



SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Revision of the Rules for Regional Meetings**Introductory Note**

1. At its 301st (March 2008) Session, the Governing Body recommended that the 97th Session (June 2008) of the International Labour Conference confirm a number of amendments to the Rules for Regional Meetings, while requesting that further adaptations be made as needed to reflect gender equality.¹ Those amendments, as so revised, were confirmed by the 97th Session of the International Labour Conference.² At the same session, the Governing Body requested the Office to prepare a revised Introductory Note to the Rules, which is appended.
2. In preparing the revised Note to reflect the latest amendments, the Office took into account the discussion in the Committee in March 2008. Particular attention was paid to the interest expressed to have a shorter Note that included references to the Rules rather than repeating their content. In particular, the proposed Note focuses on the 2008 revisions that have significant practical implications. These include, for example, the timing of initial group meetings in relation to publication of a provisional list of delegates and the two-hour period for filing objections (section 1 of the Note); privileges and immunities at the Meeting venue (section 2); attendance of eminent public figures and Officers of the Governing Body (section 3), the right to address the Meeting in light of the expansion of article 10 to “persons”, with an emphasis on priority for delegates (section 4); and the timing of publication of credentials lists and competence over communications (section 5).
3. As requested, the existing text was streamlined at several points by use of references to the Rules themselves in order to avoid repeating provisions of the Rules.³ Similarly, the Note does not repeat several of the latest revisions which seem clear from reading the provisions themselves such as consequential changes or revisions made for the purpose of updating or

¹ GB.301/LILS/2 and GB.301/11(Rev.), para. 25; GB.301/PV, para. 224.

² See *Provisional Record* No. 2-1B, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008.

³ For example, in section 4 of the Note, a partial reference to certain duties of the Officers was replaced with a reference to their duties found in paragraph 5 of article 6 of the Rules.

clarifying references.⁴ A further proposed revision to section 6 of the Note would seek to clarify the current wording by affirming that it is the Governing Body, and not the Office, which decides on what action to take in implementing Regional Meeting decisions.

- 4. *The Committee may wish to recommend to the Governing Body that it approve the revised Introductory Note found in the appendix, and to publish it together with the Rules for Regional Meetings (2008).***

Geneva, 24 October 2008.

Point for decision: Paragraph 4.

⁴ See, for example, the revisions to the Rules involving article 1, paragraphs 7 and 8; article 13; and the new footnotes 1 and 2.

Appendix

Rules for Regional Meetings

Introductory Note

For budgetary reasons, the Governing Body decided at its 264th Session (November 1995) to replace the Organization's Regional Conferences by shorter Regional Meetings with a single agenda item, which would still be considered as Regional Conferences for purposes of article 38 of the ILO Constitution. On the authority conferred to it by the International Labour Conference, the Governing Body adopted a set of new rules on an experimental basis at its 267th Session (November 1996). Based on experience with the new rules drawn from five Regional Meetings, the Governing Body adopted, at its 283rd Session (March 2002), a revised version of the Rules, which was confirmed by the 90th Session (June 2002) of the Conference. Taking account of further experience gained from five Regional Meetings since June 2002, the Governing Body adopted a second revised version of the Rules in its 301st Session (March 2008), which were confirmed by the 97th Session (June 2008) of the Conference. The Governing Body also agreed to the following guidelines to accompany the Rules.

1. Purpose and length of Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings offer the opportunity for tripartite delegations to express their views on the programming and implementation of the ILO's regional activities. Group meetings are held before the start of the discussion in plenary of the single agenda item related to ILO activities in the region concerned. Groups may meet at any other time at their request. The Meeting lasts four days unless the Governing Body decides otherwise.

2. Date, frequency and place of Regional Meetings

Normally, a Regional Meeting is held each year in one of the four regions in the following order: Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, Africa and Europe. Regional Meetings are in principle held in the country where the relevant ILO regional office is located. Any member State hosting a Regional Meeting shall guarantee at least the level of protection afforded under the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex I concerning the ILO.

3. Composition

Subject to the discretion of the Governing Body, the composition of each Regional Meeting is determined on the basis of States and territories (or States responsible for the territories) which are served by the following four ILO regional offices: Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (including the States covered by the Regional Office for Arab States); Regional Office for the Americas; Regional Office for Africa; and Regional Office for Europe.

Article 1 of the Rules provides for the composition of the delegations of States or territories invited to the Meeting. As regards advisers, account should be taken of the fact that there is only one item on the agenda. Additional advisers may be appointed in the delegation of a State responsible for a territory that has not sent a separate tripartite delegation to the Meeting.

Member States from a different region, non-member States, official international organizations or non-governmental international organizations of universal or regional

character may also be represented at Regional Meetings on the basis of individual or standing invitations of the Governing Body. Requests to be represented at Regional Meetings should accordingly reach the Office at the latest before the opening of the Governing Body session preceding the Regional Meeting concerned. Eminent public figures and Officers of the Governing Body who are not accredited as delegates to the Regional Meeting may also attend the Meeting.

4. Right to address the Meeting and conduct of business

Under article 10, no person may address the Meeting without the permission of the Chairperson, with priority given to delegates (or their substitutes). Without prejudice to the flexibility afforded to the Officers of the Meeting to discharge their duties under article 6, paragraph 5, the time limit for speeches is in principle five minutes.

5. Credentials

In view of the short duration of the Meetings, the credentials of delegates and their advisers must be submitted 15 days before the opening date of the Meeting (article 1, paragraph 3). A preliminary list of participants is published electronically a week before the opening of the Meeting. Two additional lists are made available at the Meeting: a provisional list of credentials of delegations by the scheduled time for the opening of the Meeting, and a final list of accredited delegations on the morning of the last day of the Meeting. The Office will also publish electronically on the last day a list of persons who actually registered at the Meeting.

Under article 9, the Credentials Committee is competent to receive and examine objections alleging non-observance of article 1, paragraph 2 (designations made in agreement with the most representative organizations of employers and workers in the State or territory concerned); time permitting, complaints alleging the non-payment of travel and subsistence expenses (article 1, paragraph 1); and communications.

Objections are to be submitted within two hours after the scheduled time for the opening of the Meeting, although the Committee may find valid reason to accept a late objection (article 9, paragraph 3(a)). In order to facilitate the work of the Credentials Committee under time constraints, objections (and complaints) should be submitted as soon as possible, even before the publication of the name of the delegate or adviser whose credentials are impugned.

The Credentials Committee submits a report to the Meeting under article 9, paragraph 4 which shall be brought to the attention of the Governing Body. There is no discussion of the report at the plenary of the Meeting.

6. Form, nature and evaluation of results

The decisions of Regional Meetings normally take the form of conclusions, reports, or resolutions relating to the item on the agenda (article 3). Decisions will be taken by consensus whenever practicable or, if not possible, normally by show of hands (article 12, paragraphs 3 and 4). While there is no provision for a record vote or secret ballot, the Rules do not exclude voting by such means.

The decisions of the Meeting are submitted by the Office to the Governing Body at the earliest session after the Regional Meeting. The Governing Body may make observations on the results, decide on the implementation of action called for by the Meeting and request the Office to report on the matter by a certain time, or take such other action as may be appropriate.