

Provisional Record

100th Session, Geneva, June 2011

6



First sitting

Wednesday, 1 June, 2011, 10.15 a.m.

Presidents: Mr Matjila, Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and Mr Nkili

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr MATJILA (*Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*)

It is my honour, as Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, to declare open the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference.

I would also like to take the opportunity to wish you all a warm welcome to Geneva.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr MATJILA (*Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*)

Our first task is to elect the President of the Conference. May I now call for nominations for the post?

Mr MAJOR (*Government, Hungary, speaking on behalf of the Government group*)

Ladies and gentlemen, in my capacity as Chairperson of the Government group, I have the great pleasure and honour to present the candidacy of Minister Robert Nkili of Cameroon to serve as President of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. Minister Nkili has a very impressive and solid academic, political and international background, and holds a doctorate in the field of international affairs. In addition to his roles as a permanent and assistant member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, he also served as coordinator for the Africa group in the ILO for a period of two years. As far as his political background is concerned, Minister Nkili is the longest serving Minister of Labour on the African continent. I am therefore convinced that the Conference would be making an excellent choice if it were to appoint Minister Nkili to serve as President of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference.

Original Spanish: Mr FUNES DE RIOJA (Employer Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office)

On behalf of the Employers' group, it is my pleasure and my honour to support the nomination made by the Government group. Mr Robert Nkili, Minister of Labour and Social Security of Cameroon, has the profile and meets the conditions to play this role, a very important one, given that this is the 100th Session of the Conference. I therefore confirm the support of the Employers.

Mr TROTMAN (*Worker Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*)

Like my colleague, Mr Funes de Rioja, I have very great pleasure in being able to declare my profound pleasure in having the Minister of Labour of Cameroon as the President of this session of the Conference. I would like to say that we think that he has made a tremendous contribution to the House and we look forward to his chairing this session. Our congratulations to him.

Mr MATJILA (*Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office*)

The proposal made by Ambassador Major of Hungary on behalf of the Government group has been duly seconded. In the absence of other proposals, I have great pleasure in declaring His Excellency, Mr Robert Nkili, Minister of Labour and Social Security of Cameroon, President of the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. I offer him my warmest congratulations and invite him to come up to the podium to take the chair.

(Mr Nkili, Minister of Labour and Social Security, Cameroon, is elected President of the Conference and takes the President's chair.)

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Original French: The PRESIDENT

My election to the presidency of this session of the International Labour Conference is a great honour for me, for the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, for my country, guided by its Head of State, His Excellency, Mr Paul Biya, and an honour for the whole of Africa.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the Government regional group for Africa which has been kind enough to put forward and support my candidacy. I would like to thank the other regional groups, as well as the Employers' and Workers' groups, because, without their support, this election would simply not have been possible. I assure all of you of my commitment to live up to the trust that has been placed in me and shall assume the tasks of this presidency with humility, responsibility and determination. I would also like to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to my predecessor, Mr Gilles de Robien, for the competence and efficiency with which he managed the work of the previous Conference.

At this symbolic and historical 100th Session of the Conference, whose main theme is “Building a future with decent work”, and on the eve of the centenary of the International Labour Organization, it is particularly significant for me to assume this post at a time when the world is considering the ways and means for putting an end to poverty and inequalities, and ensuring prosperity for all. I believe that this must shape our entire commitment, so that we can adopt new approaches and new actions to equip us to meet the current economic and social challenges.

The agenda of this session of the Conference takes up topics that are a real challenge both for the world and for our Organization. Referring to only one in this brief statement, I would stress that the financial, economic and social crisis has clearly shown that social protection acts as an economic stabilizer and helps to promote peace and preserve the dignity of human beings.

I believe it is appropriate, at this point, to ask ourselves how we might extend social security, including from the standpoint of social protection. