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Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization

First item on the agenda

Reform of the United Nations: Implications for the ILO ([GB.332/HL/1](#))

1. *The Chairperson* welcomed Ms Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) and Chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). He recalled that intense negotiations were currently under way in New York with a view to the adoption by the UN General Assembly later in 2018 of a resolution on the reform of the UN development system, which would have implications for the ILO. The high-level dialogue at the ILO was extremely timely, as it was most likely the only chance constituents would have to examine the UN Secretary-General's proposals for reform – as set out in his December 2017 report on repositioning the UN development system – from a world-of-work perspective and share their views with the Deputy Secretary-General before the adoption of the resolution, which would then come back to the Governing Body for a decision. His report of the proceedings would be presented to the Governing Body as document GB.332/INS/13, a tripartite document that he hoped would provide useful feedback from the ILO's constituents to the UN reform negotiations in New York. The Office would continue to monitor those negotiations and provide information and assistance where requested by member States.
2. *The Director-General* warmly welcomed Ms Mohammed and said that the ILO was extremely encouraged by the opportunity to hold a dialogue with her on the Secretary-General's proposals on the reform of the UN development system. The ILO recognized the strong momentum for UN reform among Member States and subscribed wholeheartedly to the objective of delivering more integrated, efficient and accountable support to them in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). The ILO must take maximum advantage of the discussion in order to advance its understanding and thinking on UN reform and pave the way for the Governing Body to take decisions on the forthcoming General Assembly resolution. The ILO had been a pioneer in aligning its activities to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda, and the Programme and Budget for 2018–19 explicitly and concretely linked the ILO's own policy outcomes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He trusted that the dialogue would inform and reinforce that commitment and help the ILO focus more specifically on what UN reform would mean for it as a specialized agency with tripartite constituents, governance structures, a strong normative character and constitutionally mandated responsibilities.
3. *The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations* said that she appreciated the opportunity to hold a dialogue with the ILO on the reform of the UN development system, and was eager to hear its feedback, ideas and concerns. As part of the UN system, the ILO had demonstrated its commitment to the whole-of-system approach. Noting that the United Nations respected the mandates of the specialized agencies, and that its work to remain loyal to those mandates was key to the reform's success, she observed that the ILO's engagement towards the SDGs in recent years had meant that its mandate was aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

4. Reform of the UN development system was a social, economic and environmental response to development that must be fit for purpose. It stood on pillars of governance, strong institutions and partnerships. The United Nations could learn from the ILO's example in respect of the latter.
5. She recalled that, further to General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for the development of the UN system, the Secretary-General had submitted a first report in June 2017 on the repositioning of the UN development system. In the second half of 2017, he had put in place an ambitious consultation involving Member States, UN entities and other stakeholders to develop a more robust and realistic response on how to implement the SDGs. Although most stakeholders had believed that they were implementing the SDGs, as they could link their mandate or initiatives to an SDG target, they were in fact implementing the Millennium Development Goals.
6. The Secretary-General's second report, submitted in December 2017, contained proposals in seven key areas, including the Resident Coordinator system and UN Country Teams. Governments were the primary recipients of investments in those areas, but workers, employers and other partners were not excluded. Another key area was regional approaches, including the recognition that one size did not fit all. It was important to consider how the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) could be more responsive and relevant in that respect; accordingly, it was proposed that ECOSOC's operational activities for the development segment should become a platform for accountability and transparency, and also be responsive to the needs of partners at the country level.
7. Another key area was the funding compact between the UN development system and Member States, which would reduce fragmentation and increase coherency and predictability in the funding that came to the development system. Core funding should be doubled over time, and the earmarking of non-core funding should be reduced. There should be a predictable and fully owned mode of paying for the Resident Coordinator system, as it linked the UNDG to events at the country level. Partnerships should be redefined so that the United Nations could leverage, convene and facilitate better results at the country level.
8. Concerning the next steps, negotiations and consultations would continue into mid-April. A transition team would be in place for the implementation of the reforms and would include representatives of specialized agencies.
9. The Secretary-General had restructured the UNDG, appointing her as Chair. The Vice-Chair – the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – was responsible for the coordination of UNDG operations. Results groups took up various issues on the normative and the operational aspects of policy-making, with respect to human rights, labour issues, health and education. Normative aspects were not restricted to governance, as was feared by many member States.
10. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) would be key to governments and all other stakeholders in implementing the 2030 Agenda.
11. There had been broad participation in the developments over the past four years, and the United Nations would like to think that it could be challenged to talk about how it had taken everyone with them on that journey, leaving no one behind, in all aspects related to implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
12. *The Employer spokesperson* said that his group welcomed the Secretary-General's bold initiative to reform the UN development system with a view to improving its accountability, efficiency and coherence. The ILO should be equally bold in highlighting the unique nature

of the Organization when considering the implications of the reform and whether or how the ILO could come on board. The Office's document had facilitated understanding of the reform proposals, but the Employers would have liked a more detailed analysis of the potential implications for the ILO and its constituents. The proposed reform package offered exciting opportunities, including the possibility for greater outreach, supported by the convening power of the UN. It also offered an opportunity to showcase the value of a tripartite model to a wider audience, and would allow the United Nations to gain perspective on the real economy through organizations of employers and workers. At the country level, additional avenues might be made available to make the voices of labour administrations, employers and workers heard. Furthermore, it offered an opportunity to improve the system's coherence and address long-standing concerns on fragmentation and duplication of efforts.

13. In terms of challenges, the work of the Office and the Director-General in helping to develop the reform package was appreciated, but the ILO needed to be more proactive in shaping the reform to ensure that its outcome enhanced its role and relevance, and did not reduce it. His group welcomed the idea of realigning the UN development system in order to implement the 2030 Agenda, which should provide a coordinated operational and accountability framework with greater coherence. Such alignment also offered the potential for funding and financing.
14. One key question was how the ILO's tripartite structure could be accommodated in the reform process given that the social partners had governance and decision-making power. The ILO's special mandate must not be inadvertently compromised, and collective results should not dilute the role of individual agencies.
15. A new generation of UN Country Teams that would play a stronger role in UNDAFs could improve coherence and coordination in the UN development agenda at the national level, but the outcome for the ILO would depend on how Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) priorities were reflected in the UNDAFs. The degree of alignment between DWCPs and UNDAFs should be carefully considered. The ILO would need space to carry out the part of its mandate that fell outside the scope of the UNDAF and to work with the social partners and undertake normative and supervisory activities. DWCPs should be strengthened to continuously improve quality and ownership by constituents, as well as contribute to national development agendas. Noting that the UNDAFs would be designed in a more participatory manner, he hoped that they would allow the social partners to play a representative role and be a positive force in national development. He called on the Office to initiate a targeted capacity-development programme for constituents to support that role.
16. With regard to the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system, it was essential to ensure that Resident Coordinators had a profound understanding of the specific mandates and functions of the various agencies. Interaction between Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams would provide the opportunity to bring the social partners into the dialogue, giving them more opportunity to influence the development agenda. However, more needed to be done to promote the role of the social partners in the work of other UN agencies. Noting that the composition of UN Country Teams would depend on the specific expertise required to respond to country needs and priorities, he said that the interaction between UNDAFs and DWCPs would be critical in determining the ILO's role in that context.
17. Several elements of the Secretary-General's report were of concern to the Employers. Partnerships to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the private sector should take into account the existing voices of business and employers' organizations. The role of the UN Office for Partnerships as the UN's global gateway for partnerships needed to be clarified in relation to interaction with public and private donors, and system-wide coordination. He asked what role was envisaged for the UN Global Compact – which was

not a business organization, and as such did not represent the voice of businesses – in managing partnerships with the private sector, and how UN Country Teams would work with representative business organizations to plan and implement UNDAFs. Care should be taken to ensure that streamlining the system-wide approach to partnerships would not impose additional requirements or contradict the ILO’s policy on public–private partnerships. It would be helpful if UN policies did not exclude partnerships with companies that were operating legally.

