



# ▶ Record of Proceedings

# 7C

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## **Plenary sitting: Outcome of the work of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition**

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Friday, 16 June 2023, 3.40 p.m.  
President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

## Outcome of the work of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition: Presentation and discussion

### The President

We shall now turn our attention to the work of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition and its proposed resolution, which contains the Committee's conclusions, the text of which can be found in [Record of Proceedings No. 7A](#). The report on the Committee's proceedings is contained in [Record of Proceedings No. 7B](#).

It is my pleasure to recall that the Officers of the Committee are: Mr Ballans (Ghana), Chairperson; Ms Mugo (Kenya), Employer Vice-Chairperson; and Ms Moore (Barbados), Worker Vice-Chairperson. The Reporter is Mr Jordan (Barbados).

I will begin by giving the floor to Mr Jordan, so that he may present to us the outcome of the Committee's work. The Officers of the Committee will then take the floor.

### Mr Jordan

#### Reporter of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition

It is a great honour for me to present to the Conference for adoption the resolution and conclusions of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. Allow me first to thank my group, the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries, and my region, the Americas, for nominating me for this role. *Muchas gracias*. I am grateful for what really represents an acknowledgment of the fact that my own country, Barbados, and other small island developing States, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental and climate change.

I am therefore pleased that the conclusions *do* refer to the importance of international cooperation and global solidarity with the countries most vulnerable to the devastating effects of the climate crisis, including small island developing States and least developed countries.

In the Committee, delegates focused their discussion on three points. First, how can a just transition be advanced across ILO Member States through: scaling up the development and implementation of integrated policies and measures; the financing of such policies and measures; social dialogue and tripartism; through institutional coordination and policy coherence; and the application of international labour standards? Second, what should be the role of governments and employers' and workers' organizations in the transition, including with communities and people affected? And third, what should be the priorities and strategies of the ILO to assist its constituents, and how can the ILO play a central role in the multilateral coordination for a just transition, including through partnerships?

We held 12 plenary sittings, with 3 extended sittings. In addition, the drafting group held 6 sittings, with 2 extended sittings. The number of sittings and the discussion of a total of 158 amendments received is testament to the hard work we have collectively put in to developing these conclusions. We have had good discussions – often tough, very frank and direct – but always with a true spirit of social dialogue.

The Committee managed to accomplish its work and reach consensus thanks to the tireless commitment of the Chairperson, Mr Kizito Ballans from Ghana, the two Vice-

Chairpersons – Ms Jacqueline Mugo representing the Employers’ group, and Ms Toni Moore representing the Workers’ group – and the Government members. I thank all Committee members for their engagement and constructive inputs. I also acknowledge the dedication of the members of the drafting group, who proposed to the Committee a set of draft conclusions for discussion.

Allow me also to acknowledge the enormous efforts made by the Office in preparing and providing a comprehensive and forward-looking report, along with several accompanying documents. In particular, I wish to thank the representative of the Secretary-General, Ms Laura Thompson; the deputy representative of the Secretary-General, Ms Rie Vejs-Kjeldgaard; the coordinator, Ms Josée Laporte; the senior expert, Mr Moustapha Kamal Gueye; and all the technical and coordinating staff of the secretariat for their outstanding contribution and support, including the experts, translators, interpreters, technicians and administrative staff.

Please allow me to recall that, in 2013, the International Labour Conference held a general discussion on sustainable development, decent work and green jobs. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted, in which the imperatives of a just transition and the creation of decent work were acknowledged. That same year, the ILO adopted the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, which were developed by a tripartite meeting. The meeting highlighted that the ILO is uniquely positioned to promote a just transition and to foster tripartite consensus on ambitious climate action through social dialogue.

I now have the distinct honour of submitting to the International Labour Conference for adoption the outcome of the work of the Committee: the resolution and the proposed conclusions. The proposed conclusions are structured in four parts. Part I, entitled “The imperatives of a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all”, stresses that the future of economies, societies, jobs and livelihoods is at stake, as they depend on the planet’s ecosystem, and that urgent action is therefore an imperative to ensure that a just transition results in social justice, decent work and poverty eradication, as well as tackling the adverse effects of environmental and climate change.

Part II, entitled “Guiding principles for a just transition for all”, builds on the 2015 ILO Guidelines on a just transition as the central reference point for a just transition. By adopting the Committee’s conclusions, the International Labour Conference is endorsing those guidelines and calling for their implementation to be accelerated and scaled up.

Part III, entitled “The roles of governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations”, spells out the importance of effective engagement in social dialogue in all its forms, including collective bargaining, in order to share the benefits of technological progress, green transitions and demographic changes, and to share the benefits of decent work at the enterprise, sectoral and national levels. The conclusions also stress the importance of gender-responsive, inclusive, integrated and coherent just transition frameworks that are coordinated with relevant economic, social and environmental policies.

Part IV, entitled “The role of the International Labour Organization”, provides recommendations for action by the Office. Here, I would like to highlight that the conclusions call for the reinforcement of the leadership role of the ILO, which possesses a credibility that comes from being the only tripartite specialized United Nations agency representing governments, employers and workers. And this is to be done to advance a just transition in the multilateral system, including in the United Nations climate process, as well as ILO-led initiatives aimed at promoting policy coherence for a just transition.

I believe it is fair to say that the conclusions presented before you today provide sufficient guidance to the constituents, and to the Office, on this important matter, and reinforce the ILO's global leadership in advancing a just transition. Therefore, I now have the distinct honour and privilege of submitting to the International Labour Conference for adoption the resolution and conclusions concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

## Ms Mugo

### Employer Vice-Chairperson of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition

On behalf of the Employers' group, I am pleased to take the floor to state that it has been a great honour to participate in this session of the Conference as a member of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition.

I would like to recognize the strength and tenacity of my Worker counterpart, Ms Moore. It is only through efficient and constructive dialogue that we will evolve and thrive together. There is a lot that we can work together on and achieve, if there is a will to listen to each other and to accommodate interests for the benefit of all and to the detriment of no one. I must also commend the instrumental contributions from the Governments in providing guidance, support and local views and positions reflecting the different approaches to the needs and challenges that each local or sectoral context entails. I recognize the demanding but patient work that was done by Mr Ballans as Chairperson of this Committee. We could not have reached this stage without his invaluable involvement. Lastly, I want to thank my team of Employer representatives, who stood strong, worked diligently and always stood by me during these tough discussions.

As the two weeks conclude in this house of social dialogue, it must be said that a just transition will not be reached if there is no collaboration and shared responsibility. It would be disingenuous for us to assert that as constituents we do not share the same goal, as it is true that we must not only protect our environment, but also each other. We have concluded the work for this session of the Conference, but rest assured, our shared efforts are far from over. Commitment alone will not suffice. After hours of debate, we can resolve that a just transition will come through consensus, or else it will not happen. Principles are easy to discuss, hard to incorporate, and even harder to execute consciously. Nevertheless, this must be accomplished through, and by, the tripartite constituents for the benefit of our shared future.

As we stretched the breadth of our capacities and the depth of social dialogue in this Committee, there is an initial conclusion that I want to state. It would be not only irresponsible but also reckless for us to deny or repel the joint compromise we must make to work together for a just transition as a common goal. As a group, the Employers recognize the importance of our governments in providing adequate frameworks to accompany the other constituents who must, and will, work towards this common goal. These policies will have to be coherent and balanced, and must address the nexus between climate change, decent work and sustainable development. By all means, this must be the regulatory foundation on which we will build. Furthermore, the Employers' group wants to recognize the employees, who are and will be acknowledged openly by us in this endeavour.

The gravity of the problems that we now face and have discussed makes evident that no one is more or less important than any other member of this house, and that it is critical that we must work towards the possibility of a future for all. Sustainable enterprises are fundamental to achieving our common goal. It is not that this is the only thing that matters, as it is indeed a cornerstone of our economies and the only possibility for us to succeed. A

conducive business environment is a structure in which skills development, entrepreneurship, productivity growth and tackling informality can be addressed towards this end. The promotion of skills and lifelong learning, including quality apprenticeships that are responsive to labour market needs, are key enablers for this endeavour, and all constituents should focus on accelerating readiness in this area through collaborative efforts.

I speak for the private sector, which will most willingly play a fundamental role as a driver of innovation, economic growth and decent job creation in the transition towards sustainable and inclusive economies for all. Working towards a just transition will not only entail the betterment of our environment, but it will also be essential to the advancement of sustainable societies, since skills development, as has been said, will enable and reinforce employers and workers worldwide and serve as a buffer against negative impacts. Countries and their governments will focus on their national priorities and contexts, and collaborate with international partners to promote just transition pathways that respond to their specific needs and challenges. We must work together to enable access to finance and increase fiscal space for private sector action, and efficiently incentivize and support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to create new, sustainable and quality jobs in all regions.

