



Governing Body

320th Session, Geneva, 13–27 March 2014

GB.320/WP/GBC/2

Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference

WP/GBC

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SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Review of the implementation of the Governing Body reform

Background

1. At its 310th Session (March 2011), the Governing Body adopted a reform package¹ proposed by the Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference (WP/GBC), and decided that the Governing Body should start to function in its new format on a trial basis from its 312th Session (November 2011).
2. The Working Party had emphasized that given the broad and significant nature of the reform proposals, further adjustments may be required. Consequently, the Governing Body decided that the implementation of the reform package would be reviewed by the Governing Body in 2013.
3. In preparing the agenda of the 319th Session (October 2013), the members of the Screening Group requested the Office to prepare, for that session, an information paper containing a list of issues/questions to guide the review, with a view to an in-depth analysis in March 2014. Informal consultations were held on the drafting of those issues/questions and, during the 320th Session of the Governing Body, the Working Party provided guidance to the Office on the elements of the reform package to be examined in the context of this review.
4. While the objective of the review is to consider the need for further improvements, it is worth noting that the overall positive impact of this reform has been emphasized by the three groups of constituents, in particular regarding the following points:
 - Full involvement of all Governing Body members in the deliberations and decision-making process in the context of a continuous plenary.
 - Stronger involvement of all parties in the agenda-setting process.

¹ GB.310/9/1.

- Enhanced transparency through regular informal consultations and follow-up to Governing Body decisions.
5. On the basis of the guiding principles and the four main pillars of the reform package adopted in March 2011 (as summarized in the table below), the present document will examine, under each of the four pillars: (1) the broad objectives of the reform; (2) the arrangements put in place since November 2011 to reach those objectives; and (3) further improvements to be considered.
6. The final section of this paper, “The way forward”, summarizes the proposals for further improvements discussed under each of the four pillars.

Guiding principles of the reform

- Within the framework of the ILO Constitution and a shared vision regarding the role and functions of the Governing Body, the reform package was guided by the following principles:
 - focusing on supervision and constituent-led governance of the Office while avoiding micromanagement;
 - ensuring full tripartite participation through the active engagement of all three groups;
 - giving priority to policy- and decision-making debates, including follow-up of Governing Body and Conference decisions;
 - alignment with the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization; and
 - maintaining appropriate space for high-level and strategic discussions.
- On this basis, the reform was composed of four main pillars:
 - an improved agenda-setting mechanism;
 - a new Governing Body meeting structure;
 - enhanced transparency and Office support to the tripartite constituents; and
 - better document presentation and time management.

I. An improved agenda-setting mechanism

7. The main objective of the improved agenda-setting mechanism is to “ensure an integrated and coherent approach which would avoid duplication or gaps in discussion, provide for transparency and tripartite inclusion and focus on policy- and decision-making debates”.² To this effect, the following arrangements have been put in place:
- (a) A tripartite Screening Group was established, composed of the Officers of the Governing Body, the Government group Chairperson, the regional coordinators and the secretariats of the Employers’ and Workers’ groups. The Screening Group meets after each Governing Body session (usually, the day after the closure of the session) to establish the draft agenda of the next session.

² GB.310/9/1, para. 8.

- (b) A Supplementary Report of the Director-General, currently prepared for the autumn session³ of the Governing Body, provides an overview of the action envisaged or already taken by the Office to give effect to the decisions adopted by the Governing Body at its previous sessions.
- (c) A list of the documents submitted to the Governing Body “for information only” is attached to the agenda and posted on the Governing Body web page. Those documents are divided into two categories: (1) the documents already approved by the Officers of the Governing Body by virtue of a delegation of authority by the Governing Body⁴ which are communicated to the Governing Body “for information only”; and (2) the documents submitted under the different Governing Body sections but which do not require a decision or a discussion from the Governing Body.
- (d) Side events, meetings or initiatives organized or supported by the Office not intrinsic to the business of the session but involving the participation of the Governing Body members have been limited to a minimum and are scheduled at lunch time or following the afternoon sittings of the Governing Body. These events are approved by the Screening Group or the Officers.
8. Under the Governing Body rules⁵ the agenda of the Governing Body is determined by the Screening Group. Where the Screening Group is unable to reach consensus on any matter, that matter shall be referred to the Officers. Any provisional agenda determined by the Screening Group may be updated by the Officers following consultations with the other members of the Screening Group for any urgent matters arising between Governing Body sessions, and a similar process is followed for any urgent matters arising during a Governing Body session.⁶
9. Since the Screening Group was first established in November 2011, the timing and procedure for preparing the provisional agenda have been adjusted at the request of the members of the Screening Group as follows:
- (a) A first informal list of items proposed for the next Governing Body session is established by the Office at least one week before the opening of each session of the Governing Body. This list takes into account the standing items, previous decisions adopted by the Governing Body, including issues arising from the Supplementary Report of the Director-General on the follow-up to previous decisions, and any specific requests made at previous meetings of the Screening Group. The list includes a brief explanation of each item and is distributed to the members of the Screening Group, in three languages, at the opening of each Governing Body session to allow the groups to hold consultations.

³ Until March 2013, this report was submitted to the March and November sessions of the Governing Body. In March 2013, the Governing Body endorsed the proposal for this report to be submitted only once a year to allow sufficient time for implementation between reporting periods and to enable the Office to provide more information on actions taken.

⁴ *Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*, Geneva, 2011, Standing Orders of the Governing Body, para. 2.3.

⁵ *Compendium of rules*, op. cit., Introductory Note, para. 28.

⁶ Introductory note, paras 32 and 34.