18. Finally, the Employers supported the results-oriented vision of the Secretary-General’s report and the proposed commitment to improve the quality of earmarked funding. However, the full financial implications of the reform would need to be clarified, including how short-term increases would translate into long-term savings. His group looked forward to discussing the forthcoming UN resolution at an upcoming Governing Body session.
19. *The Worker spokesperson*, noting that her group fully endorsed the 2030 Agenda, said that any reform process should recognize and respect: the unique nature of the ILO, defined by its tripartite governance structure and normative mandate, including its supervisory system; the need for the continuation of specific funding and programmes on labour rights and the world of work, including development cooperation; and the ability of the ILO to exercise its mandate through its country and regional offices. Expressing concern about the impact of reform on the tripartite governance and normative mandate of the ILO, she asked for clarification of how each specialized agency’s normative mandate would be recognized in the decision-making process. Noting that ILO country offices and development cooperation programmes were often established on the basis of tripartite decisions and could be closely linked to ILO supervisory mechanisms, she asked what measures would be taken to ensure that the ILO could continue to exercise its normative mandate in view of the streamlining of UN country offices and alignment with UNDAFs.
20. Given the lack of clarity on trade unions’ involvement in UNDAFs and the absence of a reference to tripartite decision-making with regard to priority areas for UN Country Teams, she asked what steps Resident Coordinators were expected to take to fully recognize and support the involvement of workers’ organizations in such decisions. Trade unions should be considered a specific stakeholder, apart from civil society, and consulted separately. She asked the Deputy Secretary-General to provide examples of tripartite consultations on those issues at the national level and to inform the Governing Body how DWCPs would retain their tripartite character and content and how consistency with UNDAFs would be secured.
21. Further information was needed on the budgetary implications of having common business services and back-office functions. She shared the concerns expressed in document GB.332/HL/1 about the impact on the ILO’s work of the proposal to cluster in-country staff by UNDAF results groups, rather than by agency. She asked what would be done to ensure that ILO constituents – and trade unions in particular – had access to common premises and to ensure that the ILO would have the capacity to deliver on its activities – especially its normative activities.
22. Details should also be provided of the steps foreseen to ensure that Resident Coordinators had a full understanding of the ILO’s mandate and governance structure and industrial relations in the world of work. Plans for double reporting lines for staff members of UN Country Teams gave rise to concerns about the consequences of such duplication for the ILO’s independence and accountability. Areas of decent work that were covered by the 2030 Agenda were a source of potentially significant overlap. Clarification should be provided of how those conflicts would be handled.

23. It was a cause of concern that the partnerships for the 2030 Agenda were geared towards business and did not consider the importance of tripartite constituents at the country level as partners. The International Chamber of Commerce had been granted observer status, yet no trade union or civil society organization enjoyed such status. The ILO required public-private partnerships to conform to its principles and values, and private companies that wished to fund ILO activities to have a decent labour record. She asked how respect for those principles would be ensured in the partnerships being promoted by the UN. With respect to partnerships with the international financial institutions, in view of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) giving policy advice to weaken labour legislation and social protection in contrast to the universal social protection promoted by ILO standards, she asked what would be done to ensure that the rights-based approach at the core of the 2030 Agenda and the ILO's mandate would be preserved. The Global Compact was not an adequate or suitable standard for engagement with the private sector and its revision should include oversight by the Governing Body, as the processes involved related to areas of the ILO's mandate. Additional mechanisms for the oversight of private sector partnerships should also be considered. The Workers' group strongly opposed giving the Global Compact a central role in a UN global gateway for partnerships.
24. She asked whether it was feasible to include the proposal that each agency should allocate 15 per cent of non-core funding to joint activities, which would need to be included in the ILO's funding agreements with its partners. Furthermore, she wished to know whether UN Member States had indicated their readiness to increase the resources provided to individual agencies by 30 per cent over the next five years, as proposed.
25. The ILO should be strengthened, rather than weakened, by UN reform. The Organization's mandate was founded on the recognition that universal and lasting peace could be achieved only on the basis of social justice. That should be taken into account and the special contribution that the ILO could make to the peace and security architecture of the United Nations should be recognized. While better cohesion within the UN system would be beneficial, the special place of the ILO within that system should be maintained.
26. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Rwanda said that UN reform would bring challenges and opportunities for the ILO. The Office should ensure that constituents' positions were taken on board in reform processes and that the impact of reform on the ILO's normative functions and operational activities was addressed in order to provide greater efficiency, coherence and support for countries in delivering the 2030 Agenda. The role of Resident Coordinators should be set out clearly in order to reduce the workload for national partners. The guiding principle of the QCPR resolution should be strictly applied in order to enhance UN system coherence, efficiency and effectiveness on national development challenges. The proposed funding compact would build trust and transparency. Nonetheless, clear guidance was needed on roles and responsibilities with regard to the UN Office for Partnerships and the Resident Coordinators vis-à-vis other partners, including international financial institutions. Action towards a more cohesive approach to helping Country Teams deliver on the ground was appreciated, especially for pilot countries that were "Delivering as One". The UN development system should pursue integrated policy and normative support, capacity development and leveraging of partnership and support for South-South and triangular cooperation. The ILO's readiness for a review of its progress by research and training institutions with a focus on national capacity development for the SDGs was welcome. Clarifying the role of UNDP and separating the Resident Coordinator's functions from the UNDP representative's functions would advance the division of labour, integrate support and maximize results. Further synergies could be achieved with respect to the role of DWCP national coordinators and their connections with national constituents. The development of policies and strategies for transparent and results-oriented management would be key to supporting effective country evaluations and greater objectivity in the decision-making process. The Secretary-General

should improve reform processes in collaboration with the ILO and other specialized agencies, while paying attention to the funding of operational activities for development to enable countries to achieve the SDGs.

27. He asked how strategy and results-oriented management would increase the focus on delivering upstream support in the national planning implementation processes, capacity development, high-quality advice and technical expertise based on best practices. He also asked how current UN reform would ensure that the ILO fully discharged its constitutional mandate at the global, regional and country levels and which of the components of the “Delivering as One” approach was the most successful. Details should be provided of the challenges for the other components.
28. *Speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG)*, a Government representative of Australia noted that the reform agenda had many benefits for the ILO, in particular better promotion and implementation of the Decent Work Agenda, which would help the ILO reach a wider audience and embed its normative agenda. She requested more details of how the proposed development framework and Resident Coordinator system would take into account the ILO’s unique tripartite structure. While a broader donor base would improve accountability and sustainability, financing reforms needed to be sustainable for all agencies involved. More information would be appreciated on the funding compact, on the impact of reforms at the regional and country levels, and on opportunities to enhance development cooperation across the UN.
29. *Speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC)*, a Government representative of Paraguay expressed support for the reform process and commended the ILO for participating in the relevant high-level consultations, including those of the High-Level Committee on Management and the UNDG. Better understanding of the linkages between the SDGs would maximize activities in the field. He welcomed efforts to improve the coherence of the UN development system and asked: to what extent the ILO would be able to provide technical assistance to constituents; how the ILO’s regional structures would change; how the changes to the UN Office for Partnerships would affect existing partnerships that promoted the Decent Work Agenda; whether the new funding compact would increase or decrease funding for decent work activities; how national tripartite constituents would be incorporated into work processes under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator; how priorities for DWCPs would be identified and incorporated into UNDAFs; how the ILO would be able to increase non-core resources allocated to joint activities; and whether there would be any change in the relationship between the Governing Body and ECOSOC in the context of the 1946 Agreement between the United Nations and the ILO. The Chairperson’s report should reflect the views expressed by constituents and form the basis of the Director-General’s input to future discussions.
30. *Speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC)*, a Government representative of France called on the Office to encourage constructive dialogue on UN reform within the Governing Body and with the other specialized agencies, funds and programmes. IMEC supported the 2030 Agenda as a framework for inclusive growth and the overall objective of improving system coherence and addressing concerns about the fragmentation and duplication of efforts, particularly at the country level. The ILO should participate actively in discussions on UN reform to ensure that the specific nature of the Organization was taken into account. Tripartism should play a significant role in UNDAFs, in line with the calls of the 2030 Agenda for multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Deputy Secretary-General should explain the role that tripartism would play in UN reform and how the ILO’s experience of tripartite discussions would be taken into account. In view of recognized gaps and overlaps in UN activity on the SDGs, she asked how the ILO was expected to contribute to reducing the duplication of work. Information would be appreciated on how the ILO and the Resident Coordinators could ensure the observance,

