



Governing Body

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Policy Development Section

POL

Minutes of the Policy Development Section

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Employment and Social Protection Segment

1. A normative gap analysis on decent work in the platform economy (GB.347/POL/1)

1. **The Worker spokesperson** observed that a new phase in the informal economy had begun and was on the increase in all regions of the world, where workers engaged through a platform, with poor working conditions and without labour rights or social protection whereas platforms make huge profits. The ILO had long recognized the growing significance of platform work in the context of the future of work and tripartite constituents agreed to address it in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work. It is regrettable that the Meeting of Experts on Decent Work in the Platform Economy, held in October 2022, did not reach consensus-based conclusions. However, there had been broad agreement on the nature and extent of the decent work deficits and challenges faced by workers on digital labour platforms, working both on location and online, and on the need for national and international regulation, including through standard-setting by the ILO. Key challenges and gaps had been identified, including with regard to algorithmic management, working time, the regular payment of wages and modalities to set remuneration. There was even unanimous agreement on the importance of the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198), in combating disguised employment relationships and on the need to provide access to adequate social protection for all platform workers.
2. The Office document clearly identified a number of normative gaps, including algorithmic management and data protection. It was clear that fundamental principles and rights at work apply to all workers. However, digital platforms created a unique set of challenges, and there was a need for guidance to ensure that these principles and rights were applied effectively in law and practice. While the Office had identified no gaps in the scope of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), she noted that specific challenges impeding the full exercise of those rights were directly related to algorithmic management. Therefore, governments needed to take urgent action to protect those rights in practice, and the ILO must take further action to ensure that competition law did not undermine the right to bargain collectively, in particular for self-employed workers.
3. Proper classification of the employment relationship was fundamental to the application of fundamental rights and other standards, as platform workers who were misclassified were deprived of the most basic labour protections. The increasing number of occupations being mediated through platforms made it imperative for the ILO to act. A new Convention on decent work in digital platforms could build on Recommendation No. 198 and on the growing body of national legislation and case law to address the question of employment status.
4. Some issues were not yet covered by any international labour standards. The use of algorithms programmed to take management decisions, including hiring, firing and disciplinary decisions, directly affected the rights and conditions of platform workers, including their fundamental principles and rights at work. Regulation, including through collective bargaining, of the use of such algorithmic management was crucial for workers to fully enjoy their rights and have access to justice in the event of violations, and the ILO should take the lead and act specifically to address the gap in labour protection for workers on digital labour platforms.
5. The specific thematic gaps in existing international labour standards identified in the Office document directly affected the working conditions of platform workers and could give rise to

decent work deficits. A lack of transparency on remuneration rates, irregular payment of remuneration due, and commissions and fees paid by platform workers all impacted the payment of minimum wages and the provision of social protection schemes. There were normative gaps in relation to disciplinary matters, ratings, the limitation of total working hours when including overtime, and the cross-border nature of the platform economy. Digital monitoring and labour inspection must also be addressed as regards work on digital labour platforms.

6. In addressing challenges in the world of work arising from fundamental changes in business models and the composition of the labour force, the ILO had always approached the issue from the perspective of the group that needed to be protected, taking into account existing standards and adapting them to the group concerned; the same approach should be taken in relation to platform workers. A further general discussion on decent work in the platform economy was unnecessary, as the work in preparation for the meeting of experts, the report of the meeting and the normative gap analysis provided sufficient basis for the Governing Body to decide to place a standard-setting item on the agenda of the Conference in 2025 for a double discussion. The adoption of a standard was crucial to protect platform workers whose vulnerabilities arise in particular from algorithmic management. It should be focused on protecting, respecting and realizing platform workers' rights and improving their working conditions. It should give governments sufficient guidance on how to execute their duties to protect workers and call on employers and businesses to take responsibility for the people who were creating their profits. The Workers' group therefore proposed amending the draft decision to place on the agenda of the Conference a standard-setting item with a double discussion procedure.
7. **The Employer spokesperson** stated that the broad, diverse and extremely dynamic nature of the platform economy, involving multiple sectors, business models, service provision modalities and ways of working rendered a one-size-fits-all approach inappropriate. She therefore contended that there was no solid basis for standard-setting action on decent work in the platform economy. The ILO normative framework already provided policy responses applicable to most challenges in the world of work for which international regulation was justified, including in relation to digital platforms. The normative gap analysis largely confirmed the Employers' group's position, in that it highlighted the relevance of the ILO normative framework and the applicability of a wide range of existing international labour standards to the realities of the platform economy. Furthermore, it clearly stated that there appeared to be no gap in connection with fundamental principles and rights at work, especially in connection with Conventions Nos 87 and 98. She nonetheless pointed out that it was the view of the Employers' group that the right to collective bargaining under Convention No. 98 was conditional on an employment relationship and therefore did not apply to organizations representing self-employed workers. She also noted the extreme diversity in the rules, practices and regulations of Member States in that regard.
8. Recommendation No. 198 provided guidance on how to distinguish independent contractors from those in an employment relationship and included specific criteria on how national policies should address the issue of determining whether an employment relationship existed; some of those criteria applied perfectly to the platform economy. Recommendation No. 198 also cautioned that national policy in protecting workers "should not interfere with true civil and commercial relationships". The balanced approach to the analysis of contract-based relationships in Recommendation No. 198 translated ideally to relationships established by platform work. The Office analysis also indicated that there did not seem to be any normative gap concerning employment policy and promotion, or employment security aspects, when

genuinely dependent workers were involved. Occupational safety and health related standards remained relevant and applicable to platform work. The personal scope of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) did not include self-employed workers, but this limitation was addressed in the accompanying Recommendation. A similar situation existed for the standards on social protection, which were applicable to the platform economy, and the limits on the personal scope of the Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121) was partially compensated in its accompanying Recommendation. Other standards, such as the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), or the Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177), were also applicable to the platform economy insofar as workers were in an employment relationship. However, this did not represent a gap but rather a clear intention to exclude self-employed workers from their scope because of the nature of the topics covered.

9. As to possible thematic gaps, algorithmic management was not specifically addressed in ILO Conventions, but it was unclear whether and to what extent the topic fell under the ILO's remit. She agreed that the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), was applicable regarding the prevention of discriminatory biases in the design of algorithms. The Office document had also identified working time, data protection, resolution of labour disputes and the cross-border nature of the platform economy as potential areas for ILO action; however, those topics were not specific to the platform economy. Furthermore, the protection of workers' personal data had already been addressed in an ILO code of practice of 1996, which still represented an adequate response to this issue. The normative gap analysis covered 20 topics and had shown that there was a wide range of existing standards applicable to the work performed in the platform economy. There were therefore no gaps and no need for a new standard on the platform economy.
10. The Employers' group was committed to the effective implementation of international labour standards, including, where applicable, in the context of the platform economy. To assist ILO constituents, the Office should prepare a guide on the extent to which existing ILO Conventions and Recommendations were applicable to the platform economy. The Conference item should be devoted to a general discussion, designed to further increase constituents' knowledge and understanding of the platform economy, new developments and approaches in law and practice, and the effective implementation of international labour standards to overcome challenges. It could also address the issue of algorithms, such as their potential impact on the world of work, their employment challenges and best practices in their use. The Employers' group therefore proposed amending the draft decision to indicate that the item on the Conference agenda would be a general discussion.
11. **Speaking on behalf of the Government group**, a Government representative of Germany said that the normative gap analysis reflected the recognition that, while working arrangements in the platform economy raised concerns about disguised employment relationships, the sector nonetheless comprised both workers classified as employees and workers classified as self-employed. The gap analysis thus appropriately pointed to topics where self-employed workers were not covered by the provisions of certain existing standards. She pointed also to the fact that issues like algorithmic management and the protection of workers' personal data were not adequately covered by existing standards. Work-related issues in the platform economy were indeed within the ILO's mandate. The Government group continued to support ILO action to ensure decent work in the platform economy and was committed to ensuring that the ILO had an up-to-date body of international labour standards relevant to the changing world of work. The group remained open in principle to standard-setting on decent work in the platform economy.

12. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Sudan said that the fast-growing platform economy was a hot topic in the world of business. He requested the ILO to take action in the form of a policy response, which could take the form of international labour standards. The group agreed with the Office regarding gaps in the personal scope of application of international labour standards as well as the thematic gaps in existing standards. The normative gap analysis provided a sound basis for discussion, but more information was needed, and regional and subregional discussions on the platform economy had yet to take place.
13. The Africa group would continue to support the ILO's actions to ensure decent work in the platform economy. It shared the concerns expressed in the meeting of experts about employment relationships and labour and social rights, including the need to combat disguised employment relationships. The Africa group was committed to ensure that the body of international labour standards was relevant for the changing world of work. He requested the Office to review the normative gap analysis to summarize the results and comments on the areas of agreement, contradictions and controversies, define what had been achieved and suggest starting points for a general discussion by the Conference in 2025. In the process, the Office should address how it would link the platform economy with the technology gap in Africa, the Global Coalition for Social Justice, freedom of association and collective bargaining, and with wage and employment policies, employment promotion and social security.
14. **Speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC)**, a Government representative of Colombia recalled that the Centenary Declaration called for policies and measures to meet the challenges and opportunities offered by the digital transformation in the workplace, including platform work. Existing international labour standards were insufficient to regulate all aspects of the platform economy adequately, since the types of legal relationships in platform work varied greatly, the interactions were very complex owing to the cross-border nature of platform work, the use of algorithms and the decentralization of production, and not all countries could ratify a series of Conventions as that required political consensus and complex legislative processes.
15. States should be encouraged take measures to ensure that workers who provide their services in a country different from their country of residence benefit from the right to social protection, maternity leave, healthcare, pensions and other benefits. A normative instrument would require flexible mechanisms to adapt to technological advances and thus remain effective. The fundamental Conventions must be applied to protect both employed and self-employed workers. Other areas to be addressed included social security, wage protection and the conclusion of labour contracts, as well as penalties remuneration, access to labour justice, and limits on hours of work. All of the themes were substantive elements of the employment relationship and required specific responses; hence, standard-setting action was appropriate. A standard would ensure that the employment situation of platform workers was appropriate and fair, and would provide transparency, traceability and awareness-raising. The basis for the discussion should take into account the innovative nature of platform work and its particularities. Mechanisms allowing quick adaptation of the standard to progress in technology would be required. To ensure that the instrument would be fit for purpose and to increase the prospects of compliance, it might be helpful to assess experience with specific regulations, such as the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006). Her group supported a standard-setting item with a double-discussion procedure.
16. **Speaking on behalf of Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG)**, a Government representative of Australia said that her group recognized the value of the platform economy in terms of innovation, technology and the employment opportunities it offered to people transitioning

from the informal to the formal economy, moving between jobs or entering the job market. It also allowed businesses to extend their markets and evolve their business models, contributing to economic growth. However, platform workers did not always have access to the same degree of protection under international labour standards as other workers. The ILO must assist Member States in finding suitable solutions to these challenges, in accordance with their national circumstances. The Centenary Declaration highlighted the ILO's role in promoting policy coherence in pursuit of its human-centred approach to the future of work, including decent work in the platform economy. Her group had consistently supported ensuring that ILO standards were fit for purpose and addressed the issues facing the modern world of work. It was carefully considering the merits of a general discussion and a standard-setting procedure. A principles-based standard that did not focus on any one specific type of platform work or any one model of regulation might assist Member States in ensuring that platform work provided decent work. While ASPAG was open in principle to standard-setting on decent work in the platform economy in 2025 if that was the consensus, a number of Member States, including in the region, were developing policy initiatives to protect workers in the platform economy. It would be worthwhile to take time to assess the effectiveness of such initiatives and the lessons learnt to inform a standard-setting procedure further in the future. Her group might also be open to a general discussion at the Conference in 2025 for the purposes of sharing information. The group would listen to the views of other members before declaring support for either of the options in the draft decision.

17. **Speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC)**, a Government representative of the United States of America said that while the platform economy was a growing source of work opportunities, there were deep challenges to achieving decent work for all workers in the platform economy. While not unique to the platform economy, certain issues were particularly pressing, including data protection, access to social protection and the exercise of fundamental labour rights. He agreed with the conclusion of the gap analysis that there did not appear to be any gap in the scope or issues covered by Conventions Nos 87 and 98. However, the fact that platform workers in many countries were classified as self-employed and therefore did not enjoy the enabling rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining meant that there was a significant gap in the application of international labour standards, which warranted the ILO's continued attention. The analysis had revealed that many key elements of the platform economy were not addressed by existing international labour standards. As stated in the Centenary Declaration, the ILO needs an up-to-date body of international labour standards, and standards need to respond to the changing patterns of the world of work. The Organization should therefore take a leading role in efforts to promote decent work in the platform economy by developing a dedicated standard to fill the numerous and significant normative gaps. IMEC supported devoting an agenda item to standard-setting with a double-discussion procedure at the Conference in June 2025.
18. **Speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States**, a Government representative of Sweden said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Georgia, Iceland and Norway. While he recognized that digital labour platforms were a growing source of inclusive employment opportunities that also provided opportunities for businesses, a comprehensive international framework to protect platform workers, especially those in more vulnerable positions, was required. Digital labour platforms were diverse and complex, and it was crucial to ensure, through social dialogue, that all platform workers could enjoy full trade union rights, including collective bargaining. He also mentioned the importance of issues like the transparency and predictability of contractual arrangements, working time, including waiting time and the right to disconnect, transparent remuneration rates, occupational safety

and health, algorithmic management and data protection, the prevention of discriminatory biases in decision-making processes, penalties, adequate access to social protection, access to appropriate and effective remedies, and collaboration with public authorities. All platform workers should enjoy the fundamental principles and rights at work, including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Moreover, the Commission for Social Development of the UN Economic and Social Council had adopted a draft resolution encouraging Member States to enact legislative frameworks to determine the employment status of digital platform workers and protect their rights, and to develop policies to ensure effective implementation. The EU and its Member States was therefore in favour of a standard-setting item with a double discussion procedure, which should build on existing ILO standards, fill regulatory gaps and provide guidance on regulating platform work.

19. **Speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, a Government representative of Indonesia said that the exponential growth in the platform economy was changing the nature of employment and labour relations, making it difficult to protect the welfare of workers in the informal economy and self-employed workers. Since the rise of new forms of work called for a reassessment of existing institutional structures to govern labour markets and employment relationships, a comprehensive study should be undertaken on decent work policies in the platform economy. A statement on the future of work issued by the ASEAN labour ministers had highlighted the need to prepare workers and businesses for the future of work and to take advantage of new technologies. Facilitating workers' access to training opportunities would promote decent work by enabling workers to adapt to the changing nature of employment. ASEAN would prefer a general discussion at the 2025 session of the Conference, but remained open to standard-setting on decent work in the platform economy if that was the consensus within the Governing Body.
20. **A Government representative of Barbados** said that the gaps that had been identified in the application of international labour standards on decent work in the platform economy must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The size and financial resources of many enterprises in the platform economy, the cross-border nature of the web-based business model and its use of algorithmic management posed challenges for small States with limited technical and financial resources. On the other hand, the model had the potential to bring more people into productive economic activity and enable more workers to move out of precarious work and into the formal economy. His Government supported standard-setting based on a double discussion.
21. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** said that the platform economy could contribute to economic growth by including women, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups in the world of work, and could provide employment beyond the traditional job market. Innovative small and medium-sized enterprises should be given every opportunity to grow. Caution was required in applying international labour standards in an area with diverse legal systems and economic structures. She requested the ILO for further technical assistance in this area and called for further discussion on the platform economy.
22. **A Government representative of the Dominican Republic** said that the way in which labour relations were perceived had changed at an unimaginable pace. Remote working, temporary employment and the integration of technology into work processes had given rise to new types of relationship between employers and workers. New regulatory and supervisory mechanisms were needed to address changes in the world of work and uphold the principle of decent work for all.

