



## SEVENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Report of the Steering Group on the  
Follow-up to the Declaration on Social  
Justice for a Fair Globalization****Oral report by the Chairperson of the  
Steering Group, HE Mr Z. Rapacki,  
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland  
and Permanent Representative of Poland  
to the United Nations in Geneva**

1. The second meeting of the Steering Group on the Follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization was held on 19 March 2009. HE Mr Rapacki (Government, Poland), Chairperson of the Governing Body, chaired the meeting; Mr Julien (Employers' group) and Mr Patel (Workers' group) were the Vice-Chairpersons. The Steering Group consisted of 16 Government members (Argentina, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Tunisia, United States and Uruguay), eight Employer members and eight Worker members. Other members of the Governing Body attended in an observer capacity.
2. The Chairperson reminded the Steering Group that several issues directly related to the follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization were not before the Steering Group, as they would be dealt with in other forums.
3. The decision to add an item to the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference – to review the operation of the follow-up to the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work – would be taken up by the Governing Body next week.
4. The proposal to include on the agenda of the 100th Session (2011) of the Conference a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security) would also be considered next week by the Governing Body.
5. Finally, the question of the General Survey and article 19 questionnaire on social security would be discussed in the LILS Committee on Friday, 20 March 2009, and the outcome reported to the Governing Body in the report of that Committee.

## Implementation plan: ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization

6. Only one item was on the agenda of the Steering Group, namely, “Implementation plan: ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization”. The Steering Group had before it a paper<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the representative of the Director-General (Ms O’Donovan).
7. Overall, the implementation plan was welcomed by the Steering Group. Members expressed their appreciation for the presentation of the plan in the form of a road map covering all the elements of the Declaration, its annex and the resolution. The fact that the Declaration and the resolution were both fully taken into account and given equal importance was also welcomed. For all action points, this road map identified a time frame, the linkages to the Strategy Policy Framework and the programme and budget, the relevant governance forums and the units or teams with primary responsibility for implementation. It thus met the requirements that the Steering Group had set out. It constituted a useful tool that would assist the Governing Body in its governance role for the future.
8. The Worker and Employer spokespersons, as well as a number of Government speakers, made proposals for improvements in some areas. In particular, there was concern that the detailed and systematic approach adopted by the road map might convey the idea of fragmented implementation. The Steering Group considered that it would be useful to reinforce the overall coherence by showing the linkages between the various related actions.
9. The ownership of the Declaration by the Organization as a whole and by all parts of the Office was also highlighted as an overarching priority. This would mean a profound change in working methods favouring synergies and cross-Office work. In particular, the recurrent item reports should be developed in a collaborative manner by all parts of the Office and should establish coherence at both strategic and operational levels.
10. The lead role of the Senior Management Team (SMT) in relation to the implementation of the Declaration should be clearly stated. The SMT should drive the process internally and should be empowered to do so. Both the Employer and Worker spokespersons reiterated their request that ACTRAV and ACT/EMP be made members of the SMT.
11. A number of action points in the road map identified further processes and decisions. The Steering Group expressed high expectations concerning the new knowledge strategy and the new Human Resources Strategy, both to be presented to the Governing Body in November 2009. The communications strategy, to be presented during the same session, was also expected to spell out how the Declaration could be widely promoted. The progress report to be submitted in November 2009 on the external evaluation of the Office’s evaluation function was also identified as a very important element.
12. The issue of capacity building was highlighted as being critical for the implementation of the Declaration. Obviously, it should apply to all three constituents; the role of the Turin Centre was considered of key importance in that respect. The Employer spokesperson insisted that training should be seen in the context of a wider capacity-building process that should, for the Employers, be under the control of ACT/EMP.

<sup>1</sup> GB.304/SG/DECL/1.

13. A number of additions and refinements to the road map were suggested by the Worker and Employer spokespersons and Government members of the Group. They related in particular to the identification of the lead responsibility and suggestions for some additional language to define some action points more clearly.
14. Concerning the introduction of a scheme of recurrent discussions by the International Labour Conference, the question of the length of the cycle was before the Steering Group. Most speakers favoured a seven-year cycle that would allow each strategic objective to be discussed at least once, with employment, social protection and fundamental principles and rights at work being discussed twice in each cycle. A member, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), said that, even though the EU still considered a six-year cycle more coherent, it would not block the emerging consensus for a seven-year cycle.
15. The Steering Group supported the establishment of a Governing Body working party to consider how the governance functions of the Governing Body and the Conference could be strengthened. The Office could prepare a paper for the June 2009 session of the Governing Body that would make proposals for the terms of reference, composition and time frame for the work of such a working party.
16. The Steering Group on the Follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization was established on a temporary basis. With the adoption of the implementation plan of the Declaration it would have fulfilled its initial mandate. A consensus emerged among members during the discussion that the Steering Group should be reconvened in November 2010, after the first recurrent item discussion on employment at the Conference in June 2010. This would make it possible to review the experience and draw lessons from that first discussion.
17. The Steering Group discussed different options concerning the evaluation of the follow-up to the Declaration. If the evaluation by the International Labour Conference were to take place only at the end of a full seven-year cycle, it would not take place before 2017. A number of different options were proposed by members, including the idea of biennial evaluations or of a mid-term evaluation when all four strategic objectives would be discussed at once. The members agreed that, as no immediate decision was needed on this matter, there would be time for further reflection and discussion.
18. To sum up, the discussions in the Steering Group were very positive, open and constructive, and were undertaken in a real spirit of partnership to achieve the common objective of strengthening the ILO's capacity to support its Members' efforts in this particularly challenging time. Responding to the suggestions and comments made during the discussion, the representative of the Director-General (Ms O'Donovan) undertook to review the specific comments and suggestions made. These would be included in a revised text, in so far as they related to clarifying the language of the road map and reinforcing the text to emphasize the role of the SMT, the importance of coherence, the forthcoming strategies on knowledge and human resources, the independent evaluation of the evaluation function of the Office and a communications strategy to promote the Declaration.
19. ***The Steering Group recommends to the Governing Body that it:***
  - (i) ***adopt the implementation plan of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization;***
  - (ii) ***adopt a seven-year cycle for the recurrent item discussions, with employment, social protection and fundamental principles and rights at work being discussed twice in the cycle;***

- (iii) establish a Governing Body working party on the working methods of the Governing Body and the functioning of the Conference and request the Office to prepare a proposal for submission to the 305th Session (June 2009) of the Governing Body; and*
- (iv) reconvene the Steering Group on the Follow-up to the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization at the 309th Session (November 2010) of the Governing Body to review the experience gained and lessons learned from the organization of the first recurrent item discussion on employment and such other matters as may be referred to it by the Governing Body.*

Geneva, 23 March 2009.

*Point for decision:* Paragraph 19.