



## Governing Body

320th Session, Geneva, 13–27 March 2014

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Institutional Section

INS

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Date: 20 March 2014

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### FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Report of the Director-General

### *Addendum*

### Obituary

#### Mr Marc Blondel

1. The Director-General announces with deep regret the death, on 16 March 2014, of Mr Marc Blondel, former Worker member of the Governing Body.
2. Born in Courbevoie, near Paris, on 2 May 1938, Marc Blondel was the son of a soldier and the grandson of a miner. He found his vocation as a trade unionist at a very early age. As a law student he was a member of the National Union of Students of France (UNEF), and he joined the trade union *Force ouvrière* (FO) as soon as he started working, when he was only 20 years old. In 1960, he became Secretary of the Trade Union of Social Welfare Agencies of the Paris Region and then an official of the Union of Employees of the Paris Region. An exceptional defender of people's rights with an ability to mobilize crowds, he quickly came to prominence in the French trade union landscape. In 1971, he became Permanent Secretary of the Federation of Employees and Managers and rose to the position of General Secretary in 1974. In 1980, he was appointed to the board of *Force ouvrière* and, in 1989, he became its General Secretary. He was re-elected to this position by an overwhelming majority in 1992, again in 1996, and lastly for a final term of office in 2000. He led one of his country's great trade union organizations for 15 years and left his indelible mark on it.
3. A strong advocate of social dialogue, Marc Blondel was a member of the Workers' group at the ILO Governing Body from 1981 to 1993, and again from 1996 to 2008. From 1998, he was also the Worker spokesperson on the former Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. Between 1981 and 2008, he attended numerous sessions of the International Labour Conference, first as a technical adviser and then, from 1994, as a Workers' delegate. He was Worker Vice-President of the 96th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2007. His interventions at sessions of the Governing Body will remain engraved in the memory of those who were fortunate enough to work alongside him. Charismatic, provocative, polemic, even maverick at times, Marc Blondel always

placed his art at the service of the workers. He was a relentless and resolute negotiator, capable of disarming his audience, but he was also a listener and always open to discussion. With Marc Blondel's death, the French and international trade union movement has lost one of its great figures.

**Draft decision**

4. *The Governing Body will no doubt wish to invite the Director-General to convey its condolences to Mr Blondel's family and to the General Secretary of Force ouvrière.*