23. **A Government representative of Brazil** said that the majority of platform workers had little or no power when negotiating their contracts with platform companies and were often forced to work in bogus self-employment, which left them exposed to long working hours, no sickness benefits and little or no access to social security and other benefits. General provisions should be established in areas such as the classification of workers, accident insurance, cross-border settlement of disputes, use of personal data, algorithmic management and the fairness of automated decisions regarding ratings and penalties. The absence of effective regulation harmed workers' rights and States' social security systems, and undermined the values championed by his Government and the ILO. Ensuring protection for workers meant implementing strict regulations and laws, carrying out regular audits to identify potential problems, creating safe reporting mechanisms for workers and ensuring them freedom of 'association. He therefore supported a standard-setting item in 2025 with a double-discussion procedure with a view to developing an appropriate normative framework.
24. **A Government representative of Colombia** said that it was difficult in practice to apply labour legislation to the platform economy, especially with regard to collective bargaining and the exercise of freedom of association. As a result and given the cross-border nature of platform work, the ILO should ensure that minimum standards protect platform workers. A useful framework could be developed to create synergies and ensure regulatory coherence between States. Her Government supported standard-setting on decent work in the platform economy.
25. **A Government representative of Pakistan** said that many platform workers lacked access to social protection, including healthcare, pensions and other benefits, since they were often treated as independent contractors rather than employees and their ability to negotiate the terms and conditions of their work was limited. As the rise of platform work had created challenges for traditional labour regulations, instead of attempting to adapt existing standards, it would be more feasible to adopt a new Convention to ensure that platform workers had the same rights and protections as other workers. To ensure that all stakeholders were involved in drafting and implementing the Convention and create a more comprehensive framework for regulating the platform economy, his Government supported standard-setting on the platform economy through a single-discussion procedure.
26. **A Government representative of India** applauded the ILO for taking steps towards addressing the challenges in securing labour rights and welfare for platform workers. The platform economy was growing exponentially and had the potential to empower women and persons with disabilities. Care must be taken not to hinder its potential for generating decent jobs. She outlined some of her Government's action on the platform economy.
27. Recommendation No. 198 might not be sufficient to ensure the correct classification of platform workers, which was vital for providing decent work in the platform economy. In addition, the varying approaches taken by the different constituents indicated a lack of consensus. A piecemeal approach might not effectively address the concerns of platform workers; a tailored, flexible instrument should be adopted, and that process should begin with the sharing of information and statistics on multinational platforms. Given the many local nuances in the emerging platform economy, the issue required careful thought and consideration of input from across the board in order to come up with a comprehensive action plan.
28. **A Government representative of Japan** welcomed the planned discussion at the Conference in 2025 of measures to protect platform workers. While his Government had hoped that the normative gap analysis could form the basis for a standard-setting discussion, the analysis was somewhat superficial, and there was not enough information for a meaningful discussion. It

was important to work together to establish effective measures for platform workers based on the findings of a well-elaborated gap analysis, and additional effort was required to establish which gaps needed to be filled and to what extent. In that regard, it would be useful to know what efforts were already being made by different countries. There was still time to complete that work before the Conference in 2025, and he therefore urged the Office to lay the groundwork for a fruitful standard-setting discussion and encouraged all Governing Body members to listen to one another carefully since the platform economy was evolving in different ways around the world.

29. **A Government representative of Australia** said that establishing the most appropriate normative framework across the breadth of the platform economy was a complex issue, and many remained undecided on what path the ILO should take to ensure that platform work contributed to achieving decent work for all. Her Government believed that the normative gap analysis had identified sufficient deficits in the rights and protections afforded to platform workers under existing international labour standards to warrant a standard-setting item at the Conference. Without prejudice to the results of the standard-setting process, she supported the amendment proposed by the Workers' group.
30. **The Worker spokesperson** noted the enormous developments in understanding of the importance of properly regulating the future of work and new patterns in the world of work, for the benefit of both businesses and workers, since the topic had first been raised for high-level discussion at the ILO in 2019. The information from governments on national measures to address the matter was welcome. Given the many gaps in worker protection, the ILO had an important role to play in providing guidance, including through standard-setting. The concerns raised about the need for further discussion on how precise a standard should be, what it would address and how to do that flexibly would be tackled during the standard-setting process, during which the Office would draw up a law and practice report and request further guidance from all constituents. Good use should be made of the information provided on measures adopted at the national level.
31. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining must not be afforded only to workers in legally recognized employment relationships. It was her understanding that ILO standards referred to all workers without being limited by legal definitions of that term, which were often used to exclude groups from protection. It was important for the ILO to protect all working persons. Under Recommendation No. 198, an employment relationship was assumed where an individual appeared to be a worker, a principle that was used in most labour laws around the world. She hoped that time to reflect on the draft decision would galvanize support for standard-setting.
32. **The Employer spokesperson**, highlighting that the great variety within the platform economy and the great number of different measures adopted by governments in relation to workers in the platform economy made discussions on the matter difficult, cautioned against acting too rapidly. The normative gap analysis had shown that many existing international labour standards already applied to platform workers, who therefore did not require separate regulations.
33. It was important to know how platform workers would be identified, a problem tied to the scope of the ILO's mandate. Labour law necessarily applied to workers in an employment relationship where the employer was responsible for guaranteeing his or her employees' labour rights. On the contrary, it would be challenging to identify the responsible person to guarantee labour rights for independent or self-employed workers. The issue was not confined to companies in the digital economy, as companies in all sectors used digital technology.

34. Only a small minority of countries had collective bargaining for certain categories of self-employed workers, and further discussion and clarification on that point were required. Restrictive international regulation of platform work risked pushing potential employers or platforms into informality, especially in the developing world. The complexity of the matter meant that careful consideration was required, and she agreed that time for reflection might facilitate consensus. An innovative approach might be appropriate in this regard.
35. **The Worker spokesperson** stated that the scope and relevance of certain ILO instruments could form part of the discussion in 2025 and the Office's preparatory work. A clear understanding existed of the notion of a worker and the scope of collective bargaining and fundamental principles and rights at work. The ILO and certain governments had avoided excluding protection altogether for workers who were not recognized as employees; guidelines recently adopted by the EU, for example, stated that recognizing self-employed workers' right to collective bargaining would not contravene competition law in the understanding that they would be negotiating on basic living and working conditions. That debate on that important subject should take place in the context of the standard-setting discussion in 2025. She requested clarification from the Office on the next steps should the Governing Body opt for standard-setting.
36. **A representative of the Director-General** (Assistant Director-General, Governance, Rights and Dialogue Cluster) explained that once a standard-setting item had been placed on the agenda of the Conference, the Office would begin working on a law and practice report on experiences and regulatory initiatives across the world with a view to demonstrating the range of approaches to addressing all forms of platform work. That report would form the basis of a questionnaire through which all Member States and constituents could provide insight on the scope of possible instruments, for instance in relation to the kind of instrument envisaged and the types of platform to be included. Some such guidance had already been provided during the current discussion. On the basis of the constituents' input, the Office would put forward proposals for further feedback, while also continuing its own research given the growing demand for assistance on platform work.
37. **The Chairperson** expressed the view that there was a clear majority in favour of standard-setting, with certain nuances. In addition, some Governing Body members who had expressed a preference for a general discussion had also stated that they would be open to standard-setting if that was the consensus.
38. **The Employer spokesperson** stressed that a majority did not constitute consensus. Those who had expressed flexibility had done so on the understanding that there would be consensus, which she hoped could be built, although that remained to be seen.
39. **The Worker spokesperson** stated that the ILO definition of a consensus was acceptance by all that a majority existed, rather than universal agreement. That being said, her preference would be to try to achieve an even larger majority and broad support.
40. **The Employer spokesperson** expressed disagreement with that definition of consensus. The matter at hand was important for many countries, a large number of which, including the Africa group, had expressed a preference for a general discussion. An innovative approach to the draft decision was needed, which required more time.
41. **The Worker spokesperson** said that she did not wish to interpret the positions of the Government representatives; the Africa group had expressed openness to several options. Her intention was to constructively seek the broadest possible support.