- (b) The list is updated at the end of the Governing Body session to reflect any decisions adopted during that session, and resubmitted to the Screening Group at its meeting held immediately after the close of the session.
 - (c) A revised version is prepared by the Office on the basis of the decisions adopted and requests made by the Screening Group and a tentative plan of work is established after an assessment of the time needed by each section and segment.
 - (d) This revised version of the proposed agenda is sent to the members of the Screening Group together with the tentative plan of work for final comments.
- 10.** The number of items⁷ placed on the agenda of the Governing Body has fallen from 69 in March 2011 (before the reform) to 41 in October 2013. This significant reduction has been achieved through the designation of some items as “for information only” and thus removed from the agenda, and from the new arrangements⁸ put in place to reduce duplication and overlap in agenda items. The number of documents produced for each session has generally followed the same trend, with a minor increase of the total number of agenda items’ documents since the budgetary session of March 2013.
- 11.** While the reform has contributed to a stronger sense of ownership of the agenda-setting process, the operation of the Screening Group is becoming more complex due to the large number of items proposed for the Governing Body agenda. There is scope for some further improvement, taking into consideration the following:
- (a) The composition of the Screening Group, as provided by the Standing Orders,⁹ should be maintained to ensure it is representative of all groups and not too large.
 - (b) Before the opening of each Governing Body session, the Office should provide the Screening Group with an annotated list of agenda proposals for the following Governing Body. The list should clearly indicate the rationale for each proposed item, any previous Governing Body decisions to which they refer and the estimated time needed for the discussion of each item.
 - (c) The Screening Group should meet in the week, rather than the day, following the Governing Body session to provide more time for preparation by the Office and the participants, particularly relating to items referred to it by the just concluded Governing Body session.
 - (d) The same degree of involvement should be ensured between the three groups and any change in the proposed list of items should be concurrently communicated to all members of the Screening Group.
 - (e) The agenda should be of a manageable size and the duplications of topics and debates in several sections and segments should be avoided. For example, where different aspects of an issue are being considered in multiple sections, consideration could be given to consolidating them into a single agenda item.
 - (f) More time could be allocated for policy debates on topical issues.

⁷ See Appendix III.

⁸ See below, under section II.

⁹ See Standing Orders of the Governing Body, para. 3.1.1.

- 12.** A number of issues have been raised in regard to further improvements and clarification of the agenda-setting process. In particular:
- (a) The extent to and the manner in which the Governing Body itself should give guidance on future agenda items.
 - (b) The need, or otherwise, for a better balance between the number of items allocated to the various sections/segments.
 - (c) The role of the Office in proposing agenda items, and in particular maintaining the institutional memory to ensure appropriate follow-up by the Governing Body of its or the International Labour Conference's (ILC) previous deliberations on issues.
 - (d) The process for consideration of the deferral of agenda items where the Governing Body has previously determined that an item be considered at its next session, but prior to the commencement of that session the Screening Group or the Officers form a view that the item should be deferred to a later session.
 - (e) The role of the Office in providing guidance to the Screening Group on the appropriate scheduling of Governing Body consideration of agenda items.
- 13.** It is noted that the proposal made by the Office in November 2013 to include in the agenda of each spring and autumn session of the 2014–15 biennium a discussion on two areas of critical importance (ACIs) ¹⁰ provides an example of the guidance the Office may provide to ensure that priority is given to policy- and decision-making debates through Governing Body discussion on the practical issues which should be taken into consideration in the framework of the ACIs. The discussion of ACIs at the Governing Body should deepen tripartite participation and provide guidance to the Office to ensure ACI activities reflect the realities of the world of work and respond effectively to the changing needs of constituents.
- 14.** Some comments made during the informal consultations were related to the impact of recent developments, such as the ILO internal reform, the ACIs and the future Strategic Policy Framework on the reform of the Governing Body and the extent to which these should be considered in any future or ad hoc adjustment to the Governing Body structure.

II. A new structure for the Governing Body

- 15.** The new structure of Governing Body meetings was guided by the following principles:
- The four strategic objectives should be adequately covered.
 - Flexibility would be required in the programming and handling of Governing Body work.
 - Grouping items under a limited number of themes to improve the organization of the agenda and the conduct of business.
- 16.** Since the introduction of the reforms, the Governing Body holds its sessions in continuous plenary rather than a number of concurrent committees. This allows the full involvement of all Governing Body members in the deliberations and decision-making process. To align the Governing Body structure with the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair

¹⁰ See the proposal contained in Appendix I.

Globalization, five sections have been established whose mandates correspond by and large to those of pre-reform Governing Body committees, with some expansion to encompass issues which were not adequately covered in the previous structure, as follows:

- The **Policy Development Section (POL)**, composed of four segments: (i) includes social dialogue and industrial relations issues – such as labour law, labour administration and labour inspection – in an enlarged Social Dialogue Segment; (ii) ensures that strategies and policies for technical cooperation are fully discussed in the Technical Cooperation Segment; and (iii) mainstreams the standards dimension of the above matters. A preliminary analysis of how the international labour standards have been mainstreamed since the reform was implemented in November 2011 in the issues discussed within the POL Section is displayed in tabular form in Appendix II. Further analysis is being undertaken on the extent to which the POL Section is able to monitor the ratification and implementation processes.
- The **Legal and International Labour Standards Section (LILS)** is composed of two segments: (i) legal issues; and (ii) international labour standards and human rights.
- The **Programme, Financial and Administrative Section (PFA)**, is composed of three main segments covering: (i) programme, financial and administrative questions; (ii) audit and oversight questions; and (iii) personnel questions, and has integrated into its agenda the work of two previous subcommittees on information technology and building issues.
- The **High-Level Section (HL)** meets “on a needs basis as a strategic policy segment focused on cross-cutting relevant topics or recent trends considered of strategic importance for the future of the Decent Work Agenda”¹¹ and provides a forum for global policy discussion and strategic guidance. It takes place either in its Working Party mode or as a Governing Body Strategic Policy Segment. The modalities of the Working Party¹² versus the Strategic Policy Segment are not always clear and well understood. In general, the Working Party, which is not a decision-making organ, is utilized as a forum to accommodate discussions involving external participants and requiring more flexible rules of debate. This format enables ministers of non-Governing Body member States and representatives of intergovernmental organizations to participate in the debate. In practice, the Working Party has continued to report to the INS Section, whereas the Strategic Policy Segment has adopted its decisions in line with the practice followed by the other segments of the Governing Body. Some concerns have been expressed with the systematic scheduling of the HL Section. The mandate of the HL Section may need to be clarified to ensure a better use of the different types of discussion provided.
- The **Institutional Section (INS)** considers the issues previously discussed in plenary, such as the Reports of the Director-General, the Officers, the Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA), the Regional Meetings, the Board of the Turin Centre, the constitutional obligations and urgent matters.