promotion and implementation of international labour standards within UN Country Teams and UNDAFs.

31. *Speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States*, a representative of the Delegation of the European Union to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia. The EU and its Member States fully supported the guiding principles of the reform agenda and the use of a single strategic document – the UNDAF – to guide UN development activities at the country level. Priorities needed to be set and tasks divided according to each organization’s competencies and comparative advantages. Three aspects of the ILO’s mandate should be taken into account: its tripartite structure, its normative activity and its supervisory system. The latter two aspects were not limited to countries with UNDAFs. He wished to know what would be done to ensure that, where an UNDAF was in place, UN action took into account both operational and normative activities. In view of the proposed consultations with the social partners when drafting UNDAFs and the ILO’s experience in tripartism, he asked the Deputy Secretary-General for her view on how best to ensure that those consultations, which required careful attention, were institutionally anchored.
32. The EU and its Member States were in favour of an independent and empowered Resident Coordinator; double reporting could be complex but would provide an opportunity for the ILO to reach a wider and influential audience. The proposed funding compact should promote collaboration between development system entities through inter-agency funding mechanisms and thematic and pooled funding, and seek to improve sustainability by attracting a broader pool of donors and encompassing all means of implementation and partnerships. He wished to know what would be done to ensure that the funding compact paid due attention to the specific requirements of specialized agencies, particularly the ILO as a tripartite organization. Many of the tools and procedures highlighted in the report were already used by UN development actors. Those mechanisms should be used to ensure that the United Nations responded to individual country needs in a more integrated, effective and complementary manner.
33. *Speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*, a Government representative of Thailand expressed the hope that reform of the UN development system would help the ILO to advance the Decent Work Agenda to achieve the SDGs. The ILO’s experience of developing fundamental principles and rights at work offered a unique tripartite approach to the wider development system. ASEAN therefore supported the establishment of links between DWCPs and UNDAFs. He expressed support for the proposal to extend partnerships for development, including partnerships with the private sector and with local communities and civil society. ASEAN would continue to support efforts to reform the United Nations and urged the ILO to continue its involvement in the reform process to help the United Nations focus more on people than process.
34. *The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General* said that the Governing Body’s comments would facilitate the implementation of the planned reforms. She recognized the need to take different country contexts into account, and the UN system would benefit from the unique experience and tripartite composition of the ILO. The role of the Resident Coordinator would be to represent the UN system on the ground, to respond to country priorities and to bring together the views of all the relevant stakeholders towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The role would be separate from, but closely linked to, the UNDP coordination function, and would be connected to specialized agencies and the UN Country Team. The skill and capacity profile of the Resident Coordinator would be updated accordingly. The new dual reporting line to the Secretary-General through the Deputy Secretary-General would ensure accountability and coherence, while respecting mandates.

Responsibilities would be allocated according to priorities to ensure coherence and prevent duplication burdening the UN system or Member States.

35. The redesign of the UNDAF model would involve the UN agencies in a representative and inclusive instrument, which would include the tripartite input of the ILO. The voice of all relevant actors must be heard to ensure that UNDAFs were representative of the 2030 Agenda; UNDAFs would not simply be carved up to allocate separate elements to each UN agency. The ILO's experience in developing country-specific programmes including the different constituencies would be valuable in that regard. DWCPs would be incorporated into UNDAFs, as a reflection of the priorities of government and other stakeholders.
36. The UN Global Compact acted as a platform that encouraged businesses to agree with a set of sustainability principles and leveraged dialogue and interaction between businesses and national entities that they could support; it was not a representation of the private sector. The UN Office for Partnerships would lead efforts to determine the types of partnerships that would be beneficial. It would not be feasible to have a dashboard to indicate the status of partnerships across the system due to their vast number. The business sector incorporated many different types of enterprises, and ensuring that all were represented was a complex task; however, flexibility was built into the partnerships facility. The approach was being reworked so that the UN's engagement in partnerships for the benefit of countries and regions was clear.
37. Concerning the funding compact, she said that, by seeking investment, the amount of money allocated to development activities would increase. The goal was to move spending on peace and security to spending on development. That required forward thinking to ensure that gaps were not left and that any development gains were sustainable. Therefore, funding had to be tailored to each context, ensuring that the United Nations was in the right place at the right time. It was important to better understand national economies, and to recognize that the United Nations provided more than just aid, and instead invested in people, jobs and infrastructure, while taking account of the environment. She recognized the need for more information regarding the SDG Fund, which sought to pool investment and generate a joint response to implementing the SDGs.
38. Many of the Secretary-General's reforms did not require approval from UN Member States, such as plans to strengthen the UNDG to ensure that stakeholders worked better together at the country level. Other elements did require approval, such as the plan to enhance the role of the UN Development Operations Coordination Office to provide adequate support for Resident Coordinators and Country Teams and to streamline reporting lines, ensuring that each region was adequately represented in the secretariat.
39. Resident Coordinators should have a full understanding of all the UN agencies, as they were assets relevant to attaining the SDGs. She expressed the hope that the ILO would participate in all of the results groups. The first group was working on operationalizing the SDGs, ensuring alignment between the normative framework and operational activities, and delivering on human rights mandates both within and outside the 2030 Agenda. Other groups included: business processes and innovations, to develop back-office efficiencies and improve responsiveness; funding and financing, to encourage investments from traditional or innovative sources in existing programmes or in the field, and to improve the handling of taxes and illicit flows; partnerships; and communications and advocacy.
40. In the move towards pooled funding, there was a need to improve the visibility of investment results, better explain development cooperation as tackling the root cause of conflicts and crises, and promote multilateralism to prevent fragmentation of efforts. There was also a need for greater coordination across the UN system in order to more clearly identify roles and responsibilities and avoid duplication. For the same reasons, reporting should be

strengthened on activities being carried out at the country and regional levels, particularly to ECOSOC platforms, including the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