42. **The Employer spokesperson** said that it would be difficult to proceed to standard-setting on decent work in the platform economy at the 113th Session of the International Labour Conference (2025), given the breadth of the topic. The gap analysis showed that many elements of the platform economy were already covered to a large extent by existing ILO Conventions, which also applied to platform workers who were employees. Rushing the process would cause problems, given that the employment status of platform workers was a national matter that was regulated differently across Member States. Many Governments had requested additional information from the Office and were also in favour of a general discussion, which the Employers' group agreed was the most appropriate option. That would enable constituents to identify the issues that could be addressed in a standard. In many countries, platform work was a very important source of job creation and a way to address informality. Considering the speed of the changes taking place, it would be premature to launch a standard-setting process at this stage. In addition, a standard-setting item was already on the agenda of the Conference in 2025; another such item would place too great a burden on both the Office and delegations. As a compromise, the Employers' group proposed that a general discussion should be held in 2025 to pave the way for a more informed decision on potential standard-setting work in 2026 and 2027. That approach would also increase Member States' ownership of any subsequent standard-setting exercise.
43. **The Worker spokesperson** recalled that it had already been agreed at the 346th Session of the Governing Body that it would be possible to place two standard-setting items on the Conference agenda in 2025. Many Governments had also expressed support for a standard-setting exercise and had started to consider the type of instrument that would be best suited to the platform economy.
44. **Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States**, a Government representative of Sweden said that Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Norway and Republic of Moldova aligned themselves with her statement. During the discussions, it had been recognized that digital labour platforms were a fast-growing source of inclusive employment that provided great opportunities for business as well. Several groups had recognized, however, that there were significant challenges which required normative action to protect workers in the platform economy. Based on the gap analysis provided by the Office, a consensus had emerged during discussions that issues such as data protection, dispute resolution mechanisms, algorithmic management and the cross-border nature of the platform economy needed to be addressed. All workers should enjoy the fundamental principles and rights at work; it was therefore crucial to ensure, through social dialogue, that all platform workers could fully realize their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. It was high time for the ILO to take a leadership role in standard-setting to protect the rights of platform workers, as normative gaps could be bridged only by normative action, not general guidance or principles. The item placed on the agenda of the 113th Session of the Conference should therefore be devoted to standard-setting with a double-discussion procedure. It would build on existing international labour standards, fill the gaps identified and provide guidance on decent work in the platform economy. She felt that there was an emerging consensus on this position.
45. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Morocco clarified that, although the Africa group had endorsed the Government group statement expressing no general objection to standard-setting, it would prefer a general discussion on decent work in the platform economy at the Conference in 2025.
46. **A Government representative of the United States** noted that there was strong support for standard-setting in 2025, which was unsurprising given the numerous gaps identified in the

Office document. Many Member States were grappling with how best to address gaps in law and practice and regulate platforms to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and to promote decent work, and some were already moving forward with regulation at the national and international levels, notwithstanding the fact that the platform economy was rapidly evolving and that many of their existing laws and regulations had some relevance to workers in the platform economy. The Organization should therefore lead global action for decent work in the platform economy by developing a standard that would address normative gaps, provide authoritative guidance to Member States and help shape the development of national and international initiatives in line with ILO principles. Her Government therefore supported a standard-setting item with a double-discussion procedure to be placed on the agenda of the Conference in 2025, and remained open to dialogue and other suggestions from the Office on preparations for the discussion.

47. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC**, a Government representative of Colombia reaffirmed that the ILO should lead the way on dealing with those issues. Standard-setting was urgently required on decent work in the platform economy and her group therefore supported the proposal to devote the item to standard-setting with a double-discussion procedure.
48. **The Chairperson** noted that a majority was in favour of standard-setting, whereas some members had expressed a preference for a general discussion. He asked those who had indicated flexibility whether consensus could be reached.
49. **A Government representative of China** stressed that the status of workers in the platform economy differed between countries, and many countries were currently exploring new standards and regulations. The ILO should therefore not rush into standard-setting. His Government agreed with the Employers' group that the item should be examined in a general discussion.
50. **Speaking on behalf of ASEAN**, a Government representative of Indonesia reiterated that her group would prefer a general discussion. It was open in principle to standard-setting action, but only if that was the consensus in the Governing Body.
51. **A Government representative of India** supported a general discussion.
52. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** supported a general discussion, but could be flexible if there was overwhelming consensus on standard-setting.
53. **The Employer spokesperson** said that the proposal by the Employers' group represented a compromise that could achieve consensus if goodwill and flexibility were shown. A general discussion at the Conference in 2025 would enable options to be prepared with a view to standard-setting in 2026 and 2027. Such an approach would be more appropriate for a complex and dynamic phenomenon such as the platform economy. The Employers' group had demonstrated its goodwill and flexibility, and many Governments were in favour of their proposal.
54. **The Worker spokesperson** noted that standard-setting did not necessarily mean the development of a Convention; the future instrument could also be a Recommendation. The questionnaire developed by the Office would include a question on the type of instrument to be adopted. She considered that the approach proposed by the Employers' group was not a good idea. There had been strong support for standard-setting among Governments at the 346th Session of the Governing Body and at the meeting of experts. Furthermore, the Employer spokesperson had indicated that her group would not oppose a decision that would lead to a situation of two standard-setting discussions taking place in 2025. At that session, the Governing Body had agreed that further background information was needed, and the Office

had since provided that information through the normative gap analysis. There was also significant additional information available, including from the meeting of experts. Many Governments either favoured or were open to standard-setting, and the different views expressed could be reflected in the preparatory work over the next two years.

