noted the progress in the three action programmes and emphasized the importance of the evaluation aspect. His group endorsed the proposed framework and encouraged consideration of the gender dimension in that process.
19. The representative of the Government of the Philippines welcomed the document on the monitoring and evaluation of action programmes. She commended the high quality of the paper and acknowledged that the ILO Evaluation Unit had provided useful guidance in its development. The approach proposed was very appropriate.
20. The Committee took note of the information provided.

² GB.301/STM/2(Rev.).

III. Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral and technical meetings

(a) Tripartite Meeting on the Impact of Global Food Chains on Employment

(Geneva, 24–27 September 2007)

21. Ms Walgrave introduced the two papers before the Committee.³ She pointed out a translation error in the Spanish version of the report of the Meeting: Mr Julio Rosales, the Chairperson of the Meeting, had been wrongly identified as a member of the Workers' group. Ms Walgrave apologized to Mr Rosales and clarified that he was a member of the Governing Body representing the Government of Argentina. She indicated that follow-up activities to implement the conclusions adopted by the Meeting were already envisaged for 2008–09, particularly in Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).
22. The Worker spokesperson supported the points for decision and emphasized that the Office should focus on comprehensive research on: corporate concentration in global food chains, particularly with regard to industrial relations; the production, sourcing and trading of agricultural products; export processing zones; and retail and catering. The Office also needed to conduct research on precarious working conditions throughout global food chains, particularly as they affected migrant and vulnerable workers. The impact of global food chains on child labour also needed to be examined. The impact of global production systems as they applied to the food chain required attention, as did the issues of food safety, food security and the sustainability of the world's food system. Nanotechnology was an important issue for his group and he suggested that the Sectoral Activities Programme should also focus its research efforts, in partnership with other ILO units and United Nations (UN) agencies, on establishing the effect of this technology on the health and safety of workers.
23. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the positive outcome of the Meeting and said that it was important that the Office follow up the Meeting's conclusions. He recalled that the conclusions of the Meeting called on the ILO, in conjunction with relevant UN agencies to "evaluate existing research literature into the possible impact of advanced technologies in food production, processing and distribution on working conditions and employment along the food chain, and include the appropriate references in its pertinent database". The Employers acknowledged that global changes in food chains were having an impact on employment and were of the view that the social partners should ensure that workers had the right skills. For this reason, it was important for workers to have the right training and education to cope with these changes.
24. The representative of the Government of Argentina endorsed the points for decision and emphasized that the topic needed to be examined in greater depth given the number of Governments which had shown interest in it. The conclusions adopted were the result of a dedicated tripartite effort. In the future work of the Office, it was important to envisage strengthening the capacities of governments and the social partners, carrying out studies on specific aspects of the subject and making progress towards the establishment of regional observatories of the functioning of global food chains. Such observatories, which could be permanent technical bodies, would collect data on a regional and subregional basis, on collective bargaining and employment trends and characteristics with the full participation of the social partners. In that regard, MERCOSUR's experience could serve as a basis for pooling and updating such information.

³ GB.301/STM/3/1 and TMFCE/2007/11.

25. The representative of the Government of India endorsed the points for decision. The development of global food chains had brought many employment opportunities to countries in the Asian region, although a number of labour issues had also arisen, such as hours of work, pay levels, restrictions on night work and provisions governing paid leave, bonuses, etc. Skills upgrading, occupational safety and health, food safety and the observance of international food safety standards all called for attention. India had been making considerable headway in developing food chains by matching education and training with the needs of the food and drink industry, and by developing a facilitating environment nurtured by healthier industrial relations and social dialogue in the food and drink sector.
26. The representative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran endorsed the points for decision and observed that many countries had taken advantage of the development of global food chains, not only in economic but also in cultural terms. However, individual, structural and non-structural barriers stood in the way of the efficient operation of such chains worldwide. The examination of global food chains needed to give due consideration to issues such as the gathering of statistical information, skills upgrading, training and cultural and economic circumstances. The social partners not only needed access to information on global food chains, but also on management, rules and regulations and social, cultural and economic issues.
27. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*
- (a) *authorize the Director-General to communicate the Note on the proceedings containing the texts mentioned in paragraph 4 of document GB.301/STM/3/1:*
 - (i) *to governments, requesting them to communicate these texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
 - (ii) *to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned; and*
 - (iii) *to the international organizations concerned; and*
 - (b) **Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics: Updating the International Standard Classification of Occupations**
(Geneva, 3–6 December 2007)

28. Mr Young, Director of the ILO Bureau of Statistics, introduced the two papers before the Committee.⁴ He recalled that work to update the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) had been mandated by a resolution of the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, held in November 2003, and endorsed by the Governing Body in March 2004. The Meeting had discussed the outcome of this work,

⁴ GB.301/STM/3/2 and MELS/2007/2.

amended the draft presented to it and adopted a resolution endorsing and adopting the updated International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008 (ISCO-08). The updated ISCO was expected to be used by countries in their preparations for the 2010 round of population censuses.