Even though the phrase "in the spirit of compromise" was vastly used in the house and in our Committee, it must be said that we have worked together, not as opponents, but as constituents, in the spirit of survival. Now, it is not only through compromise, but certainly also through our mutual respect and efforts, that we will all be instrumental in accomplishing the task that has been bestowed upon us. This transition, as of today, is no longer an aspiration. Through our efforts, it has officially become a common global purpose that entails shared responsibilities to develop coherent and integrated policies that address climate change and environmental degradation to deliver positive economic and social outcomes that avoid unintended and negative impacts on our economies and the world of work.

After long debate, it can be stated that in this session of the Conference, through social dialogue and in the pursuit of our common goals, we are all honestly engaged in and committed to a just transition. We are not disingenuous. Let it be noted for all intents and purposes that this is, in fact, genius.

In conclusion, the Employers' group remains committed to engaging our social partners in a constructive manner to attain sustainability in our environment, our enterprises and our common goals. Then again, it is not to the benefit of one of the parties alone, or even through only one or two of the parties, but by all means: by all, through all and, most importantly, for all.

My deepest and personal thanks go to the ILO and the members of this Committee, including the Drafting Group, who have contributed significantly with their dedication and wisdom to the results that we present today, which we can all be proud of.

## **Ms Moore**

### **Worker Vice-Chairperson of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition**

It was an honour for me to represent the Workers' group to advance conclusions on a just transition that would assist this house in fulfilling its mandate. From the Workers' benches, we certainly felt the challenge of our responsibility to ensure that we had conclusions that would reflect the urgency to respond to the climate crisis and that would include a set of action-orientated measures that would make a difference for all of us.

It is particularly urgent for someone like me. Permit me to borrow a concept from one of the most prominent thinkers of decolonialization, Walter D. Mignolo, who observed: "I am where I think." I'm from the Caribbean, I'm a Barbadian, I carry with me the history of colonialism and slavery and I live on an island that many see as a nice place to come for a holiday but that I call home. A home that is under threat due to the climate crisis. I feel the urgency of the climate crisis; I don't need to be told any stories. And the thing is, all of us have a story, because your home – and your home, and your home – all of our homes are at risk. Yet, at times, the deliberations by some in our Committee caused me to reflect on how many of us treat death and dying: we know that it is inevitable, yet we seem not to recognize that the greatest loss is not death but that which lies inside of all of us while we are alive – our willingness to make a difference.

As we were fighting on language over the last few days and fighting to ensure that what was left for us was not a watered-down set of conclusions, New York City was covered by smoke from a wildfire in the forest in Quebec; more than 100 people are now dead and others missing. Lives were also lost in the Mediterranean after a boat carrying refugees and migrants capsized and sank. I pay tribute to these people. But also to the many others who left their homes to look for a better place and instead were met with death, racism and closed doors instead of open arms. Those that appear in the newspaper as statistics: migrants or refugees, but who are all humans like all of us here in this room, who had hopes and dreams but, sadly, these are those that were.

The Workers' group would have preferred not to be fighting over words, but we sometimes felt the pain of the dysfunctional nature of democracy and consensus-building, one which therefore required our very loyal opposition at times. I feel the urgency when I see my own daughter and I wonder if she will be able to enjoy our beautiful Barbados all her life, or if we will soon be counted among the migrants and climate refugees who may or may not survive. So to you, dear colleagues, who felt that I was passionate in defending our perspectives over the past two weeks, now you know: it is because I am where I think. And in this climate crisis, we had better recognize that we all are, and therefore we must now walk the talk.

The conclusions before us must be bolstered by political will. The political commitment for this house is established, of course, in the Declaration of Philadelphia, which we took to the debates on the climate action that was necessary. But what is this famous just transition that we have been speaking about? After years of internal debate and international lobbying, the trade union movement was successful in seeing the concept included even in the Preamble to the Paris Agreement. But moving from theory to practice requires our attention to two main components: transition and justice.

We must transition from a production model based on the intensive use of polluting energies with high environmental impacts that puts profits over people, towards a model that looks beyond the short term and puts people over profits. If we want to continue living on this planet, we have to think about another world of work.