17. The following arrangements apply to the management of Governing Body business:

¹¹ Introductory note, para. 37.

¹² Introductory note, para. 41. The Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization is not a decision-making organ and meets as a committee of the whole to provide representatives of Governments that are not represented on the Governing Body with an opportunity to express their views.

- (a) Each section is composed of thematic segments in order to better organize the agenda.
- (b) The agenda and allocation of time are determined by the issues to be discussed.
- (c) There is no requirement to include items in all segments of a section in a given Governing Body, but all segments should be utilized no less than once a year, with the possible exception of the Strategic Policy Segment which convenes on a needs basis only.
- (d) The business to be conducted determines the time needed, and the indicative time allocated to each section or segment is communicated to the Screening Group to ensure, as far as possible, predictability for participants.
- (e) Each section takes its own decisions as the Governing Body proceeds. Any amendment to a proposed decision should be submitted in writing and, if possible, communicated to the Office 24 hours in advance to ensure that the amendment is translated and distributed to the three groups early enough to ensure proper consultations.
- (f) The Officers (the Chairperson and the Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons) remain the same throughout the entire Governing Body session and the Chairperson normally presides all the sittings.¹³ The Chairperson can however assign the functions necessary for chairing sections or segments to a regular or deputy Government member. In practice, this delegation applies to the POL Section and the LILS Section. To ensure the effective conduct of the Governing Body, the Chairperson may withdraw or vary the assignment at any time; for example, if the person to whom functions have been assigned is unable to attend the relevant segment. In accordance with the principle of autonomy of the groups, each group can also designate, among the titular or deputy members of that group, a spokesperson to express the views of that group in a particular section or segment.
- (g) Governing Body organs such as the CFA, the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization, and any ad hoc committees or working parties established by the Governing Body¹⁴ submit their reports to the INS Section for Governing Body consideration/decision.

18. The major issues raised regarding the structure of the Governing Body relate to:

- (a) appropriate planning and distribution between the sections/segments in order to ensure a governance-oriented approach and effective use of the respective mandates; and
- (b) the need to ensure a fluid running of the continuous plenary.

19. To achieve a stronger balance of Governing Body deliberations, it has been suggested that the Social Dialogue Segment should pay more attention to labour administration and labour law issues, and the Technical Cooperation Segment give more importance to strategic policy issues. The agendas of the Employment and Social Protection Segment and Multinational Enterprises Segment could also be strengthened to include more substantial items.

¹³ See Standing Orders of the Governing Body, para. 2.2.4.

¹⁴ Pursuant to para. 4.2.1 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body.

- 20.** It has also been suggested that the Governing Body agenda should ensure a more balanced coverage of the Decent Work Agenda components. To address this concern, the Office has examined the extent to which the POL Section has covered all elements of the Decent Work Agenda.
- 21.** Since the reform package was first implemented in November 2011, the agenda of Governing Body sessions has included strategic discussions and decisions on follow-up plans regarding matters arising out of the work of sessions of the International Labour Conference. These are all relevant topics that intertwine with the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda and include sustainable development, decent work and green jobs; employment and social protection in the new demographic context; youth employment; sustainable enterprises; labour administration and inspection as well as making decent work a reality for domestic workers. Discussions have also been held on the follow-up to the recurrent discussions on social security (2011), fundamental principles and rights at work (2012) and social dialogue (2013).¹⁵ Agenda items have also included preparations for recurrent discussions that will take place in 2014 on employment¹⁶ and in 2015 on labour protection¹⁷ providing an opportunity to seek constituents' views from an early stage.
- 22.** Other major Governing Body agenda items for the advancement of the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda include decent work in the post-2015 development agenda;¹⁸ and the prevention of occupational diseases¹⁹ (where the Governing Body confirmed that the prevention of occupational diseases is a central element of the Decent Work Agenda, and requested the Director-General to intensify the Office's work on this issue). During the discussions held on technical cooperation, constituents have underscored the important role of technical cooperation in the achievements on the Decent Work Agenda and the importance to better target extra-budgetary resources towards it.²⁰
- 23.** Appropriate space has also been given for high-level and strategic discussions which are of utmost importance for shaping the future of the Decent Work Agenda. The Strategic Policy Segment of the HL Section has focused on cross-cutting relevant topics and recent trends of strategic importance for the future of the Decent Work Agenda. The latter has included a substantive discussion on the global economic and employment situation and the policy options.²¹
- 24.** Further improvement is required to ensure the fluid running of the continuous plenary, when the discussion of an item proves to require more or less time than expected. Moreover, it has proved challenging to move from a situation where the time allowed for each committee was determined prior to the establishment of the agenda to a situation

¹⁵ 319th Session (October 2013), 316th Session (November 2012) and 312th Session (November 2011).