29. The Employer Vice-Chairperson said that his group was ready to endorse the updated classification. This was important work that had achieved a very satisfactory outcome and would be a real showcase for the ILO. He observed that ILO statistics were very valuable.
30. The Worker spokesperson congratulated the Office on the outcome of the work and supported the endorsement of the updated ISCO.
31. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom appreciated the fact that the United Kingdom had been invited to contribute and praised the high level of consultation that the ILO had undertaken. He congratulated the ILO for the delivery of a quality result within such a short time.
32. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*
 - (a) *take note of the report of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts and its resolution concerning the updating and adoption of the ISCO;*
 - (b) *request the Director-General to consider the wishes expressed by the Meeting when drawing up proposals for future work of the Office; and*
 - (c) *authorize the Director-General to publish the ISCO–08.*

(c) Meeting of Experts to Examine Instruments, Knowledge, Advocacy, Technical Cooperation and International Collaboration as Tools with a View to Developing a Policy Framework for Hazardous Substances
(Geneva, 10–13 December 2007)

33. Ms Walgrave introduced the two papers before the Committee.⁵ She recalled that the Meeting had adopted a set of recommendations and emphasized that, because of its unique tripartite nature, the ILO was particularly well equipped to make a real impact in the world of work. She proposed that the point for decision be modified, to better reflect the specific outcome of the Meeting, in accordance with an amended wording which had been made available and distributed to the Committee members.
34. The Worker spokesperson supported the revised point for decision. He emphasized that, for the full implementation of the recommendations, all member States of the ILO needed to ratify and implement the ILO occupational safety and health Conventions, in particular the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170), and the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174). He suggested that, to this effect, the Office should emphasize its activities in the areas of training, the promotion of the sound management of chemicals and chemical safety by making use of the DWCPs, the *Guidelines on occupational safety*

⁵ GB.301/STM/3/3 and MEPFHS/2007/11.

and health management systems, *ILO–OSH 2001* and its work in the framework of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

35. The Employer Vice-Chairperson supported the revised point for decision. He said that the Meeting had been extremely successful. Since he had worked for the chemical industry in his home country (Sweden), he knew the importance of the sound management of chemicals to the industry and to people. Given this importance and global changes, it was crucial for the Office to update its methodology on dealing with the issue. He emphasized that active tripartite participation in the work on the SAICM was important.
36. The representative of the Government of India stated that the sound management of chemicals was an important matter to protect the safety of workers in the workplace in his country. India had implemented laws and practices on the sound management of chemicals, including waste management, hazards control and reduced exposure risks. India had ratified the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174), and was implementing its provisions. In order to promote the sound management of chemicals, the Government of India was seeking the continued technical assistance of the Office.
37. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*
- (a) *authorize the Director-General to communicate the final report of the Meeting:*
- (i) *to governments, requesting them to communicate the text to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;*
- (ii) *to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned; and*
- (iii) *to the other international organizations concerned; and*
- (b) *request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in the recommendations containing a plan of action for the ILO.*

IV. Maritime matters

- (a) **Report on the 93rd Session of the IMO Legal Committee concerning the work of the Joint IMO/ILO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding Claims for Death, Personal Injury and Abandonment of Seafarers**

38. Ms Tinoco, Chief of the Sectoral Activities Branch, introduced the paper before the Committee.⁶ She noted that the Joint Working Group had met at its Seventh Session in early February this year. It had decided to reconvene on 21–24 July 2008 to complete its

⁶ GB.301/STM/5/1.

work. The outcome of its work would be reported to the present Committee in November 2008 and to the IMO Legal Committee in October 2008.

39. The Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Worker spokesperson took note of the information.
40. The representative of the Government of India stated that his country, a major supplier of maritime labour, was satisfied with the progress of the Joint Working Group and would like to be represented at future sessions.
41. The Committee took note of the information.