41. The system-wide strategic document would be helpful for implementing the reform. However, that document was less ambitious than expected and she anticipated that member States would seek a more ambitious strategy. The intention was to strengthen the capacity of the UN system to deliver the 2030 Agenda by learning from past successes and mistakes. The 2030 Agenda was not a legally binding framework, and it was therefore important to incentivize investment and action. There were many different stakeholders who had identified challenges and needs in their own contexts. The United Nations had to reform in order to be the first port of call for any partner or constituent, as it was currently competing with international non-governmental organizations and foundations and businesses. The United Nations had to earn back its leadership status and prove that it was fit for purpose in delivering the 2030 Agenda. She reiterated that all the SDGs were linked and all were important to the ILO, not just SDG 8 on economic growth, employment and decent work.
42. The goal of the UN development system, Country Teams and Resident Coordinators was to serve beneficiaries by drawing on the UN's assets. The UNDP would lead efforts under its new strategic plan. However, entities within the system were still being sought to take responsibility for various goals that did not currently fall under the mandate of a specific agency. Training in leadership and specific skills was another important part of the reform process, and the UN System Staff College was responsible for developing the core competencies of UN staff. Professional staff should be granted the same opportunities as civil servants in Member States. Members of UN Country Teams could be non-resident, in order to provide the capacities needed.
43. She recognized that DWCPs and other programmes aimed at achieving the 2030 Agenda had to be flexible and responsive to constantly changing contexts, as countries and regions were facing huge and diverse challenges, including conflict-induced migration and refugee crisis situations and climate change. The United Nations should be prepared to meet States' needs with whatever resources were required, while maintaining efficiency in spending. Finally, relationships had to be developed with parliamentarians, as they determined the budget to achieve the plans and visions of governments.
44. *A Government representative of Ethiopia* said that the reform process was important and timely. It was crucial that it should consider the views and concerns of all UN member States and other stakeholders, including the ILO. His Government had aligned its development plans with the 2030 Agenda, was working with over 28 UN agencies under the UN "Delivering as One" approach, and would participate in the voluntary national reviews. The reform would affect peacekeeping operations, and development and humanitarian activities in his country. The ILO's unique tripartite nature provided a platform for constituents to discuss labour issues of global importance, and he asked how that would be taken into account in the UN reform process to avoid any negative impact on the working methods of the ILO. He also asked how the existing UN humanitarian and development system was viewed in the light of the reform, noting that any potential disruption of a country's development activities and humanitarian obligations should be avoided.
45. *A Government representative of Lesotho* commended the UN Secretary-General's proposals, which presented opportunities as well as challenges for the ILO and its constituents. She acknowledged the ILO's participation in consultations and as a member of the core group for inter-agency implementation. She welcomed the references to promoting gender parity in senior UN positions, enhancing protection against sexual harassment and abuse, and protecting whistle-blowers. They were also priorities for the Governing Body and tied in with the forthcoming Conference discussion on violence and harassment in the world of work. The ILO's experience in South-South and triangular cooperation would benefit the

development of partnerships for the 2030 Agenda; however, different forms of partnerships should be sought, and they should be adapted to the needs of partners. She expressed support for the reforms, but called on the UN Secretary-General to recognize the challenges of implementation on the independent governance structure of the ILO.

46. *A Government representative of South Africa* requested clarification on how initiatives would be rolled out and their practical application, and cautioned that it was important not to change processes that worked well. In particular, DWCPs were negotiated with the social partners to ensure ownership of strategic objectives, and it was unclear how that would be affected by the reform. ILO interactions with country offices were effective, supportive of both member States and social partners, and underpinned by tripartism, which must not be lost. It appeared from the proposals that ILO directors in field offices would report to both the ILO and the Resident Coordinator, which could result in duplication, confusion and targets being missed. The ILO, as a specialized agency, should be allowed to continue its operations unhindered; it would be unfortunate if previous improvements to the ILO's normative activities and supervisory mechanisms were unwittingly reversed.
47. *A Government representative of Japan* welcomed the reform of the UN development system to improve the quality of services delivered in developing countries, and expressed a commitment to making a constructive contribution to reach consensus during consultations. Although uncertainties remained regarding the impact of the reform on the ILO as a specialized agency, the Organization should take the opportunity to become more efficient and effective. Close attention should be paid to the reform of field operations in particular.
48. *A Government representative of Saudi Arabia* said that his country had aligned its programmes with the SDGs to achieve national objectives. The specific circumstances of individual countries was among the major principles of UN development action and formed the basis for the UNDAFs and ILO assistance provided to member States in implementing the Decent Work Agenda and reporting on ratified Conventions. He asked how the specificities of countries and the ILO itself would be taken into account during the reform, while building upon previous successes.
49. *A Government representative of Nepal* expressed support for the reform of the UN development system, notably the strengthening of the Resident Coordinator position and the use of common premises, operations and services to enhance efficiency. "Delivering as One" through UN Country Teams by taking a strategic, results-based approach to planning, management and implementation at the country level was a realistic aim that required multi-stakeholder partnerships, and which should be geared towards attainment of the SDGs. The emphasis on effective Country Teams and Resident Coordinators was vital to achieve results in the field and ensure extensive engagement with governments, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders involved in UNDAF implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It was indispensable for the ILO to increase its collaboration with UN Country Teams, given the coverage of the Decent Work Agenda in the SDGs. As underscored in the 2016 QCPR report, it was imperative to align UN operational activities for development with national development plans in a targeted way, and regularly monitor and report on results. The ILO should follow the UN development reform closely and ensure it encouraged multilateral mechanisms to bring about action that led to results.
50. *A Government representative of Argentina* applauded the Secretary-General's proposal to create a UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and a UN Department of Peace Operations, and expressed the hope that that would provide a better response and coordination mechanism to tackle obstacles to peace and human rights. She acknowledged the need for a full review of UN strategic and operational leadership on matters such as preparing budgets, reducing duplicative structures in areas such as humanitarian work, and increasing transparency in decisions with international relevance. The ILO should be

cognizant of its role in the reform of the UN development system, as the outcomes would have a significant bearing upon its work. She supported the Secretary-General's proposals, in particular with regard to the presence of UN Country Teams and all strategic actions taken towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and adaptation of the UN system structure at the regional level. Given the importance and positive impact those measures would have, it would be crucial to comply with the proposed timeline.

- 51.** *A Government representative of Brazil* expressed appreciation for the proposals in the Secretary-General's report, such as the cost-effective and collaborative models for a UN field presence based on country priorities. Brazil expected UN Country Teams to work closely with governments to ensure that they participated fully in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNDAFs and to strengthen accountability and national ownership. Resources saved could be directed to strengthening end activities. Innovative funding modalities, such as pooled funds, could serve as an alternative to earmarked funds, while innovative partnerships could build synergies, improve development results and generate additional funding. She highlighted the overarching objective of the UN development system to eradicate poverty. Tripartism should remain a central feature of the ILO in a reformed UN, and the Organization's successful experience in South-South and triangular cooperation should be explored as a way to further strengthen the ILO's role in a repositioned UN system.
- 52.** *A Government representative of Canada* commended the ILO's commitment to system-wide cooperation and coordination, and welcomed its leadership role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Many of the reforms proposed by the UN Secretary-General were critical to future effectiveness of the system. Her country was a strong supporter of UN reform, particularly fostering coherence and complementarity, and reducing duplication and overlap. Geneva-based UN bodies must be integrated into UN reform planning, particularly on the UN development system reform at the country level. The ILO had expertise and access points to society through the social partners, which would be imperative in addressing challenges in achieving the SDGs. She firmly supported the reforms aimed at strengthening the Resident Coordinator system to ensure a more secure funding base and enhance impartiality and accountability, and appreciated efforts to address the need for alignment between the SDGs and a range of new funding models. Anchoring reforms to achieve results for the most vulnerable demanded a focus on gender equality, human rights and labour rights, and the embedding of multi-stakeholder partnerships into the UN development system – areas in which the ILO was well placed to assist. Finally, she requested information on the specific measures that would be introduced to mainstream human rights and labour rights in the UN development system reform with a view to reflecting the rights-based foundation of the SDGs.
- 53.** *A Government representative of Colombia* said that the ambitious proposals for the reform of the UN development system were an absolute priority and the 2030 Agenda would provide a roadmap to guide member States. As to the view that all the UN bodies had to act in concert in implementation, it was unclear exactly how the ILO, as a specialized agency, would be fully integrated into the reform, or how its relationship to the UN system would change from April 2018. She requested clarification on that point, especially given the fact that UN General Assembly resolutions were not binding on the ILO, and given the ILO's tripartite composition, where Employers and Workers also had a vote.
- 54.** *A Government representative of Mexico* commented that the 2030 Agenda was ambitious, and its achievement would require a paradigm shift in the way that UN organizations worked and interacted with Member States. She agreed that the United Nations was no longer at the helm in development work, and that none of the agencies were yet implementing the SDGs, but rather still advancing the Millennium Development Goals. That was indicative of the need to accelerate the reform, which her Government fully supported and which would

require all parts of the UN system to make every effort to implement. The ILO had many assets to contribute, including its tripartite composition, which could improve the application of the 2030 Agenda on the ground. In conclusion, her Government wished to see the reform successfully completed, as it was important for both the United Nations and all the Member States.