¹⁶ 317th Session (March 2013).

¹⁷ 320th Session (March 2014).

¹⁸ 319th Session (October 2013) and 316th Session (November 2012).

¹⁹ 317th Session (March 2013).

²⁰ See for example para. 460 (Africa group) of the Draft minutes of the 319th Session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office; para. 519 (Workers' group intervention) of the Minutes of the 317th Session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office.

²¹ 319th Session (October 2013).

where the agenda, scheduling of segments and the allocation of time are determined by the issues to be discussed.

25. The possible improvements could include the following:

- (a) A tentative consolidated programme, including an assessment of the time required for the discussion of each item, should be communicated at an early stage to the three groups to enable the delegates to adequately plan their attendance.
- (b) The three groups should be promptly consulted when changes to the programme or the order of business are anticipated.
- (c) Further cooperation is required to ensure the degree of flexibility required for a continuous plenary, both in terms of attendance and chairing responsibilities. The Government representatives identified to assume the chairing responsibilities of the various segments should make themselves available for the whole duration of the Governing Body plenary, and, in case of unexpected absence, the Chairperson of the Governing Body could resume the chairing of the relevant segments.
- (d) The process for submitting amendments to draft decision points, and the presentation of the proposed amendments could be improved. To allow timely translation, distribution, consultations and preparations, the amendments should be submitted in writing, if possible 24 hours in advance. Should amendments resulting from last-minute negotiations be submitted during the discussion, the Governing Body could suspend the adoption of the relevant decision point and revert to it when the amendments are ready to be displayed in the three languages on the screen.
- (e) According to the guiding principles of the reform, each section determines its own time-management procedures. Depending on the number of speakers registered, the chairperson of the sitting can decide to impose a time limit, in particular for individual statements. Any procedure set up in that regard – such as a time limit or a list of speakers – should be announced at the beginning of the sitting. A requirement for speakers to register in advance could facilitate the time-management process as it would allow the Clerk to establish a list of speakers for the Chairperson before the meeting starts. Moreover, if the number of speakers is very high, the Chairperson could propose a time limit on interventions. Some flexibility is however needed to preserve the capacity for Governing Body members to indicate at short notice their wish to intervene in the debate.
- (f) The starting time of the sittings should be strictly observed in order to optimize the time allotted to substantive debate. Statistics of the last Governing Body session show that the morning and afternoon sittings almost systematically started 20 minutes later than scheduled and that, on four instances, afternoon meetings started 30 minutes late. This represents approximately a whole day of lost time.

26. The Officers: The role and mandate of the Officers is of critical importance and should be enhanced. Their role in considering, in private session, sensitive issues before their submission to the Governing Body is a critical aspect of the “the proper conduct of the work of the Governing Body.”²²

27. Government members have requested that information submitted to the Officers’ meeting is communicated to the Governing Body members early enough to allow consultation with capital cities or within the groups. General information on matters to be discussed by the

²² See Standing Orders of the Governing Body, section 2.

Officers is now provided to Governing Body members, while preserving the prerogative of the Officers to formally consider the items during their private sitting. The Officers are consulted and take the final decision about the extent and nature of the information to be published. An earlier scheduling of the meeting of the Officers will also facilitate the timely distribution of the documents examined by the Officers.

- 28. Scheduling of the Governing Body:** The experience of the November 2011 session demonstrated that, in light of the time constraints between the November and March sessions, the Office encountered serious difficulties in the preparation of the documents requested for the March session of the Governing Body. Further to a survey of official meetings scheduled respectively in April and October 2012 and 2013 across the United Nations, it was decided that the 319th Session of the Governing Body be held from 17 to 31 October 2013. However, it appears that the early dates of the Governing Body in October 2013 also generated significant problems both for the constituents and for the Office in terms of preparatory work planning. Moreover, for scheduling reasons related to the dates of other major UN events,²³ the Governing Body decided that the autumn 2014 session be scheduled from 30 October to 13 November. Starting the Governing Body autumn sessions during the last week of October, which advances the autumn session by one week compared with the practice followed in 2010, 2011 and 2012, could be a suitable solution for future years.

III. Enhanced transparency and Office support to tripartite constituents

- 29.** In order to enhance active participation by all three groups, a consultation mechanism has been put in place to ensure that any consultation to be held or information to be submitted involves simultaneously the Secretaries of the Employers' and Workers' groups, the Government group Chairperson and the regional coordinators.²⁴ To facilitate the consultation process, an informal group – the Geneva-based Tripartite Consultative Group – composed of the representatives of the Employers' and Workers' secretariats, the Regional Coordinators, a representative of the Government group Chairperson and a representative of the Chairperson of the Governing Body has been established and is regularly consulted on issues related to the preparation of Governing Body sessions, the preparation of the discussions to be held at the International Labour Conference, and the preparation of technical meetings.
- 30.** Informal consultations with this group are systematically organized before each Governing Body session. The feedback provided by this consultative group on critical issues, such as the agenda of the Conference, the reform of the Governing Body or the International Labour Conference is reflected in the final version of the relevant paper to be submitted to the Governing Body. It is however emphasized that this group is not a decision-making organ and has no mandate to take a decision on behalf of the Governing Body. It simply provides an opportunity for the Office to consult with representatives of the groups and facilitates the exchange of information with, and between, the three groups of constituents and, in the case of the Government group, with all members of the Governing Body and with their capitals.

²³ As explained in document GB.317/INS/13/4.

²⁴ Introductory note, para. 19.