55. **The Chairperson** noted that some Governments had expressed a preference for a general discussion but would not be opposed to a standard-setting item provided that there was consensus, and asked the Governing Body whether it could reach consensus on a standard-setting item, otherwise the question would need to be put to a vote.
56. **The Employer spokesperson** said that there was no consensus on proceeding directly to standard-setting, or even a strong majority. The Governing Body could instead reach consensus on the Employers' group's compromise proposal.
57. **The Worker spokesperson** stated that the Workers' group would always seek consensus where it could be achieved, but that a decision must be taken, if necessary by vote.
58. **The Employer spokesperson** explained that the situation had changed since the 346th Session of the Governing Body, since the normative gap analysis by the Office had shown that there were actually very few normative gaps and most ILO Conventions applied to workers in the platform economy. It would therefore be more appropriate to have a general discussion at the Conference, which had wider participation than the Governing Body, to determine whether standard-setting action was required. She suggested to ask whether there was a consensus on that compromise proposal.
59. **The Worker spokesperson** clarified that the Workers' group did not agree to have a general discussion in 2025 followed by standard-setting items in 2026 and 2027, as that was not the appropriate approach for the issue, and a number of other important items needed to be placed on the Conference agenda.
60. **The Chairperson** said that if there was no consensus, the matter would need to be put to a vote.
61. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Morocco said that Government representatives would need sufficient time to consult with their capitals before any vote.
62. **The Worker spokesperson** added that the decision on the current matter would have to be taken prior to the discussion of the agenda of future sessions of the International Labour Conference (INS/2/1), which would be affected by the outcome.
63. **The Chairperson** noted that the Governing Body had been unable to reach consensus on whether the item on decent work in the platform economy to be placed on the agenda of the 113th Session (2025) of the Conference should be a general discussion, as supported by the Employers' group's proposed amendment, or a standard-setting exercise, as supported by the Workers' group's proposed amendment. In accordance with paragraph 5.7.3 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body, he had decided to put the two proposed amendments to a vote against each other.
64. **The Employer spokesperson** said that the Employers' group wished to express great discontent that it had been forced into a vote without being given the opportunity to build a consensus-based solution. Despite the Employers' group constructive approach and flexibility, the Workers' group and some Government groups showed no willingness to compromise. She thanked the Governments that had expressed flexibility and raised the need for a consensus- and dialogue-based solution. The evidence in the Office's analysis suggested that a broad set

of existing instruments were relevant to the platform economy and potential normative gaps had been identified in only a small number of areas. In addition, Governments had expressed divergent views, and many had expressed a preference for a general discussion. Rushing now towards a standard-setting procedure would not do justice to the complexity of the issues concerning the platform economy. That was a repetition of the situation in the meeting of experts, where an attempt to deal with everything had led to a failure to agree on anything, and no consensus-based conclusions had been adopted. The decision to proceed to a vote would lead to a similar situation at the International Labour Conference.

65. The Employers' group opposed standard-setting on the platform economy because, first, there had been no opportunity to discuss precisely which aspects should be the subject of standard-setting and, second, the approach disregarded the relevance of existing standards to the platform economy. It was regrettable that members of the Governing Body were being rushed to deal with that topic in a manner where there was a risk that the impact of the ILO would be irrelevant. The fact that many Governments did not see standard-setting as the best approach would have an impact on the ratification rate for the future instrument, and low ratification rates were a sign of the Organization's irrelevance. Furthermore, some Governments had indicated that they were already developing varied responses at the national and subnational levels, and it was therefore difficult to envisage a blanket approach where all business models, types of employment and economic activities could be regulated globally. In addition, the Employers' group did not support the Workers' proposal of aiming to create an instrument potentially modelled on the MLC, 2006, as the maritime sector could not be compared with the platform economy, which was not a sector, but a complex means of organizing work used within myriad economic activities, working arrangements and types of employment relationships. The comparison with the MLC, 2006, was therefore irrelevant. Moreover, the reality from one country or region to another could vary drastically according to the level of informality, access to technology and other factors. Solutions driven by social dialogue would be the most effective. It was regrettable that consensus could not be reached in the ILO, the home of social dialogue.
66. Lastly, the adoption of the Workers' group's amendment would have a direct impact on the decision to be taken in relation to the agenda of future sessions of the International Labour Conference, as the Employers' group would not agree to have two standard-setting items in a single year.
67. **The Worker spokesperson** said that her group also found it regrettable that the Chairperson's attempts at achieving consensus on what had clearly been a majority position had not been successful and that the Governing Body must resort to a vote. The platform economy was an important issue, which Governments were already addressing. The ILO had the opportunity to take a leading role; failure to do so would be a significant missed opportunity and could mean that other international organizations would take action instead. She noted with regret that it was necessary to hold a vote.
68. No decision had been made on the form of the instrument – whether a Convention, a Recommendation or both – or its precise scope. Input from all constituents, including the social partners, would be sought in the questionnaire attached to the law and practice report. The Workers' group wanted the standard-setting process to be a success, including for enterprises and businesses. The world of work needed a standard; however, the Workers' group had not suggested that it could be based on the MLC, 2006; in fact, the group agreed that such an approach would not be suitable. Finally, she again rejected the statement made by the Employers' spokesperson regarding the impossibility of having two standard-setting items at

the same session of the Conference, as that was contrary to what had been agreed at the 346th Session of the Governing Body.

(There were 22 votes in favour of the amendment submitted by the Employers' group, 32 votes in favour of the amendment submitted by the Workers' group and 1 abstention.)

Decision

- 69. The Governing Body, having taken note of the normative gap analysis contained in document GB.347/POL/1, decided that the item placed on the agenda of the 113th Session (June 2025) of the Conference on decent work in the platform economy will be devoted to standard-setting with a double-discussion procedure.**

(GB.347/POL/1, paragraph 65, as amended by the Governing Body)

Social Dialogue Segment

2. Sectoral meetings held in 2022, proposals for meetings in 2023, and recommendations of the sectoral advisory bodies for work in 2024–25 (GB.347/POL/2)

- 70. The Employer spokesperson**, referring to the possible review of the list of 22 economic and social sectors covered by the Office, said that his group would prefer a targeted rationalization of the 22 sectors to a drastic modification. It was unnecessary to develop a systematic reporting mechanism to the Governing Body on how the Office was implementing conclusions and recommendations adopted by technical meetings, better use of existing informal channels would suffice, or through the Social Dialogue Segment of the Governing Body. The Employers fully supported the holding of the seven global sectoral meetings listed in Appendix I and the postponed meeting of experts to produce joint ILO–International Maritime Organization (IMO) guidelines for medical examination of fishers.
- 71.** His group continued to stress its concern regarding the workload represented by all the sectoral policy priorities and would favour a reduction in the number of global sectoral meetings per biennium. Regarding the format of the meeting on the railways sector, he supported holding a technical meeting. The current state of the sector and its challenges and opportunities should be assessed before a recommendation could be made to produce guidelines specific to the railways sector. He supported the draft decision with the option including “Technical meeting on the promotion of decent work in the railways sector”.
- 72. The Worker spokesperson** said that the ILO should engage in further action to protect whistle-blowers, including normative action, when the discussion was sufficiently mature. The group welcomed the conclusions on the future of work in the oil and gas industry and noted that the industrial strategies to be developed and implemented should involve all workers, including outsourced workers.
- 73.** The joint work with the IMO to discuss and adopt guidelines for port State and flag State authorities on how to deal with seafarer abandonment cases was crucial for the protection and realization of the rights of seafarers in desperate situations. The guidelines should be considered for action by all States, regardless of ratification status of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended. He welcomed the commitment of the Office and the social partners to establish a working group to consider the mechanism of reporting and encouraged the development of a work plan to promote the guidelines. The Workers' group endorsed the

seven meetings that had been agreed. In addition, a meeting of experts should be convened to adopt guidelines on the effective implementation of social dialogue in the world of sport. He asked the Office to provide an update on the results of the ongoing research on sports at the 349th Session of the Governing Body.