55. *Speaking on behalf of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia group*, a Government representative of Poland expressed strong support for the active involvement of the ILO in the UN reform process and noted the need for a coherent framework for all UN agencies. The unique tripartite structure of the ILO allowed it to balance the interests of all stakeholders, together with its range of international standards and independent supervisory mechanisms; that meant it should play an important role in the UN development system and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The DWCPs were helping many countries progress towards decent work and economic growth, and he believed that the Organization would strengthen its leadership in the context of technological advancements and environmental challenges. In conclusion, he asked how the ILO's longstanding and rich experience of tripartism could best contribute to a coherent UN system, and how the reform would benefit the ILO in turn.
56. *Speaking on behalf of the Western Europe group*, a Government representative of Ireland reiterated his group's support for the UN reform agenda, which would be essential for the delivery of the SDGs. He noted that tripartism, normative activity and standards supervision were the main recurring themes within the Governing Body. He asked firstly how the ILO could transfer its successful experience in tripartism, including through the DWCPs, to the preparation of effective UNDAFs, and what guidance could be provided to UN Country Teams to help them make the most of the social partners' expertise. Secondly, he requested details on what measures would be taken to ensure that the reform did not prevent the ILO, as a normative organization, from fulfilling its mandate and related activities at the country level; more specifically, he asked what scope there was under the reformed UNDAFs for the Governing Body to continue its role of recommending country-specific technical assistance projects to help a country meet normative labour standards as a follow-up to a complaint procedure. Lastly, he asked what steps could be taken to ensure that the ILO and other specialized agencies were fully bound to the reform process, particularly in relation to the targets on common premises and back-office functions.
57. *A representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)* said that the ILO and UNIDO had complementary mandates to support socio-economic development in developing countries. Although the globalization of business and trade offered opportunities, too many people were still being left behind. Inclusive industrialization could provide decent work, given the potential of the manufacturing industry to create employment, and would allow deeper integration into the global economy. Industry helped workers develop their skillsets and obtain better-paid jobs, accompanied by improved social protection and worker security. The new UN development system architecture would offer scope for the ILO to work closely with UNIDO at the country level to respond to the socio-economic development priorities of member States. Achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda would require the UN development system to address the gaps identified in the Secretary-General's report, which particularly affected the implementation of the SDGs linked to the economy and the environment. UNIDO was committed to addressing such gaps. UN agencies should work with other development actors to establish effective mechanisms on the basis of the new architecture proposed in the Secretary-General's report. They should help developing countries respond to challenges posed by the fourth industrial revolution and rapidly emerging new technologies, which would have profound implications for industrial production and job creation. To create impact, UN agencies would need to join forces and strengthen programming, resource mobilization and implementation, in particular at the country level. UNIDO sought to

strengthen and operationalize its alliance with the ILO through knowledge exchange and by leveraging their respective field networks, and looked forward to working with the ILO and other entities with an economic development mandate to contribute to the ongoing debate on the new UN development system architecture.

58. *The Worker spokesperson* expressed appreciation for the Deputy Secretary-General's acknowledgement that the Governing Body should discuss how the UN reform could benefit from the ILO's unique experience and structure. The ILO's work often positioned the Organization itself, rather than the countries, in the driving seat, with the Governing Body making decisions and issuing recommendations on international labour standards. Those standards were increasingly important in an era of globalization, when the existence or absence of decent work in one country affected another country; a level playing field created by those standards was needed to drive forward sustainable development. It was also important to mention unions explicitly: as valuable partners in development, cooperation and finding solutions, workers' organizations had to be involved as well as the workers themselves. An issue of great concern to workers was whether the future of work would include decent jobs and a social safety net, which were an essential part of sustainable development, and social justice was key to securing peace. Lastly, she called for the ILO's own decision-making structures to be recognized and respected during the reform. The Organization would remain committed to the SDGs, but needed to maintain its fully tripartite decision-making process.
59. *The Employer spokesperson* welcomed the agreement expressed on the issues being discussed. It was critical that the UN reform should be favourable to all stakeholders. The UN system would benefit from the ILO's unique and specific tripartite structure, which any reform should accommodate and strengthen. However, it remained unclear how that structure could be preserved and strengthened. The future of work and governance of the world of work needed a fully functional and relevant ILO that remained consistent with its mandate. The ILO might make a more focused impact through the UN's modular, on-demand Country Teams, while not neglecting its constituents in places with a limited ILO presence. Given the governance and decision-making power of the social partners in the Organization, the question of how the tripartite structure could be accommodated in the reform process remained to be answered.
60. UN partnerships should not be conditional on adherence to the Global Compact. Many companies already upheld principles equivalent to those of the Global Compact and the International Chamber of Commerce could play a role in fostering partnerships with such companies and businesses. The Organization represented a high number of those businesses, at the national and international level, from all sectors and of all sizes, many of which were involved in development issues and the SDGs. It was essential that the UN development system was equipped to assist States with development challenges. However, the financial implications of the reform and the means whereby short-term increases would translate into long-term savings remained unclear. He asked what options were available to the ILO, as a member of the UN system, in the event that the reform had a negative impact on its mandate and constituents. He also asked, in view of the short time frame, how the Organization could respond if the General Assembly resolution failed to accommodate the ILO's specific mandate.
61. *The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General* thanked participants for the constructive discussion. Much of the discussion among member States of specialized agencies went unheard at General Assembly meetings, which reported primarily to foreign ministries. All member States therefore, from Geneva to New York, should ensure that they gathered to discuss the reform prior to the adoption of the resolution in order to ensure its successful implementation, particularly given the short time frame for its adoption.