Justice is multifaceted, including attention to social, economic, cultural, tax, gender, environmental, intergenerational, racial, local and regional aspects. Well, it is local, rooted in a development model that guarantees access to essential rights such as water, sanitation, food, shelter, education and health. It is also borderless, because inequality, and the production and consumption system that generates it, are global. The richest 10 per cent of the world can become totally green: it's easy for them. But at the same time, the market-driven transition process that we are in today relegates most other countries to the lowest segment of the chain,

to be victims, rather than beneficiaries, of the transition. That is why for the past two weeks we have been reiterating constantly that for workers to be part of the transition, the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining have to be guaranteed; there can be no transition without social dialogue.

Just transition cannot be limited to negotiating compensation for potentially lost jobs. It is about planning and protection of those who are or who will be affected and assuring their solidarity. For us, the conclusions deliver on these priorities that we set at the start of this exercise.

**Planning:** One of our main priorities was to reflect that the mandate of the ILO is to work on production and consumption patterns and therefore to focus and provide support to its Members on the design and implementation of sustainable industrial policies for the well-being of people, of course taking into account the planetary boundaries.

Certainly, to have sound and sustainable industrial policies, there is a need for a well-funded and well-staffed public sector and public investment in innovation, science and production. And we will certainly need responsible companies, engaged in complying with the Paris Agreement and respecting human and labour rights, to be an important source of decent jobs. The conclusions therefore reflect that tripartite commitment to planning and managing the transition, and this will be one area of priority for us.

**Protection:** Another of our priorities was to recognize that climate change, extreme weather events and climate patterns are a risk for the occupational health and safety of workers. We were therefore happy that the Committee was able to get the private sector to accept that, among other things, it has a pivotal role to play in helping us to reach 1.5 degrees, and that mitigation matters and is indeed urgent wherever it takes place on this earth. The conclusions recognize the need for policy guidance from the ILO and in this regard, we remain hopeful that the next step could be a tripartite meeting of experts on occupational safety and health and climate change.

Protection of all workers is crucial. Climate change is a major change and challenge for the world of work and would require, in some cases, drastic action. But this can be planned and implemented hand in hand, while protecting those affected. And this is not only for those who will lose their jobs because they work in polluting industries, but also those who, for example, will have to leave their jobs in tourism in coastal areas.

**Solidarity:** The Workers' group was fortunate to have a Maori representative from New Zealand in our group, and we have links with many indigenous organizations all over the world. Their lives and their livelihoods are at risk. Unfortunately, we didn't manage to reach an agreement to include in the text reparation to victims. On this, we felt left alone by Governments and Employers. However, we were able to have embedded in the conclusions the need to effectively implement both the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and through these, the access to remedy is covered in these conclusions. For the Workers' group, we commit to ensuring that, in the future, this pillar of the UN Guiding Principles will be more present in the work of the ILO. The conclusions recognize clearly that indigenous and tribal peoples have a role to play, as they know better than anyone about planetary health, and we believe they can help us in our work.

Last, but by no means least, by adopting these conclusions, the Conference will endorse the ILO's *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*. This means that the Director-General has work to do in leading our capacity to

bring them to the international arena, and to put a just transition at the heart of the Global Coalition for Social Justice. The voice of the ILO must be heard in calling for the effective and equitable use of fiscal and monetary instruments to ensure fiscal space for a just transition, and indeed to incentivize structural transformation towards a just transition.

We know that this is another step that we have taken in a very long journey, but we are proud of the Workers' group's contributions. I am proud of the Workers' group. We had many young trade unionists in that group, many of whom are already back home, and that is why they cannot join us here in plenary. We also had a room filled with experienced people: brothers and sisters who are already engaged in social dialogue, and particularly in collective bargaining at the sectoral and company levels. With our strength and knowledge, we have managed to bring the voice of workers to the discussion. Now, it is time for me to stop talking, and for all of us to stop talking. So we urge Members to build on these conclusions.

We also thank the secretariat, the Chairperson of our Committee, Mr Ballans, and of course my Employer counterpart, Ms Mugo, and her team for their respective contributions to the conclusions that are before this house.

We look forward to that dream envisioned by Louis Armstrong, the singer. I hope that one day we can see trees of green; red roses, too. Let's see them bloom for me and you, and think to ourselves: what a wonderful world. A day when transition, therefore, becomes a reality. A day when we can say, to use the favourite word of the Chairperson of our Committee, that everything is wonderful.