74. The Workers maintained their preference for a meeting of experts on the railways sector and reiterated their request to ensure more systematic reporting on progress made in implementing the conclusions and recommendations adopted by technical meetings. He asked the Office to step up efforts to promote the implementation and application of guidelines on early childhood education, road transport and the tourism industry, and requested a regional meeting in Latin America for the financial sector. His group supported the draft decision with the option including “Meeting of experts to adopt guidelines on decent work in the railways sector”.
75. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Uganda said that the group supported the proposed follow-up actions and biennial global sectoral meetings. He supported the draft decision, favouring a technical meeting on the railways sector.
76. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC**, a Government representative of Spain underscored the need for the conclusions and recommendations of previous meetings to influence policy development. The future agendas of sectoral meetings should consider, inter alia, demographic shifts and technological advancements to reflect the changing nature of the world, and the Global Coalition for Social Justice should be developed in synergy with sectoral policies. IMEC requested more information on a possible review of the 22 economic and social sectors and asked whether a meeting could be convened to advance the conclusions of the Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in the World of Sport. IMEC supported the draft decision and expressed a preference for a technical meeting on the railways sector.
77. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Sectoral Policies Department) reassured the Governing Body that the Office remained committed to implementing the conclusions and recommendations of all meetings. She suggested that the Office engage in informal consultations on the review of the list of 22 economic and social sectors, the systematic reporting mechanism to the Governing Body, and the format for a meeting of experts or a technical meeting on the railways sector, with a view to reporting back to the 349th Session of the Governing Body. At that session, the Office would also provide an update on the outcome of the research on sports, with a view to a draft decision for the Governing Body to determine whether the item should fill the eighth global sectoral meetings slot. With regard to the Workers’ group’s comments concerning further action to protect whistle-blowers, she referred to the discussion on the agenda of future sessions of the Conference ¹ and suggested to continue engaging in informal consultations on the matter.
78. **The Employer spokesperson** said that the eighth global sectoral meetings slot had been allotted to the meeting on guidelines for medical examination of fishers. Furthermore, no consensus had been reached during the meeting of the sectoral advisory bodies that decent work in the world of sport should be one of the priorities.
79. **The Worker spokesperson** said that, as time was not of the essence, a decision on the format of the meeting on the railways sector could be made at the 349th Session of the Governing Body.

¹ GB.347/INS/2/1.

- 80. **The Employer spokesperson**, in the light of the widespread support for a technical meeting, asked why a decision could not be made there and then.
- 81. **The Worker spokesperson** responded that the Governing Body should use its time productively to discuss other items on the agenda and postpone consultation of the matter.
- 82. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Sectoral Policies Department), in the interest of time, proposed that the Governing Body adopt the draft decision and return to the issue of the format of the meeting on the railways sector at a later stage.

Decision

83. The Governing Body:

- (a) approved the records of proceedings of the two technical meetings and the meeting of the Joint IMO-ILO tripartite working group referred to in section I of document GB.347/POL/2 and authorized the Director-General to publish them;
- (b) requested the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for future work, the recommendations for future action by the ILO made by the meetings referred to in section I of document GB.347/POL/2;
- (c) authorized the Director-General to publish the guidelines on how to deal with seafarer abandonment cases (subject to adoption by the Legal Committee of the International Maritime Organization at its 110th Session in March 2023);
- (d) took note of the recommendations of the Joint Action Group to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's transport workers and the global supply chain and requested the Director-General to ensure appropriate follow-up action;
- (e) deferred to its 349th Session (October–November 2023) the decision on the format of a meeting on the promotion of decent work in the transport (railways) sector; and
- (f) endorsed the programme of global sectoral meetings and other sectoral work for the biennium 2024–25 set out in section II and Appendix I to document GB.347/POL/2, as recommended by the sectoral advisory bodies, subject to the approval by the International Labour Conference at its 111th Session (June 2023) of the corresponding allocations in the Programme and Budget for 2024–25.

(GB.347/POL/2, paragraph 48)

Development Cooperation Segment

3. Mid-term review of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy (2020–25) (GB.347/POL/3)

- 84. The Governing Body had before it an amendment to the draft decision, which had been proposed by the Member States of the EU and circulated by the Office, which read: "The Governing Body took note of the mid-term review of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 and its implementation plan contained in document GB.347/POL/3 and requested the Director-General to consider the Governing Body's guidance for stepping up efforts in the next phase of the Strategy and its implementation plan in areas for action where the need for further progress is identified."
- 85. **The Chairperson** welcomed Mr Makhtar Diop, Managing Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), who, under article 1.10 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body, had

been invited to share his vision of the implementation of the IFC's mandate in the current climate, as well as its partnership with the ILO.

86. **The Director-General** noted that the IFC, the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in developing countries, was more than a bank: it was a trend-setter in responsible investment. The IFC's first Performance Standard on labour and working conditions had been adopted in 2006, and its revised version continued to be used as a reference for the capital market community. Mr Diop, who had been appointed Managing Director of the IFC in 2021, was committed to environmental and social accountability and had acquired extensive experience during his career. His commitment to mobilizing resources for the poorest and most fragile countries, and to creating the conditions for an inclusive and sustainable recovery, aligned him very closely with the aims of the ILO. By working more closely together, the two organizations could make a difference, particularly to workers in supply chains. He welcomed Mr Diop, thanking him for his support for reinvigorated cooperation between the ILO and the IFC.
87. **The Managing Director of the IFC** drew attention to the need for increased cooperation to address the multiple crises facing the world. The IFC and the ILO made complementary, and crucial, contributions to their joint agenda: the IFC financed private companies in emerging markets to drive job creation, while the ILO promoted workers' rights. The IFC's clients must comply with its Sustainability Framework, which promoted sound environmental and social practices through the Performance Standards. The environments in the countries in which the IFC invested were often fragile, and the Performance Standards were stringent, took time to implement and must be upheld by other investors. The partnership between the IFC and the ILO was therefore welcome given that both organizations were required to work with a complex ecosystem of stakeholders. The success of that partnership was illustrated by the Better Work programme, a long-standing joint effort between the IFC and the ILO that helped unite public- and private-sector stakeholders in the garment industry in 12 countries.
88. There was significant potential to expand the partnership between the two organizations. For example, the lessons learned through the Better Work programme could be expanded to other countries and industries. Moreover, the relationship between the two institutions could be strengthened, for example through the planned staff exchange programme that would allow technical expertise to be shared. Furthermore, the ILO could assist the IFC's staff in addressing social issues, for instance through the training programme for IFC investment officers that was being launched with the help of the ILO.
89. It was important that the institutions' development efforts reached all workers, including women, young persons and persons with disabilities. Promoting gender equality in the workplace and addressing gender-based violence at work were issues of particular concern and on which he was keen to make further progress together with the ILO. Joint efforts to improve conditions for workers in supply chains must be scaled up, and the organizations should also cooperate to support the creation of quality green jobs and assist small green businesses; decarbonization and good environmental and social standards were no longer optional, and the IFC and the ILO could learn from each other's experiences in those areas. Partnerships represented the best tool in the difficult task of bringing about significant development progress. He would welcome further ideas for cooperation between the IFC and the ILO.
90. **The Worker spokesperson** observed that collective bargaining had not featured among the factors that guided the IFC when deciding where to invest and suggested to the Managing Director of the IFC that it was an important factor to consider. In view of the recent concerns

raised in a report of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) regarding the implementation of the IFC's Performance Standard 2 in the hotel sector, she asked how the IFC would ensure that workers and unions were consulted at every stage of development projects to prevent investment in enterprises that systematically violated labour rights.