- 62.** With regard to the SDGs, SDGs 1 to 6 represented the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. The corresponding SDG indicators and targets had been made more ambitious. SDGs 7 to 15 addressed the economy, including, in SDGs 13 to 15, the added value to the economy of environmental protection and sustainability. Investment in SDGs 7 to 15 would foster an inclusive economy, which would subsequently generate country revenues to pay for SDGs 1 to 6, prompting an end to dependency on aid. Such a process amounted to genuinely sustainable development. It had been difficult to secure SDG 16, as it referred to the normative agenda and the importance of having strong institutions to apply the 2030 Agenda. SDG 17 related to partnerships and funding required for implementation. Therefore, although the ILO might most cherish SDG 8, as it was the most relevant to its mandate, the strength of the 2030 Agenda lay in the interconnectedness of the SDGs and its potential would be realized only if specialized agencies contributed to the network of targets and indicators.
- 63.** The ILO would have to play a role in the transition process for the implementation of the reform, as well as in the UNDAFs and the Resident Coordinator system. Although Resident Coordinators should have some political acumen, all roles must be filled by persons with the most appropriate skills.
- 64.** In the context of the reform, humanitarian law took precedence and saving lives remained the primary objective. The success of the 2030 Agenda would not be measured only in terms of results and posts created, but rather in sunset clauses and in the shutting down of many specialized agencies owing to the achievement of their development mandate. Sustainable development essentially meant empowering countries to no longer rely on development aid and agendas.
- 65.** The aspects of the 2030 Agenda that addressed data, young people and gender were particularly important. Data collection had to be reinforced in the United Nations in order that women, and all vulnerable groups, were not left behind. Data should be qualified and shared; and ILO data was especially useful. South–South cooperation was growing rapidly and discussions were being held on ways to leverage and facilitate it. Major conceptual changes had occurred and the reform would ensure that UN actions and offices were fit for purpose and more responsive to SDG requirements. ECOSOC should be strengthened and made the point of reference for development issues to the same extent as other development agencies, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Economic Forum. In order to increase its relevance at the international level, the reform recommended holding ECOSOC meetings in Europe in addition to New York. The purpose of the proposed dual reporting lines in the field offices was to increase coordination and coherence, in full respect of each person’s mandate to report to their headquarters. Discussions were still ongoing, however, and decisions had not been made as the resolution remained to be approved.
- 66.** Faced with a trust deficit with regard to the reform, it was vital to ensure openness, transparency and accountability in the process to adopt the resolution. It was important to recall the context for the reform: the lives of 7.5 billion people required improvement. Although it appeared an impossible feat, as Nelson Mandela had said, “it always seems impossible until it is done”. In that light, thanks were due especially to those who supported the reform but had concerns about its implementation. An environment had to be created to dampen those concerns and provide a sense of synergy and of the possibility of solutions. National governments had a duty to steer the direction of the process but ownership of the reform should be system-wide, and forums with different constituencies should be set up to inform governments to enable them to meet their responsibilities and their people’s aspirations. Member States were contributing to the reform from both within and outside the system and it was critical to ensure that all constituencies, such as the trade unions, were

well defined and in a position to contribute to the discussions. Certain goals required further work and integration into the 2030 Agenda. The ILO should also engage with the UNDG.

67. The discussions being held at the ILO, and with other development partners in the UN system and governments, often covered the same social and economic themes but lacked coordination. Many agencies were considering, in isolated discussions, issues that were spearheaded by the ILO. It was important to identify ways to increase coherence and incentivize sectors to jointly address the challenges in spaces such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and the UNDG. The alignment between the ILO's mandate and the SDGs did not undermine the distinct normative aspects of that mandate. More consideration should be paid, however, to the relationships of UN country-level operations with both governments and the UNDG.
68. The ten principles of the Global Compact, which were due to be reviewed, were only a guide and not endorsed by all Member States. Further, 80 per cent of the businesses and partnerships working with the UN agencies had not endorsed the Global Compact and any party not belonging to it was fully entitled to participate in the UN system. With regard to the financial implications of the reform, an allocation by UN development system entities of 15 per cent of non-core resources to joint activities for the Resident Coordinator system should be seen as an investment in the inter-agency pooled funds. Discussions were also ongoing on staggering funding over six to 18 months, in accordance with the work being carried out.
69. Lastly, gender parity reform was the most important aspect overall, with an aim of promoting parity in the secretariat by 2020. It entailed changing power relations and holding discussions on zero tolerance of sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation and abuse. Implementing parity was more complicated in certain areas, such as peacekeeping. To that end, it was important to raise awareness in academic institutions and encourage women's involvement. Actually achieving gender parity required a discussion, not yet pursued, on the real consequences for men, which essentially meant them giving over some of their posts for women. Equally, with regard to sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation and abuse, discussions on the rights of victims were being held, but conversations with the men who perpetuated such violence did not exist. Without such conversations, there would never be gender equality. The United Nations, as a whole, should set an example by enforcing gender parity in practice and addressing sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation and abuse. Gender equality was a global issue and Member States should contribute to the processes and discussions of the United Nations.
70. *The Director-General* said that the discussion had been enlightening and necessary, and had helped advance the discussion on the 2030 Agenda and related matters. Unanimous support had been expressed for both the UN reform process and the 2030 Agenda. The Organization would need to closely review its responsibilities and interests in those areas, the first of which was a strengthened and enhanced multilateral system. It was illusory to believe that the ILO could move forward if the system as a whole did not move forward in unity. The Organization's place in the reform could not therefore be dictated by an institutionally narrow or defensive perspective, as its interests were broader. It must be an active agent of the reform process and had been afforded considerable space and scope to contribute to it, for which he was particularly appreciative. The Organization's responsibility in the 2030 Agenda was not limited to SDG 8, just as it was not the only organization charged with delivering on that Goal. It was incumbent on the ILO to assume a broader responsibility within the network of interrelationships, which rendered the notion of partnership vitally important. The specialized agencies, and specifically the ILO, were strategic assets in the reform, and thus tripartism, international labour standards and the supervisory system were also assets in that process, which should be leveraged to be properly exploited.

71. The discussion had helped clarify the areas in which the ILO needed to define its response, such as its place in the UN Country Teams. While challenges existed, they were not insuperable. As part of the intrinsic tripartism of the Organization, it was incumbent on the Employer and Worker constituencies to take their places in the process, by increasing capacity building and mobilizing the social partners.
72. The Governing Body would discuss all the issues raised at the current debate, including the Global Compact, in the near future in the light of the short time frame, with a view to positioning itself in the decision-making process. With regard to gender parity, the Organization had made progress but more needed to be done. The leadership of the representative of Canada and the International Gender Champions network were contributing to raising awareness and identifying creative ways to make progress to combat sexual harassment and abuse.
73. *The Chairperson* thanked all participants and expressed his gratitude to the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General for her presence and engagement with the Governing Body. A rich, frank and timely discussion had taken place, and he trusted that the UN Member States would note with interest the views of the ILO social partners on the reform proposals, as well as the potential challenges the Organization would face as a specialized agency with a unique mandate and governance structure.

Strategic Policy Segment

Second item on the agenda

Decent work for sustainable development

([GB.332/HL/2](#))

74. *The Chairperson* recalled that the purpose of the discussion was to prepare the ILO's contribution to the ECOSOC High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, whose theme for 2018 was "transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". The Forum would examine SDGs 6 (water and sanitation), 7 (energy), 11 (cities), 12 (sustainable consumption and production) and 15 (terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity) and their interlinkages to each other and the other SDGs, concluding with the adoption of a ministerial declaration.
75. *The Employer spokesperson* reminded Governing Body members that the goals of economic development, social justice and environmental sustainability were the only means of creating more resilient societies. The group appreciated the balanced and integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development provided by document GB.332/HL/2. However, the group did not subscribe to the erroneous idea that the conceptual framework provided by the 2030 Agenda could also be referred to as a "normative framework". She recalled that the ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* provided non-binding practical guidance to governments and the social partners, which was key to their future adoption.
76. With regard to SDG 6 (water and sanitation), priority should be given to effective and sustainable water and sanitation management, especially in areas of high water shortages, while ensuring that policies and regulations did not discourage investment, limit productivity or compromise growth and job creation and redeployment. Capacity building and public-private partnerships would play an important role in that regard, and progress should be measured by building on SDG 17 (means of implementation and partnerships).