## Mr Ballans

### Chairperson of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition

It has been an honour for me to serve as the Chairperson of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition. I cannot imagine a more topical theme right now, when my country, Ghana, has the privilege of chairing the Climate Vulnerable Forum. The nearly 60 member countries of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, including small island developing States and least developed countries, are at the forefront of climate impacts. The rapid climatic change and environmental degradation are pushing the boundaries of our planet's ecosystems, jeopardizing the future of economies, societies, jobs and livelihoods. These changes are taking place in a complex context of today's multiple overlapping crises and conflicts. The challenges are therefore many, but the alternatives to making progress are non-existent.

The decision to raise the topic to a tripartite discussion at the Conference is both highly strategic and timely. These past days have confirmed the true commitment of actors in the world of work to take urgent action against environmental and climate change, in a way that is just and brings us closer to our common goal of social justice.

With your kind permission, I would like to offer some reflections on the work of the Committee at this session of the Conference. The speed and scale of the impact of climate change on workers, enterprises and communities are unprecedented. But while the challenges are evident and growing, the progress in addressing them has been insufficient. The general discussion on a just transition at this session of the Conference has allowed us to bring the full power of a tripartite approach to chart a way forward. During the past two weeks, we have listened to each other's concerns, presented our positions and deliberated on many complex issues in order to reach a common understanding and consensus on the measures that are needed. To mention a few, we have discussed: the role of industrial policies; the importance of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises; universal social protection; financing for



change; new demands on occupational safety and health; and skills development. These are real challenges that are also being debated in my home country, Ghana, and across the world, to ensure the well-being of our citizens today and tomorrow, and in the context of tightening fiscal space.

As has been mentioned by my colleagues, the Committee has worked tirelessly, and I mean tirelessly. Despite the difficult topics and frank exchanges of opinion, their interactions have been in the spirit of true social dialogue, where every voice is heard and respected. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Committee members for the collaborative approach adopted that enabled us to reach conclusions by consensus. The conclusions provide us with a critical sense of urgency to advance a just transition for the achievement of social justice, decent work and poverty eradication in response to environmental and climate change. They endorse the ILO's *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* as the central reference for policymaking and the basis for action, and strengthen the ILO's global leadership in the endeavour towards a just transition for all. The conclusions have enabled us to agree on guidance for the ILO and its Members on a range of priority areas for action, in line with the respective rules of Member States.

The conclusions we submit to the Conference for adoption are the result of the outstanding work of the Committee. They show the power of tripartite negotiations and social dialogue. They confirm that it is possible to forge consensus, even in complex and sensitive areas of the world of work. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the engagement of all members of the Committee. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Ms Jacqueline Mugo, Employer Vice-Chairperson, and Ms Toni Moore, Worker Vice-Chairperson, whose names I kept switching during the discussions. I would also like to thank Ms Thompson, the representative of the Secretary-General, and the entire secretariat, who worked tirelessly throughout the Conference to support the work of the Committee, and for that we are truly grateful and we appreciate all the work you did for us.

We, the members of the Committee, and all the delegates at this Conference, have a key responsibility, not only to the people we represent, but also to future generations. It is my hope that, with our work, we can look our children in the face and say that we did everything within our power to advance a just transition, social equity and sustainable economies and societies for all. To quote my fellow Ghanaian, the late Kofi Annan of blessed memory, "The world is not ours to keep. We hold it in trust for future generations."

## The President

I thank the Reporter and the Officers of the Committee for their statements. I now open the floor for the discussion of the outcome of the Committee's work.

## Ms Qian

### Government (China), speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group

At the outset, I would like to commend the able leadership of the Chairperson of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition and the concerted efforts of all members of the Committee to reach a consensus through respectful, faithful and inclusive social dialogue. I also thank the Office and all its technical staff, as well as the interpreters behind the scenes for their important assistance to the work of the Committee.

Given the challenges and opportunities in the fast-evolving world of work, we believe that a just transition is imperative to achieving social justice, decent work and poverty eradication. Meanwhile, it is key to tackling environmental degradation and climate change, which have

become severe challenges for all Member States, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States. We appreciate the placement of a just transition on the agenda of this session of the Conference, which has enabled the tripartite constituents from all over the world to have an in-depth conversation on this critical topic. In the past two weeks, we were proud to witness that Governments, Employers and Workers are taking steps in solidarity to articulate the urgent call for a just transition and to reaffirm their support for the ILO to take a leadership role in this regard within the multilateral system.

The Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG) strongly supports the adoption of the resolution concerning a just transition and encourages this Organization to take full advantage of its normative function, unique tripartite structure and expertise to address the challenges ahead of us. We also support the ILO in its work to strengthen policy coherence and cooperation with all stakeholders, including the UN development system, international financial institutions, regional organizations and development partners, in order to promote a just transition while advancing social justice and realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We are glad to see the progress achieved by the ILO so far to support the constituents in this area by means of knowledge-sharing, technical assistance, capacity-building and development cooperation, including South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation. Specifically, we welcome concrete outcomes such as the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, which were a result of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Sustainable Development, Decent Work and Green Jobs, as well as the Climate Action for Jobs initiative, which is spearheaded by the ILO.

Standing at this crucial juncture, ASPAG would like to renew its commitment to engage with all the delegates here to continue this pivotal discussion in pursuit of developing a comprehensive and strategic vision on a just transition. A human-centred approach could properly inform and facilitate industry policymaking, job creation and technology and skills development at the national level.

ASPAG firmly believes that it is the common aspiration of all Member States to build a world of work in the future for all, based on environmental, economic and social sustainability, through the effective implementation of this resolution and its impactful delivery by the ILO in the years to come.

### Mr Bogani

Government (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries  
(Original Spanish)

The representatives of the Workers, Employers and Governments have worked incredibly hard in the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition. As a result, we now have a document with criteria and guidance to manage the transition to more sustainable societies. The drafting of this document would not have been possible without the assistance of Office staff and their dedicated participation at the various Committee meetings. The Office provided its knowledge and experience, which enabled us to clarify various substantive matters, as well as procedural aspects and those relating to the functioning of the Committee and the ILO in general.

The Latin American and Caribbean countries always endeavour to contribute to a constructive dialogue and the quest for consensus, with a view to obtaining a document such as the one that has been drawn up, with clear concepts, criteria and guidelines. We made

contributions collectively, as the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC), and also in our own national capacities, whenever there were common topics that went beyond regional considerations.

As we see it, these conclusions, together with the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, will be a guide for action in the promotion of decent work in the context of caring for and mitigating the effects of climate change on the environment. In countries like those in our region, the transition must be carried out together with productive transformation, which needs to involve a process of growth in green jobs and the development of our societies. These processes should focus in particular on indigenous and tribal peoples, groups in situations of vulnerability, the gender perspective and communities affected by climate change.

In our opening statement to the Committee, we stated that our region had paid dearly for the adverse effects of climate change. We continue to maintain that we are paying dearly in this regard, so we call on the developed nations to comply with the whole of the Paris Agreement. The discussions we have had and the document we have drafted are of paramount importance to our region, because they will enable us to improve the actions that are already under way related to the promotion of green employment, sustainable enterprises and the quest for more integrated societies that are respectful of the environment. We return to our capitals with new ideas and projects, we return with a renewed commitment to social justice. For all these reasons, Mr President, we would like once again to thank the representatives of the Workers and the Employers, and the Government officials.

## Mr Jarefors

### Government (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

I speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Georgia, Iceland, Norway, Members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

As we are all aware, the structure of the ILO, which was founded on social dialogue, gives an equal voice to workers, employers and governments. Based on this established practice we have consensually agreed to conclusions on a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

The timing of this general discussion on a just transition has indeed been most opportune, as urgent action to advance just transition is an imperative to achieving social justice, decent work and poverty eradication and tackling environmental and climate change. We recognize the utmost importance of this Committee, working on this pressing and defining issue for our time.

As we said in our opening statement in this Committee, just transition is not just a transition; it is a transition that aims at social justice. It should create quality job opportunities for everyone and, also, contribute to raising incomes, reducing inequalities and poverty overall. It can thus tackle pre-existing socio-economic inequalities and social exclusion, improving health and well-being and promoting fairness and equality, including gender equality.

It was evident from our discussion that a just transition is central to delivering sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions and to addressing the linkages between them. Coherent and integrated strategies are key to facilitate the transition

to the formal economy and prevent the informalization of formal economy jobs, paying particular attention to sectors that are highly impacted by environmental and climate change.

The conclusions highlight the need to promote skills and lifelong learning as enablers for a just transition and as a buffer against adverse impacts of change. Governments should, in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, anticipate skills needs and identify skills mismatches, invest in systems to provide equitable access to skills and monitor how effective these systems are.