91. Turning to document GB.347/POL/3, she welcomed the progress made with regard to the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy (2020–25) but highlighted that more measured data on progress and deliverables since 2020 were required. The Workers' group commended the assessment by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), which, while identifying several areas for improvement, had highlighted the value added to the United Nations (UN) system through the ILO's tripartite structure, social dialogue and programme implementation expertise.
92. Regarding pillar 1 of the Strategy, the Workers' group welcomed efforts to integrate the Decent Work Agenda into UN processes and to strengthen constituents' engagement in UN programming and partnerships at the national level and in South–South and triangular cooperation. However, many trade unions continued to struggle to engage in structured dialogue with UN resident coordinators. The Office must step up efforts to raise awareness of the importance of consulting constituents at the initial stages of project design; allowing constituents to take ownership of the design, implementation and evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs); and enabling the social partners to engage in Common Country Analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) processes. Her group would appreciate more information on progress in that area, particularly in relation to the need to align DWCPs and the UNSDCF to achieve policy coherence. Her group was concerned that focusing on impact when evaluating cooperation in the provision of services to constituents might lead to the underestimation of long-term achievements. She also requested clarification of the Office's responsibilities towards the ultimate beneficiaries of development cooperation services.
93. In relation to pillar 2, the Workers' group commended the progress in partnerships for policy coherence and financing, with the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions at their core. However, the ILO should use its leading role within the Global Accelerator to ensure that unions participated in a more structured manner, with particular attention given to freedom of association, representativeness and collective bargaining. In relation to cooperation with the private sector to support decent work, the Workers' group reiterated its calls for greater vigilance to prevent the misuse of the ILO brand as a means of greenwashing or covering up social issues. A regulatory framework was required to ensure that investment aligned with ILO standards, responsible conduct and due diligence. The Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights were important tools for assessing new partnerships, and responsibility and transparency mechanisms with binding eligibility criteria based on respect for environmental and international labour standards were essential. Moreover, the ILO's guidance on approving public–private partnerships, and the existing consultation process, remained effective.
94. Regarding pillar 3, the Workers' group congratulated the Office on maintaining voluntary funding levels despite an increasingly competitive financial environment. The diversification of voluntary funding sources, especially in view of the renewed focus of the ILO for decent work in supply chains, investment and trade, would require a regulatory framework that guaranteed respect for ILO standards, responsible conduct and due diligence. The conclusions concerning inequalities and the world of work adopted at the 109th Session (2021) of the International

Labour Conference provided important guidance in that regard. She welcomed the progress made under pillar 4 with regard to transparency, country services and communication, which owed to, inter alia, efforts to uphold ILO and UN environmental and social standards, including measures against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

95. The new organizational structure being put in place by the Director-General was commendable. The Office must continue to value consultation, ensure that constituents took ownership of services provided to them. The Office should step up its efforts to use non-earmarked funding to improve development cooperation, including by calling on public donors to meet their public development assistance commitments and with enlarged South-South cooperation. The Workers' group supported the draft decision, although it was willing to support the amendment proposed by the Member States of the EU.
96. **The Employer spokesperson** said that increased collaboration between the ILO and IFC, whose expertise and spheres of influence were complementary, could promote sustainable economic development and decent work in several areas. Development cooperation was instrumental in the current context, translating the ILO's mandate, vision and strategy in sustainable development outcomes that matter for people, businesses, workers, and their families. Development cooperation should be based on constituents' needs and priorities; national ownership was a precondition for its success. While partnerships were important, they must always reflect constituents' priorities and not detract from the delivery of services to constituents. It was unclear to his group why the mid-term review did not mention the deliverables on ownership and consultation that it specified as priorities when the implementation plan was endorsed at the 341st Session of the Governing Body (March 2021).
97. The progress achieved under pillar 1 was welcome. However, the Office must accelerate the development of guidelines for ILO staff on strengthening constituents' capacity and their participation in project design and implementation. In addition to social dialogue, meaningful consultation early on to establish constituents' needs, priorities and capacity gaps was key to ensuring project ownership and also the effective and sustainable use of funding. The dedicated programme to strengthen the institutional capacity of employers' and workers' organizations, set out in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2024-25, should complement core capacity development work already done by the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP); if it was to be supported through resource mobilization, the Office must emphasize its importance to development partners. He commended the Office for its work at the country level to raise awareness among UN resident coordinators about the role of the social partners.
98. Under pillar 2, while partnerships for policy coherence and funding had been forged, there remained a need to expand ILO services and capacity development for constituents on policy support and financing, and to ensure national financing frameworks were aligned with the UNSDCF. Consequently, the ILO must continue its collaboration with multi-stakeholder partnerships, alliances and international financial institutions such as the IFC.
99. Under pillar 3, contrary to the priorities stated by his group during the 340th Session of the Governing Body (November 2020), tripartism and social dialogue had not been prioritized for funding. His group hoped that the structured funding dialogues piloted by the Office would include Employers' activities in the future.
100. Under pillar 4, more must be done to develop communication on the ILO's comparative advantage in partnerships, to enhance accountability to end-beneficiaries through the ILO Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework and to ensure its effective and comprehensive implementation through ongoing monitoring, review and capacity-building.

The Office should prioritize the development of clear, measurable environmental and social sustainability targets across all of its activities; engage with stakeholders to ensure that their needs and concerns were addressed; and adopt a stronger stance on critical environmental issues, such as climate change. Furthermore, the Office should take action to address its own environmental and social impacts, including by promoting diversity and inclusion and by preventing and responding to issues such as sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in its own operations. The Employers' group supported the draft decision and could support the amendment proposed by the EU and its Member States.

101. **Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States**, a Government representative of Sweden said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Türkiye, Georgia, Iceland and Norway. She welcomed the strengthened cooperation between the ILO and the World Bank on the Development Cooperation Strategy and the contribution of the Managing Director of the IFC to the discussion.
102. While the progress outlined in the review was welcome, significant ground remained to be covered to meet the Strategy's objectives. The Office should clearly identify areas requiring further progress in order to enable constituents, particularly those investing significant resources in development cooperation such as the EU and its Member States, to easily assess progress during the next review. Further work to strengthen constituents' ownership, including for mainstreaming social dialogue across ILO policy outcomes and in DWCPs, was particularly important. Similarly, the involvement of constituents in project design and implementation should be further enhanced.
103. Regarding funding, she noted with appreciation that efforts to end child labour and forced labour were among the most funded areas in 2020–22 and welcomed the consistent efforts to promote Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) modalities with funding partners. However, the mid-term review showed that further explanation and diversification of voluntary funding sources and partnerships was needed. Fostering partnerships, in particular multi-stakeholder partnerships, for policy coherence was of particular importance, as Alliance 8.7, South–South and triangular cooperation, as well as regional initiatives, had illustrated. She strongly emphasized the need for increased collaboration with international financial institutions, in particular the International Monetary Fund. Increased focus on decent work in supply chains was also crucial. In order to strengthen development cooperation, further attention should be paid to enhancing ILO services to constituents on policy and financing, as well as to integrated national financing frameworks and UNSDCF. The implementation of the ILO Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework was important. When considering future steps, efforts should be directed towards the identified areas in the mid-term review that require further actions, with a view to accelerating progress in all four pillars of the strategy, while implementing also a more systematic "One ILO" approach and strengthening the capacity on country level. The amendments to the decision point proposed by her group provided clearer guidance in that regard.
104. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC**, a Government representative of Colombia said that her group would like the Office to convene a meeting with Member States to provide further details on the results of development cooperation efforts in the Americas and on how effective development cooperation would be coordinated with the Global Coalition for Social Justice. While GRULAC supported the four priority action programmes, it was concerned about the reduced budget of US\$146.6 million allocated to the Americas region, especially given its substantial need to address informality. She welcomed the range of multilateral initiatives undertaken to eliminate child labour and expressed the hope that the Latin America and the

Caribbean Free of Child Labour Regional Initiative, among others, would continue. Further information on how programmes were chosen in the Americas to receive RBSA funding would be welcome. Her group appreciated the Office's efforts to improve transparency on financing and results in line with the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative. GRULAC supported the amendments to the draft decision proposed by the EU.

105. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG**, a Government representative of China said that his group attached great importance to the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy and commended the Office on its implementation in difficult circumstances. Initiatives for South-South and triangular cooperation played an important role in improving access to decent work. The Office should further strengthen all development cooperation initiatives. ASPAG welcomed the partnerships for policy coherence forged through the Global Accelerator. His group requested the Office to make substantial efforts to expand voluntary funding sources and encouraged it to strengthen collaboration with Member States to enhance resource mobilization. Inter-agency funding partnerships with the UN Secretariat, funds, programmes and other specialized agencies for South-South cooperation would also be welcome. Noting with appreciation the increase of extra-budgetary resources for development cooperation in the programme and budget proposals, he requested the Office to focus development cooperation efforts on employment promotion, social protection, skills development and occupational safety and health, which were all priorities for his region. Given that Asia and the Pacific was home to more than 60 per cent of the world's workers, the region should be given full consideration in the allocation of resources. ASPAG requested more targeted support for developing countries. The Office should be constantly improving all aspects of development cooperation, including performance, transparency and the use of resources, making full use of the new internal system for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Development Cooperation Strategy. His group supported the draft decision.
106. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Namibia welcomed the update on progress made in implementing the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy and the results of the MOPAN review, which had concluded that the ILO added value to the UN system and growth potential in partnerships with international financial institutions. Development cooperation was crucial in enabling the ILO to achieve decent work at the country level. He asked whether progress had been made under pillar 1 of the Strategy in developing guidance for ILO staff on capacity development of ILO constituents and their involvement in project design and implementation. The update of the Decent Work for Sustainable Development Resource Platform had been welcome; the programme could be rolled out to regional training centres to bring services closer to constituents. While his group appreciated the update on progress under pillars 2 and 3 of the Strategy, further information was needed on the mechanisms in place for countries not eligible for official development assistance. Lastly, given that communication on the ILO's comparative advantage in partnerships, including a business case, remained to be developed, he asked when that could be expected. The Africa group supported the draft decision with the amendments proposed by the EU.
107. **A Government representative of Argentina** said that effective development cooperation was more important than ever. In that regard, his Government was developing its fourth DWCP with the national social partners. His country has been awarded "pathfinder country" status by Alliance 8.7 and held the position of Deputy Chair in its Global Coordinating Group.
108. **A Government representative of India** said that his country was progressing towards its targets under the Sustainable Development Goals and towards greater social justice. Access to decent work was improving and India had recently renewed its fourth DWCP. The ILO Development Cooperation Strategy needed a well-crafted implementation plan that

considered the national context in different countries to tackle labour market challenges. The Strategy should focus on opportunities for women and vulnerable sectors of the population, facilitating consensus on decent work policies and improving social protection coverage. He urged the ILO to continue supporting Member States to achieve the Strategy's outcomes. India supported the draft decision.

- 109. A Government representative of Indonesia** said that his Government expected the ILO to continue to provide assistance to tripartite constituents with measurable and clear targets to achieve the priorities set out in the Decent Work Agenda. He expressed appreciation for the various ILO projects implemented in his country. He encouraged the ILO to develop more specific training programmes at its International Training Centre that were open to constituents from all regions, especially Asia and the Pacific. The ILO should identify best practices at the country level to promote decent work in consultation with governments and social partners.
- 110. A Government representative of Brazil** said that development cooperation could play a pivotal role in tackling numerous challenges related to the world of work and social justice. His Government was particularly committed to promoting South-South cooperation within the ILO. While the transparency on funding sources in the document was welcome, his Government would like to see more detailed information on the provenance of domestic trust fund contributions. His country had contributed millions of US dollars since 2005 and transfer of knowledge and expertise for projects in developing countries. He supported the draft decision with the amendments proposed by the EU.
- 111. A Government representative of the United States** expressed support for the collaboration between the ILO and the IFC and encouraged the ILO to promote policy coherence with international financial institutions. Her Government would particularly welcome joint ILO and IFC activities that would improve support for and understanding of collective bargaining and freedom of association. The ILO could play a larger role in training IFC staff and borrowers on labour issues; facilitate IFC engagement with social partners and labour inspectorates; provide information to working groups on labour-related topics; lead the expansion of employment impact assessments that tracked the quantity and quality of job creation through IFC lending; and consult with the IFC on policy advice or technical assistance to its clients on subjects within the ILO's mandate. She would appreciate feedback on those ideas. She supported the draft decision and the amendments submitted by the EU.
- 112. The Managing Director of the IFC** said that his organization would indeed be deepening its collaboration with the ILO along the lines mentioned by the Government representative of the United States. Gender equality was also a priority that the IFC would like to promote at the grassroots level by financing more micro-projects. There were many opportunities to collaborate, especially given the global focus on greening the economy. He did not want smaller companies to be left behind in those efforts. The IFC was committed to working with the ILO and to consolidating work being done at the technical level.
- 113.** In response to the question about how freedom of association was included in IFC investment decisions, he said that the IFC's Performance Standard 2 was guided by international labour standards including the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). The Standard included specific provisions on respect for workers' organizations and collective bargaining agreements.
- 114.** In response to the Worker spokesperson's question regarding a recent IUF report, he said that the IFC was supporting the creation of better-quality jobs in the sectors concerned, which were

often dominated by informality. Nevertheless, some enterprises were not ready to comply with IFC standards and therefore did not receive IFC investment. No compromises were made in that regard. He was keen to encourage more exchanges between ILO and IFC staff in order to support employers in complying with those standards. His team had been and would continue engaging with trade unions at a local level. His recent meeting with IUF senior management demonstrated his commitment to working together. It was important that the development ecosystem include those struggling to meet standards, or the most economically excluded could be left behind. While he was aware that working with micro and small enterprises in developing countries could be challenging because they lacked capacity to implement standards, it was necessary to do so for women's economic empowerment and to combat economic exclusion. He and his team remained committed to collaboration with the ILO.

- 115. A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department) said that the Office would continue to engage the constituents in all phases of development cooperation. The Office was working with the United Nations Development Programme to better incorporate decent work into integrated national financing frameworks. Increasing the amount and diversity of voluntary resources was a priority for 2024–25, to which end the Office would be working with bilateral partners, the constituents, financial institutions and other UN specialized agencies. Development cooperation would play a key role in the Global Coalition for Social Justice and the four priority action programmes, which, in turn, would improve coordination and coherence across the Office's activities and open the door to new partnerships.
- 116.** The Office recognized the importance of and would continue to reinforce constituents' ownership and participation in the ILO. All cooperation projects and country programmes were evaluated regularly and thematically, and constant efforts were made to follow progress and needs for technical assistance.
- 117.** With regard to official development assistance, few ILO Member States were not eligible. However, such assistance could not address all SDG-related challenges; renewed efforts by public, private, international and national partners would be needed. Specific documents were being drafted on South–South cooperation and the Office welcomed the leadership role played by Brazil, China, Panama and South Africa in that regard. Certain information pertaining to domestic trust fund contributions was already available on the Development Cooperation Dashboard. He reiterated the Office's commitment to public–private partnerships, through which decent work ran as a thread, and mentioned that the internal approval process needed to be swifter and more flexible.

Decision

- 118. The Governing Body took note of the mid-term review of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 and its implementation plan contained in document GB.347/POL/3 and requested the Director-General to consider the Governing Body's guidance for stepping up efforts in the next phase of the Strategy and its implementation plan in areas for action where the need for further progress is identified.**

(GB.347/POL/3, paragraph 38, as amended by the Governing Body)