31. The effectiveness of this consultative mechanism is widely recognized and is also used during the Governing Body sessions for any information which has to be communicated to all members of the Governing Body in an expeditious manner.
32. During recent sessions of the Governing Body, the Chairperson of the Governing Body has also held regular consultations with the regional coordinators. This initiative has been highly appreciated and has contributed to a positive exchange of information and enhanced coordination within the Government group.
33. The Office, through the Official Relations and Meetings Branch (RELOFF), has taken a number of measures to improve support to the Government group as follows:
 - Nomination of a Government Support/Senior Relations Officer whose essential functions are to provide the regional coordinators and government representatives with information about ILO activities, rules and procedures, composition of governance bodies, preparations for the main official meetings, and to organize briefings or contacts for them with departments in the Office.
 - Establishment within RELOFF of a new Governing Organs and Government Support Team to enhance the servicing and management of the governance bodies and provide a better support to the three groups of constituents, and in particular the Government group, in the preparation of those sessions.
 - Briefings to the permanent missions based in Geneva are organized before every session of the Governing Body and the Conference to provide detailed information both on the substance of the issues to be discussed and the organization, programme, specific rules and procedures of those governance bodies.
 - A one-day orientation seminar was organized in 2013 for newly arrived diplomats in Geneva to enhance their understanding of the work and functioning of the Organization. In the light of the appreciation expressed by the participants, the seminar will be held annually.
 - Governing Body members are now able to better follow and participate in the discussion of amendments through the installation of new screens in the Governing Body room displaying the amendments in English, French and Spanish.
 - A consolidated order of business for the Governing Body sessions is now available on the web and updated on a regular basis. Screens displaying the programme and order of business of the morning and afternoon sittings have also been placed outside the Governing Body room.

IV. Documentation: Improved presentation and timely distribution

34. Improvements are continuing to be implemented to ensure that Governing Body papers are reader-friendly and decision-oriented; however it is generally considered that significant progress has been made in reducing the length and improving the presentation of Governing Body documents.
35. A new format has been developed for all Governing Body papers with a synoptic box on the front page indicating: (a) the relevant paragraphs for decision with an explanation of their content; (b) the need for follow-up (if any); (c) the financial implications (if any); (d) a short executive summary; and (e) the ILO author unit. Efforts have been made to

ensure that the follow-up action requested of the Office is indicated through clearer drafting of decision points, however it is recognised that there is still scope for improvement.

36. The number of copies of Governing Body documents reproduced before and during Governing Body sessions has significantly reduced over the last biennia. Since 2010, a reduction of 28 per cent of the A4 pages printed has been registered, and the in-session document production has been reduced by 40 per cent.
37. The vast majority of Governing Body documents are provided within the 15- or 30-day time limit determined by the Governing Body. Generally the only exceptions to this are documents reflecting the results of events, consultations and missions taking place just before the Governing Body session. When a delay is foreseen, a text is placed on the Web to explain the reasons for the delay.
38. The recent experience of October 2013 has demonstrated that, due to the heavy workload of the INS Section, it was not possible to post the draft minutes of the INS Section on the Web in the week following the closure of the session. Consideration should be given to extending the deadline for the posting of the INS Section draft minutes.

V. The way forward

39. The above analysis tends to demonstrate that the objectives of the Governing Body reform have been successfully met and guiding principles of the reform have been duly observed in arrangements put in place to give effect to the reform package. The practical implementation of the reform has however raised a number of challenges. Measures to address these, referred to in the above sections, can be broadly summarized as follows:

An improved agenda-setting mechanism

40. There is scope for some further improvement to the agenda-setting mechanism, taking into consideration the following:
 - (a) The composition of the Screening Group, as provided by the Standing Orders,²⁵ should be maintained to ensure it is representative of all groups and not too large.
 - (b) Before the opening of each Governing Body session, the Office should provide the Screening Group, with an annotated list of agenda proposals for the following Governing Body. The list should clearly indicate the rationale for each proposed item, any previous Governing Body decisions to which they refer and the estimated time needed for the discussion of each item.
 - (c) The Screening Group should meet in the week, rather than the day, following the Governing Body session to provide more time for preparation by the Office and the participants, particularly relating to items referred to it by the just concluded Governing Body session.
 - (d) The same degree of involvement should be ensured between the three groups and any change in the proposed list of items should be concurrently communicated to all members of the Screening Group.

²⁵ See Standing Orders of the Governing Body, para. 3.1.1.

- (e) The agenda should be of a manageable size and the duplications of topics and debates in several sections and segments should be avoided. For example, where different aspects of an issue are being considered in multiple sections, consideration could be given to consolidating them into a single agenda item.
- (f) More time could be allocated for policy debates on topical issues.
- (g) The extent to and the manner in which the Governing Body itself should give guidance on future agenda items.
- (h) The need, or otherwise, for a better balance between the number of items allocated to the various sections/segments.
- (i) The role of the Office in proposing agenda items, and in particular maintaining the institutional memory to ensure appropriate follow-up by the Governing Body of its or the International Labour Conference's (ILC), previous deliberations on issues.
- (j) The process for consideration of the deferral of agenda items where the Governing Body has previously determined that an item be considered at its next session, but prior to the commencement of that session the Screening Group or the Officers form a view that the item should be deferred to a later session.
- (k) The role of the Office in providing guidance to the Screening Group on the appropriate scheduling of Governing Body consideration of agenda items.

A new structure for the Governing Body

41. The major issues raised regarding the structure of the Governing Body relate to:

- (a) appropriate planning and distribution between the sections/segments in order to ensure a governance-oriented approach and effective use of the respective mandates; and
- (b) the need to ensure a fluid running of the continuous plenary.

42. To achieve a stronger balance of Governing Body deliberations, it has been suggested that the Social Dialogue Segment should pay more attention to labour administration and labour law issues, and the Technical Cooperation Segment give more importance to strategic policy issues. The agendas of the Employment and Social Protection Segment and Multinational Enterprises Segment could also be strengthened to include more substantial items.