We believe that the final conclusions adopted by the Committee on a Just Transition will strengthen the principles outlined in the ILO's *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, exploiting policy synergies to maximize the positive and minimize the negative impacts of measures to mitigate climate change and adapt our societies to deal with its consequences, thereby enabling a tangible step forward in achieving a just transition.

The EU and its Member States acknowledge the strength of the ILO with its unique tripartite composition and its deeply rooted expertise in the field of the world of work. This expertise should be put to use in the green transition and the ILO should participate in leading global policy platforms and conferences, along with providing technical support and assistance to ILO constituents.

This set of action-oriented conclusions should guide and encourage the ILO and its constituents in promoting and accelerating its efforts to respond to the climate and environmental crisis in achieving a just transition.

We certainly hope that the adoption of these conclusions will, ultimately, be a step forward in achieving a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.

## Ms Mattos Guzmán

Worker (Peru)

(Original Spanish)

For the drafting group of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition, preparing the conclusions presented a significant challenge, particularly with regard to two aspects of critical importance: occupational safety and health, and indigenous and tribal peoples.

First, occupational safety and health is a very important and sensitive aspect of creating decent work. In 2022, during the 110th Session of the International Labour Conference, occupational safety and health was added as a fundamental principle and right at work. Working people in the world of work are facing the consequences of the climate crisis, with the physical and mental health of workers being particularly affected as a result of various factors, including greater exposure to extreme temperatures, which causes acute and chronic respiratory conditions, skin conditions and, ultimately, an increase in mortality. Heat stress leads to acute and serious mental health conditions, including anxiety, depression and others. It is crucial to include a preventative approach to occupational safety and health and the management of new risks related to climate change in the conclusions. It is important to implement preventative measures for workers exposed to climate hazards and extreme weather events. If we do not take timely action, workers will be left without a safe and healthy working environment.

Second, it is very important to recognize that indigenous and tribal peoples and rural communities have rights, as we develop inclusive and equitable measures to achieve a just transition. That is to say, it is important to work both with and for them, making use of their ancestral knowledge and their resilience in saving the planet. This is a tremendous opportunity to reaffirm their right to be involved, in an effective manner, in decisions that affect them and thereby draw up a road map to enable them to overcome their situation of vulnerability. This will be possible only through effective social dialogue, strategic alliances and collective actions, in the same way that these have been part of the activity of the workers' movement through the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas. We call on the ILO to continue to promote the ratification of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

### **Ms Chipeleme Worker (Zambia)**

I would like to congratulate all my fellow members of the Committee for the incredible work we have done. As usual, there were moments when we were thinking that we would never see the end of the tunnel, but we did.

However, as we know, we have a lot of work ahead of us and a huge responsibility. As a member of the ILO Governing Body, my duty will be to make sure that our conclusions turn into a substantive plan of action that will reflect the sense of urgency that we need. In the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, we made a commitment to reinvigorate the ILO mandate set out in the Declaration of Philadelphia, which, to us, is like a very good piece of classical music that will never be outdated. It is like Beethoven's "Ode to Joy"; this is our Ode to Social Justice. In fact, these conclusions are an adaptation of that. Today's symphony must be an Ode to Social and Environmental Justice, because both are interconnected.

Let me pass on just one message: it is time to act. It is time to implement the ILO's *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* (2015) and to work together from the design to the implementation of the industrial policies and production and consumption models that take into consideration all our needs and the need to phase out fossil fuels.

From the trade union movement, we are committed to doing so and we are proud to be working on just transition, a concept that we brought to the table; but we are not attached to it as a child holds on to a toy. It is no longer just a toy and the conclusions show that clearly. Just transition reflects a common global purpose that entails responsibilities for everyone, including governments, employers and workers.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our colleague Ms Toni Moore for the excellent work she did representing the Workers on the Committee; the Chairperson, Mr Kizito Ballans, for his patience and excellent chairing; and the members of the Committee for their commitment.

## **Resolution and conclusions concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all**

### **The President**

Let us now proceed with the adoption of the proposed resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, which contains the Committee's conclusions, the text of which is included in Record of Proceedings No. 7A.

If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts the proposed resolution and the conclusions contained therein?

**(The resolution and conclusions are adopted.)**

I would like to thank all the members of the Committee, and the members of the secretariat working behind the scenes, for their commitment and dedication. Congratulations to them all for these excellent results.

**(The Conference continued its work in plenary.)**