(b) Report of the 83rd Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee concerning the establishment of a Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on the Human Element

42. Ms Tinoco introduced the paper before the Committee ⁷ and emphasized the importance for the sector of addressing the human element through international cooperation between UN specialized agencies.
43. The Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Worker spokesperson both expressed disappointment at the response given to the ILO's proposal for the establishment of a Joint Working Group on the Human Element. They both supported the point for decision.
44. *The Committee took note of the information provided and recommended that the Governing Body:*
 - (a) *reiterate the request to the Director-General mentioned in paragraph 1 of document GB.301/STM/5/2; and*
 - (b) *request the Director-General to transmit these decisions to the Secretary-General of the IMO.*

(c) Report of the 83rd Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee and of the 93rd Session of the IMO Legal Committee concerning the second meeting of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident

45. Ms Tinoco introduced the paper. ⁸
46. The Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Worker spokesperson took note of the information.

⁷ GB.301/STM/5/2.

⁸ GB.301/STM/5/3.

47. The representative of the Government of India agreed that there was no need to revise the guidelines at this stage. His Government wished to participate in future sessions of the Joint Expert Working Group.

48. The Committee took note of the information.

(d) Follow-up to the resolution concerning tonnage measurement and accommodation adopted by the 96th Session of the International Labour Conference

49. Ms Tinoco introduced the paper before the Committee.⁹

50. The Employer Vice-Chairperson and the Worker spokesperson agreed that the issue was important to both seafarers and fishers and strongly supported the point for decision.

51. This view was shared by the representatives of the Governments of India and the Philippines.

52. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body request the Director-General to:*

(a) continue to monitor the developments at the IMO and to evaluate any amendment to, or interpretation of, agreements of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (1969 TM Convention), that could have an impact on the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), especially on Annex III;

(b) monitor developments and evaluate any amendment to, or interpretation of, agreements of the 1969 TM Convention that could have an impact on the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006; and

(c) encourage the IMO to give full consideration to possible amendments to, or interpretation of, agreements of the 1969 TM Convention that would lead to improved welfare of seafarers or fishers or both.

V. Composition of the Third Session of the Joint ILO/IMO/Basel Convention Working Group on Ship Scrapping

53. Ms Tinoco introduced the paper before the Committee.¹⁰

54. The Worker spokesperson endorsed the point for decision.

55. The Employer Vice-Chairperson also endorsed the point for decision, but pointed out that the decision to hold the meeting in Geneva instead of London might have cost implications for the Employer participants, who were all based in London.

⁹ GB.301/STM/5/4.

¹⁰ GB.301/STM/6.

56. A representative of the Government of India endorsed the point for decision and commented that the report of the 56th Session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) contained Regulations 19 to 24 on various aspects of occupational safety and health in ship recycling. The Regulations were appropriate, generic in nature and, in principle, acceptable, as most of the provisions were covered in national legislation and practice. If, however, the MEPC working group developed specific technical guidelines under any of the proposed regulations, existing Indian legislation and practice should be taken into consideration in order to facilitate the future process of ratification of the IMO Convention. Finally, he asked that India be considered as one of the participating member States.
57. Ms Tinoco took note of the concern indicated by the Employers' group.
58. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*
- (a) *set the dates of the Third Session of the Joint ILO/IMO/Basel Convention Working Group on Ship Scrapping in Geneva for 29–31 October 2008;*
 - (b) *approve that the delegation be composed of ten ILO (five Employer and five Worker) representatives at no cost to the Office, five Basel Convention representatives and five IMO representatives; and*
 - (c) *request the Director-General to communicate its decision to the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and to the Secretary-General of the IMO.*

VI. Report of the International Symposium on the Labour and Social Aspects of Global Production Systems: Issues for Business (Geneva, 17–19 October 2007)

VII. Other questions

Report of the International Workers' Symposium on the role of trade unions in workers' education: The key to trade union capacity building (Geneva, 8–12 October 2007)

59. Ms Walgrave introduced the two papers before the Committee.¹¹
60. The Employer Vice-Chairperson confirmed that the International Symposium on the Labour and Social Aspects of Global Production Systems had been very successful. He pointed out that in the report of the International Workers' Symposium one of the paragraphs addressed employers' organizations and suggested that questions that concerned both workers and employers should be dealt with in different forums.

¹¹ GB.301/STM/7 and GB.301/STM/8/1.

61. The Worker spokesperson took note of the papers.
62. The Committee took note of the information provided.

Geneva, 12 March 2008.

Points for decision: Paragraph 15;
Paragraph 27;
Paragraph 32;
Paragraph 37;
Paragraph 44;
Paragraph 52;
Paragraph 58.