43. The possible improvements to provide greater fluidity of the Governing Body could include the following:

- (a) A tentative consolidated programme, including an assessment of the time required for the discussion of each item, should be communicated at an early stage to the three groups to enable the delegates to adequately plan their attendance.
- (b) The three groups should be promptly consulted when changes to the programme or the order of business are anticipated.
- (c) Further cooperation is required to ensure the degree of flexibility required for a continuous plenary, both in terms of attendance and chairing responsibilities. The Government representatives identified to assume the chairing responsibilities of the

various segments should make themselves available for the whole duration of the Governing Body plenary, and, in case of unexpected absence, the Chairperson of the Governing Body could resume the chairing of the relevant segments.

- (d) The process for submitting amendments to draft decision points, and the presentation of the proposed amendments could be improved. To allow timely translation, distribution, consultations and preparations, the amendments should be submitted in writing, if possible 24 hours in advance. Should amendments resulting from last-minute negotiations be submitted during the discussion, the Governing Body could suspend the adoption of the relevant decision point and revert to it when the amendments are ready to be displayed in the three languages on the screen.
- (e) According to the guiding principles of the reform, each section determines its own time-management procedures. Depending on the number of speakers registered, the chairperson of the sitting can decide to impose a time limit, in particular for individual statements. Any procedure set up in that regard – such as a time limit or a list of speakers – should be announced at the beginning of the sitting. A requirement for speakers to register in advance could facilitate the time-management process as it would allow the Clerk to establish a list of speakers for the Chairperson before the meeting starts. Moreover, if the number of speakers is very high, the Chairperson could propose a time limit on interventions. Some flexibility is however needed to preserve the capacity for Governing Body members to indicate at short notice their wish to intervene in the debate.
- (f) The starting time of the sittings should be strictly observed in order to optimize the time allotted to substantive debate. Statistics of the last Governing Body session show that the morning and afternoon sittings almost systematically started 20 minutes later than scheduled and that, on four instances, afternoon meetings started 30 minutes late. This represents approximately a whole day of lost time.

Enhanced transparency and Office support to tripartite constituents

- 44.** The possible improvements to further enhance transparency and Office support include the following:
- (a) The same degree of involvement should be ensured for the three groups in the preparatory discussions for Governing Body debates.
 - (b) The consultation process through the so-called Geneva-based Tripartite Consultative Group – composed of the representatives of the Employers' and Workers' secretariats, the regional coordinators, a representative of the Government group Chairperson and a representative of the Chairperson of the Governing Body – should be enhanced. However, this consultative group is not a decision-making organ and has no mandate to take a decision on behalf of the Governing Body.
 - (c) Among the various measures taken by RELOFF to support the Government group, the recent initiative to organize a one-day orientation seminar in Geneva for diplomats newly arrived in Geneva should be continued.

Documentation: Improved presentation and timely distribution

45. The possible improvements to provide further improvement to documentation include the following:
- (a) There is still scope for improvement to ensure that Governing Body papers are reader-friendly and decision-oriented: for example, the efforts made to improve the drafting of the decision point should be pursued to ensure that the follow-up action requested from the Office is clearly indicated.
 - (b) Based on the results of regular surveys, continued efforts to move toward a paperless policy should be pursued.
 - (c) Due to the heavy workload of the INS Section (in particular during the last week) it was not possible in October 2013 to post the draft minutes of the INS Section on the web the week following the closure of the session. Consideration should be given to extending the deadline for the posting of the INS Section draft minutes.

Appendix I

Proposal to include discussion of the eight ACIs in the agenda of the Governing Body sessions during the biennium 2014–15¹

Background

The ILC approved a programme for the ILO for 2014–15 which placed emphasis on eight ACIs that should be prioritized in the work of the Organization² during the biennium. The eight agreed priorities are:

- promoting more and better jobs for inclusive growth;
- jobs and skills for youth;
- creating and extending social protection floors;
- productivity and working conditions in SMEs;
- decent work in the rural economy;
- formalization of the informal economy;
- strengthening workplace compliance through labour inspection; and
- protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work.

These ACIs respond to a consensus among constituents on the need for the Office to prioritize, focus, achieve critical mass and thereby have a greater impact in workplaces, countries and at global level. The ACIs will also require greater teamwork within the Office because of their multifaceted and multidisciplinary nature.

The ACIs are not additions to the 19 Strategic Outcomes of the current Strategic Policy Framework but rather draw on and integrate various outcomes in order to be more relevant to the needs and challenges faced by constituents. Work on the ACIs will bring together specialist inputs from disciplines and structures across the Office, both in Geneva and in the field, to address constituents' priority issues.

Organization of the work of the ACIs

The Office has organized “start-up task teams” composed of technical specialists from HQ and the regions. The objective of the start-up teams is to conduct a diagnostic exercise covering the knowledge base, portfolio of relevant policy advice and capacity-building tools and delivery mechanisms and to fill any gaps identified. This start-up phase will end in December 2013 or early 2014. During this preliminary phase, each team is also developing a preliminary proposal for the scope, focus and ambition of the full ACI teams that will work throughout the next biennium.

For the biennium, each ACI team will prepare a detailed workplan detailing how resources will be allocated and coordinated across the Office to deliver concrete results from both headquarters and the regions under all sources of funding, with clear accountabilities and time frames.

¹ From 320th (March 2014) to 325th (October 2015) Sessions of the Governing Body.

² ILO Programme and Budget for 2014–15.