77. With regard to SDG 7 (energy), a regulatory framework was paramount and, in a highly competitive global market, enterprises needed solid climate and energy policies based on clear objectives that fostered innovation. Investment in the green economy should generate enough jobs to offset job losses in the fossil-fuel and energy-intensive sectors. In that connection, social dialogue and capacity building that took into account specific geographical situations and national contexts were essential in the transition to a low-carbon economy.
78. As for SDG 11, governments and municipalities had a vital role to play in improving living conditions, and enterprises in improving infrastructure energy efficiency and waste management or in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable transport systems. With respect to both SDGs 11 and 12, enterprises should be encouraged to adopt circular production systems, to maximize recycling and the reuse of materials. However, the differing sizes, locations, and levels of maturity and technical capacity of enterprises would have an impact on their ability to do so, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Employers' organizations were therefore important as agents of change and providers of technical assistance and capacity building.
79. The employment and social dimensions should be at the heart of environmental programmes for achieving SDG 15 (terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity), and policy decisions aimed at capping the use of resources must be accompanied by incentives for job redeployment, skills development, business creation and improving labour market fluidity, as well as accessible, sustainable and economically viable compensation schemes.
80. Her group welcomed the proposal to provide support to employers' and workers' organizations to facilitate their participation in the High-level Political Forum. However, more clarity was needed on how the Office intended to do so both in the short and long term.
81. The Office should continue working with other international organizations, including the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The ILO should impart the following five messages to the High-level Political Forum: the need to ensure an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises through policy convergence; encourage economic and fiscal incentive policies to support the transition to low-carbon solutions; anticipate changing skills requirements and plan for the implementation of accessible and economically viable social protection policies to accompany the transition; provide for evaluations of the economic and employment impacts of all sustainability measures; and focus on a bottom-up approach and capacity building rather than new regulations.
82. *The Worker spokesperson* said that the ILO's contribution to the High-level Political Forum discussion should be based on the principles of social justice, enshrined in the ILO Constitution and the Declaration of Philadelphia, and the concept of a just transition, which were crucial for vulnerable populations worldwide. The *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* should be used as a basis for the ILO's contribution.
83. The sustainable management of water and sanitation was a source of decent jobs, mainly in publicly owned water and sanitation utilities. The ILO should therefore address the public ownership of water and water justice at the High-level Political Forum. The right to water should not be associated with investment opportunities, as was often the case in the current model of agribusiness, which posed an obstacle to accessing safe water and benefited the few at the expense of the many.

- 84.** He sought clarification on whether the energy section of the document was referring to renewable energy, as a just transition to renewable resources was of paramount importance. Moreover, the availability of energy was vital for economic transformation. Regarding job-creation opportunities, there should be a clear reference to opportunities for decent work. He noted with concern that the references to women in paragraphs 12 and 20 were limited to their work in the home. The path towards a low-carbon economy and sustainable development needed to be well planned and managed in order to create equal decent work opportunities for men and women.
- 85.** With respect to sustainable cities, he noted that there was no mention of ILO joint efforts with cities and local governments to implement the Decent Work Agenda. In that connection, the ILO's contribution to the High-level Political Forum discussion could reference the Maputo Roadmap on South–South Cooperation for Local Governments. The document should highlight that the consequences of environmental degradation and unsustainable patterns of production would not only affect us in the future, but were also currently being felt and affected the most vulnerable populations.
- 86.** During the High-level Political Forum, the ILO should stress the importance of the social partners in achieving the SDGs and of the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*. It should also promote the relevant international labour Conventions linked to the SDGs mentioned in the paper. The Workers supported the draft decision.
- 87.** *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Namibia said that, for Africa, attainment of the SDGs would be a milestone towards achievement of the continent's development objectives. Integration of the decent work goals into the work of the UN system would assist member States in their SDG efforts. The DWCPs should therefore be aligned to the 2030 Agenda. New job opportunities in the green economy were welcomed, although with some reservations. Renewable energy and the new technology needed to generate electricity was not regularly available or affordable in Africa; it would require additional financing, regulation, and technology innovation and transfer.
- 88.** Access to clean drinking water and water storage capacity remained a major challenge to Africa's development, and ILO technical support was needed for infrastructure development planning. In addition, the lack of clean drinking water increased the threat of disease and affected the social and economic productivity of communities. The ILO's ongoing collaborative projects with other international organizations, such as the WASH4Work initiative, were therefore welcome.
- 89.** As rural-to-urban migration increased, sustainable urban planning of land use, housing and transportation was critical to harness the productive potential of African cities. Strengthening expertise in urban planning through education and skills development was therefore crucial, as was providing job-creation opportunities, especially for marginalized communities.
- 90.** Regional, economic and social development plans, along with social dialogue, were important drivers of concrete progress towards achieving the SDGs at national level. To ensure that workers' and employers' voices were heard within all frameworks, her group recommended that: an integrated approach should be taken to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of progress towards the SDGs, taking into account what was provided for in the DWCPs at national level; resources should be shared among the UN agencies to minimize the duplication of efforts at national level; and collaboration should be strengthened between development partners in the African Union Commission to support countries in achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063.

91. *Speaking on behalf of ASPAG*, a Government representative of Bangladesh reinforced the need for the further rollout of ILO activities that contributed to the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability. She called upon the Office to invest more in low-carbon infrastructure, green construction and the creation of green jobs, in line with the ILO's Green Initiative. The Office should make further progress on the issue of the threat to employment opportunities from climate change, before the High-level Political Forum review in 2019. ASPAG welcomed the ILO's community-contracting guidelines for the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation and energy, but asked the Office to explore the viability and effectiveness of the guidelines. Technical support to promote SMEs, such as training for enterprises and their workforces, would help to ensure efficient production. The Office was asked to ensure the adequate protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems in all of its programmes. Lastly, for clarity, the challenges to sustainable development that affected the world of work should be spelled out separately in the document.
92. *Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States*, a Government representative of Bulgaria said that the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EFTA country Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia aligned themselves with her statement. She recalled that the ILO's main responsibility in relation to the SDGs was the achievement of SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. Contributions to other SDGs should be made through close cooperation with other relevant organizations. Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies would have a tremendous impact on the world of work and on working conditions. She called for policies that would improve sustainability in consumption and production patterns, in accordance with agreed international frameworks. Economic growth needed to be decoupled from environmental degradation; it was important to raise awareness of the economic and social costs of environmental damage. The EU was committed to the promotion of a green growth model that outlined a structural economic change. The ILO was in a position to contribute to the shift towards an energy- and resource-efficient circular economy that would increase competitiveness and boost economic growth while creating decent jobs. Social dialogue would play an important role at the national and local levels in the restructuring of economic sectors affected by the shift towards renewable energies. Recalling the vulnerable situation of workers in the informal economy, she underscored that the initiative on the formalization of the informal economy was essential to the realization of several SDGs. The ILO could provide a valuable contribution to the major challenges highlighted in the report, based on its values, knowledge and experience.
93. *A Government representative of Azerbaijan* said that his country supported the ILO's Future of Work Initiative. He outlined the progress that Azerbaijan had made through the successful implementation of a programme of economic policy aimed at generating employment, creating decent work opportunities and improving social welfare. Azerbaijan's experience of applying a tripartite process to evaluate policy proposals had been recommended by the ILO as an example of best practice.
94. *A Government representative of Ethiopia* said that the High-level Political Forum would provide an opportunity for the ILO to demonstrate the relevance of its mandate to the attainment of sustainable and resilient societies. The ILO's contribution to the provision of basic services was greatly appreciated. Social dialogue in water resources management made an important contribution to the fair and equitable distribution of scarce resources. Access to modern energy and its efficient use had an impact on social and economic development. He welcomed the ILO skills development programmes for energy, established in three countries, and encouraged the Office to increase the number of countries which benefited from those programmes. Furthermore, the ILO's support to member States for the inclusion

of labour issues in their national development policies and programmes was of critical importance. He called on the ILO to reinforce and maintain its involvement in the High-level Political Forum in a more concrete manner, as the Forum afforded an opportunity to ensure that social justice was at the heart of sustainable development.