Relevance of a Governing Body discussion

ACIs are of strategic importance to the work of the Organization and would greatly benefit from Governing Body discussions. This is also in line with the main orientations of the Governing body reform package³ and in particular:

- the importance of constituent-led governance of the Office;
- the need to ensure the active engagement of the tripartite groups; and
- giving more priority to policy- and decision-making debates in the Governing Body.

Proposal for documents and discussion in Governing Body sessions during the 2014–15 biennium

The Office therefore proposes that each spring and autumn sessions of the Governing Body during the biennium would address two of the eight ACIs.

The Office will prepare documents for the Governing Body that take stock of progress, results, challenges and proposed priorities for the future for the ACIs to be discussed at that session. The discussion and points for decision shall seek constituents' feedback and guidance for future work. Such discussions will deepen tripartite participation in the main areas of work of the Office and ensure that Office efforts are rooted in the realities of the world of work and respond effectively to the changing needs of constituents.

The papers will reflect the reality that there are substantial differences among the ACIs, both in terms of what is expected from the Office as well as how well prepared the Office is to meet these expectations. Some ACIs benefit from a substantive knowledge base and a robust portfolio of policy options. Other ACIs are not at such an advanced state, either because these are relatively new issues or because the Office's analytical work and policy advice had not received adequate attention in recent years or decades and needs to be significantly strengthened.

Depending on the point in the biennium that the Governing Body will address each ACI, the papers may also cover different stages of ACI development. For example, those ACIs covered in March 2014 will report on the outcome of the start-up phase, vision, goals to be set as well as results of preliminary interventions implemented early in the year. Papers presented later in the biennium will focus more on progress made and results achieved, lessons learned and future steps forward.

Proposed calendar and segments

In order to allow for additional agenda items to be discussed, the proposed calendar, as of October 2014, includes one ACI per segment.

³ See GB.310/WP/GBC/1(Rev.2), para. 5.

Session	ACI	Segment
March 2014	Jobs and skills for youth Productivity and working conditions in SMEs	Employment and Social Protection Employment and Social Protection
October 2014	More and better jobs for inclusive growth Strengthening workplace compliance through labour inspection	Employment and Social Protection Social Dialogue
March 2015	Decent work in the rural economy Formalization of the informal economy	Social Dialogue Employment and Social Protection
October 2015	Creating and extending social protection floors Protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work	Employment and Social Protection International Labour Standards and Human Rights

Appendix II

Mainstreaming international labour standards (ILS) into the work of the Policy Development Section (POL)

Governing Body session	POL Section agenda and prima facie reference to ILS
312th Session (November 2011)	<p>Employment and Social Protection Segment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Green jobs, decent work and sustainable development (limited reference to ILS) 2. Follow-up to the discussion on social security at the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference (2011): Plan of action (reference to ILS) 3. Follow-up to the conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2007 (reference to ILS) 4. Work–life balance (limited reference to ILS) <p>Social Dialogue Segment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Global Dialogue Forums: Lessons learned (no reference to ILS) 6. Labour administration and labour inspection: Follow-up to the general discussion at the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference (reference to ILS) 7. Decent work in the global food supply chain: A sectoral approach (limited reference to ILS) 8. Other questions: Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral and technical meetings (limited reference to ILS) <p>Technical Cooperation Segment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Capacity development for constituents in Decent Work Country Programmes and technical cooperation: Follow-up (limited reference to ILS) 10. ILO technical cooperation and Decent Work Country Programmes, 2009–10 (no reference to ILS) 11. Enhanced programme of technical cooperation for the occupied Arab territories (no reference to ILS) 12. Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Technical cooperation priorities and action plans regarding the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation (reference to ILS) <p>Multinational Enterprises Segment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Update on Strategic Priorities 2010–11 including on promotion of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy in collaboration with intergovernmental and other international organizations (limited reference to ILS)
313th Session (March 2012)	<p>Employment and Social Protection Segment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow-up to the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Working-time Arrangements (Geneva, 17–21 October 2011) (reference to ILS) 2. Follow-up to the HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200) (reference to ILS) 3. Follow-up on the implementation of the ILO–G20 Training Strategy (reference to ILS)

Social Dialogue Segment

4. Global Dialogue Forums and mandate of sectoral meetings (no reference to ILS)
5. Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral and technical meetings (no reference to ILS)
6. Other questions: Follow-up to the resolution concerning tonnage measurement and accommodation (oral report)

Technical Cooperation Segment

7. South–South and Triangular Cooperation: The way forward (no reference to ILS)
8. Regional perspectives on technical cooperation: The African region (reference to ILS)

Multinational Enterprises Segment

9. Report of the Tripartite Ad Hoc Working Group on the Follow-up Mechanism of the MNE Declaration (limited reference to ILS)

316th Session (November 2012)**Employment and Social Protection Segment**

1. Labour migration (reference to ILS)
2. Disability inclusion (reference to ILS)
3. Discussion about the effect given to the decision adopted in November 2011 on the item entitled Green jobs, decent work and sustainable development, with a focus on the implication for the ILO's programme of work of the outcome of the UNCSD 2012 (Rio +20) (no reference to ILS)

Social Dialogue Segment

4. Sectoral activities programme 2012–13 (limited reference to ILS)

Technical Cooperation Segment

5. South–South and Triangular Cooperation: The way forward – Revised indicators for the strategy adopted in March 2012 (no reference to ILS)
6. Public–private partnerships: The way forward (reference to ILS)
7. Enhanced programme of technical cooperation for the occupied Arab territories (no reference to ILS)
8. Implementation of the tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy in Colombia (reference to ILS)

317th Session (March 2013)**Employment and Social Protection Segment**

1. Recurrent discussion report on employment (2014) (reference to ILS)
2. Trade and employment (no reference to ILS)
3. Prevention of occupational diseases (limited reference to ILS)

Social Dialogue Segment

4. Sectoral activities programme 2012–13
 - Joint ILO–UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART): Report of the 11th Session (2012), to be submitted to the International Labour Conference (reference to ILS)
5. Sectoral activities programme: Proposals for 2014–15 (limited reference to ILS)

Technical Cooperation Segment

6. Technical cooperation approaches and capacity development of constituents (limited reference to ILS)
7. Regional perspectives on technical cooperation: Asia and the Pacific (reference to ILS)

Multinational Enterprises Segment

8. Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration): Operational plan for promotional activities and proposal for the new survey (reference to ILS)

319th Session (October 2013)**Employment and Social Protection Segment**

1. Follow-up to the resolution concerning efforts to make decent work a reality for domestic workers worldwide: Progress report (reference to ILS)
2. Oral report on the outcome of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development (October 2013) (reference to ILS)

Social Dialogue Segment

3. Follow-up to the resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on social dialogue (reference to ILS)
4. Sectoral activities programme 2012–13 and 2014–15 (limited reference to ILS)

Technical Cooperation Segment

5. Regional perspectives on technical cooperation: Latin America and the Caribbean (reference to ILS)
6. Enhanced programme of technical cooperation for the occupied Arab territories (limited reference to ILS)
7. ILO's technical cooperation programme: Trends and perspectives since 2000 (limited reference to ILS)

320th Session (March 2014)**Employment and Social Protection Segment**

3. Follow-up to the Tripartite Technical Meeting on Labour Migration (Geneva, 4–8 November 2013) (reference to ILS)

Appendix III

Overview of Governing Body agenda volume since 2011

310th Session (March 2011)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
GB agenda items	20
GB agenda items' documents	32
GB agenda items' documents and information documents	35
PFA agenda items	17
PFA agenda items' documents	27
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	27
PFA/BS agenda items	3
PFA/BS agenda items' documents	3
PFA/BS agenda items' documents and information documents	3
LILS agenda items	6
LILS agenda items' documents	6
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	6
MNE agenda items	4
MNE agenda items' documents	1
MNE agenda items' documents and information documents	1
ESP agenda items	4
ESP agenda items' documents	2
ESP agenda items' documents and information documents	2
STM agenda items	7
STM agenda items' documents	12
STM agenda items' documents and information documents	12
TC agenda items	5
TC agenda items' documents	3
TC agenda items' documents and information documents	3
WP/SDG agenda items	2
WP/SDG agenda items' documents	4
WP/SDG agenda items' documents and information documents	4
WP/GBC agenda items	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	1
Total agenda items	69
Total agenda items' documents	91
Total documents (including documents for information)	94

312th Session (November 2011)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
INS agenda items	17
INS agenda items' documents	28
INS agenda items' documents and information documents	30
POL agenda items	13
POL agenda items' documents	13
POL agenda items' documents and information documents	14
LILS agenda items	7
LILS agenda items' documents	6
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	8
PFA agenda items	15
PFA agenda items' documents	16
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	19
HL agenda items	2
HL agenda items' documents	3
HL agenda items' documents and information documents	3
WP/GBC agenda items	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	1
Total agenda items	55
Total agenda items' documents	67
Total documents (including documents for information)	78

313th Session (March 2012)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
INS agenda items	15
INS agenda items' documents	25
INS agenda items' documents and information documents	30
POL agenda items	9
POL agenda items' documents	9
POL agenda items' documents and information documents	9
LILS agenda items	7
LILS agenda items' documents	7
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	8
PFA agenda items	10
PFA agenda items' documents	12
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	22
HL agenda items	2
HL agenda items' documents	3
HL agenda items' documents and information documents	3

Agenda	Number of items/documents
WP/GBC agenda items	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	1
Total agenda items	44
Total agenda items' documents	57
Total documents (including documents for information)	76

316th Session (November 2012)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
INS agenda items	16
INS agenda items' documents	33
INS agenda items' documents and information documents	34
POL agenda items	8
POL agenda items' documents	9
POL agenda items' documents and information documents	11
LILS agenda items	3
LILS agenda items' documents	3
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	5
PFA agenda items	9
PFA agenda items' documents	11
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	13
HL agenda items	1
HL agenda items' documents	2
HL agenda items' documents and information documents	2
WP/GBC agenda items	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	1
Total agenda items	38
Total agenda items' documents	59
Total documents (including documents for information)	68

317th Session (March 2013)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
INS agenda items	14
INS agenda items' documents	28
INS agenda items' documents and information documents	31
POL agenda items	8
POL agenda items' documents	9
POL agenda items' documents and information documents	10
LILS agenda items	3

Agenda	Number of items/documents
LILS agenda items' documents	4
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	4
PFA agenda items	13
PFA agenda items' documents	13
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	19
HL agenda items	2
HL agenda items' documents	3
HL agenda items' documents and information documents	3
WP/GBC agenda items	2
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	1
Total agenda items	42
Total agenda items' documents	58
Total documents (including documents for information)	71

319th Session (October 2013)

Agenda	Number of items/documents
INS agenda items	16
INS agenda items' documents	35
INS agenda items' documents and information documents	38
POL agenda items	7
POL agenda items' documents	8
POL agenda items' documents and information documents	10
LILS agenda items	5
LILS agenda items' documents	5
LILS agenda items' documents and information documents	6
PFA agenda items	11
PFA agenda items' documents	13
PFA agenda items' documents and information documents	16
HL agenda items	1
HL agenda items' documents	2
HL agenda items' documents and information documents	2
WP/GBC agenda items	1
WP/GBC agenda items' documents	2
WP/GBC agenda items' documents and information documents	3
Total agenda items	41
Total agenda items' documents	65
Total documents (including documents for information)	77

Graphical summary