95. *A Government representative of Peru* said that changing employment patterns posed a continuous challenge to traditional perceptions of standard employment relationships, which reaffirmed the need to ensure that all citizens in all countries could access decent work. His country had taken steps towards that goal by adopting a strategy to reduce the size of the informal economy through improving productivity and employability, strengthening institutional capacity in respect of labour inspection and boosting the formal economy. In addition, it was creating plans aimed at reducing the gender pay gap, sexual harassment in the workplace and discrimination against people belonging to vulnerable groups; creating a registry to identify children at risk of child labour; and including forced labour in the country's revised criminal code. Furthermore, it was adopting legislation to help workers engage in collective bargaining. Spaces for tripartite dialogue on labour matters were available at the national and regional levels in Peru. His Government was currently in the process of formulating a social security policy to build on the progress already made and reaffirmed its commitment to working towards decent work for all.
96. *A Government representative of India* said that her country was tackling the challenges inherent in providing quality water and sanitation to its huge population. It had also instituted programmes aimed at developing infrastructure, cleaning up both urban and rural areas and instituting "smart" solutions in cities. The effective and sustainable management of water and sanitation could provide direct and indirect sources of economic activity and quality jobs. In addition, the ILO had the capacity to promote international cooperation free from protectionism in order to leverage technological advancement and promote innovation in sectors dependent on natural resources.
97. Her country was committed to clean energy transition. Aside from being a founding member of the International Solar Alliance, India was a major contributor to the achievement of the target of producing one terawatt of solar power capacity by 2030. As cleaner energy industries led to more skilled jobs, the ILO should promote international cooperation in that area. However, as those industries were often also loss-making, their sustainability was in doubt, as was the willingness of new players to join the sector. Wider consultations among all stakeholders were needed to address those issues. Her country supported the ILO's expanded role in addressing the challenges to sustainable development that affected the world of work and looked forward to making systems more robust and resilient.
98. *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* said that sustainable development was crucial to any economy, developed or developing. Many of the policies and laws in the Russian Federation already included measures to achieve the SDGs. His country had been focusing in particular on achieving SDGs 1 and 8, and had achieved positive results, including wage increases and labour market stability. The need to improve the quality of drinking water in line with SDG 6 had been formally recognized by the President, as had the need to improve productivity in large and medium-sized enterprises in key industries by at least 5 per cent per year, including by ensuring the achievement of SDG 12. The Russian Federation would be stepping up its efforts and hoped that it would be able to count on the expert support of the ILO in that endeavour.
99. *A Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran* expressed support for the measures taken by the Office thus far. He underscored the relationship between the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability. Failure to tackle the challenge of climate change and its impact on the world of work effectively would compromise the ability of countries to attain many of the SDGs. On the eve of the

ILO centenary, governments and the social partners should seek and adopt new constructive and confidence-building initiatives to cope with the challenge. It was imperative that the ILO tripartite constituents attempted to jointly develop a coherent and convergent strategy to overcome the problems identified. The ILO had a role to play in reinforcing international cooperation with respect to a green economy. Further research into the challenges and opportunities of a green transition should be conducted. Skilled workers and productive enterprises were required, including cooperatives equipped with technical know-how. His country had adopted a National Plan for Green Jobs and welcomed the development of international cooperation in that respect.

- 100.** *A Government representative of the United States* applauded the call for shared responsibility in the 2030 Agenda. While recognizing the important linkages between the world of work and SDGs outlined in the paper, she asked the ILO to prioritize its resources in areas that were squarely within its mandate. With that in mind, she saw a stronger role for the Organization in the 2019 High-level Political Forum, which would address decent work and economic growth, and a more limited role in the 2018 Forum. She strongly supported national responsibility as stressed in the 2030 Agenda. Countries must work towards implementation in accordance with their own national policies and priorities. Upon the request of constituents, the ILO should provide assistance aimed at gaining a better understanding of the impact on national economies of sustainable water, energy, cities, production and consumption, and achieving ecosystem protection. The Office should also assist Members in their efforts to consider policies in those areas, which would benefit workers and enterprises.
- 101.** *A Government representative of Nepal* said that water supply was still a challenge for Nepal and his Government would appreciate ILO assistance in the areas of access to clean water and sanitation; affordable, reliable and sustainable energy; sustainable consumption and production; sustainable cities; and ecosystem protection. He stressed the importance and difficulty of attaining SDGs 7 and 11. Resources were limited and their excessive exploitation could put livelihoods at risk. He therefore asked the Office to expand programmes such as SCORE (Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises) and PAGE (Partnership for Action on Green Economy). Innovative and sustainable options and lower dependence on natural resources for work and employment were needed to protect Nepal's biodiversity. He requested the Office to prepare comprehensively for the High-level Political Forum and to consult regularly with the constituents in that regard.
- 102.** *A Government representative of Argentina* said that it was a matter of concern that SDG 13 on climate change had been relegated to 2019. The other selected SDGs should thus be examined taking into account their linkages to SDG 13. She commended the work of the ILO on water and sanitation, particularly the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme. It was crucial that the ILO continued its work on job creation and training in a way which advanced the transition to renewable energies. Green jobs were very important in reducing the environmental impact of companies and economic sectors since they improved energy efficiency and efficiency in the consumption of raw materials and water. It was essential to build resilience in cities. That should involve the creation of decent work which promoted ecologically sustainable growth. Governments should share knowledge in order to improve urban planning and management. Production and consumption patterns must change. Sustainable production could be promoted through tripartite dialogue, and the ILO could facilitate its feasibility for SMEs. Sustainable consumption patterns could be promoted through companies designing solutions which encouraged individuals to lead more sustainable ways of life and governments mobilizing technical and financial assistance to strengthen scientific and technological capacities in that area. It was also important to protect biodiversity. Indigenous populations and the example they provided were invaluable. "Protection" was the keyword, including of biodiversity, resources, workers and migrants.

Her Government agreed that the pillars of the Decent Work Agenda should be prioritized in all action undertaken towards sustainable, robust and inclusive development.

- 103.** *A Government representative of Brazil* said that the ILO should encourage job creation in the renewable energy sector. Poverty and unemployment in rural areas could be better addressed through inter-agency work, for instance among the ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNDP. He agreed on the need to address new technologies and labour standards simultaneously, while also promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns. The social pillar could not be neglected in efforts towards sustainable development.
- 104.** *A representative of the Director-General* (Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships), responding to a question from the Employers' group, said that the Office ran several training programmes aimed at all constituents, particularly the social partners, including programmes on the transition towards decent work, green jobs and sustainable housing. The work of the Office in that area was carried out at the national, regional and global levels. Nationally, the Office supported all constituents from countries submitting a voluntary national review; regionally, the Office provided support for all relevant activities; and globally, the Office would be organizing events and activities within the context of the High-level Political Forum. The Office commended its constituents for their efforts on the SDGs and had taken note of their needs. All amendments, proposals and guidance provided on document GB.332/HL/2 would be taken into account ahead of the High-level Political Forum. Following on from the statements of the Governments of the United States and Nepal, he said that both the 2018 and 2019 High-level Political Forums were relevant for SDG 8, which was at the heart of ILO activities.

Decision

- 105.** *The Governing Body requested the Director-General to take account of its guidance in further developing the ILO contribution to the 2018 High-level Political Forum (HLPF).*

(GB.332/HL/2, paragraph 61.)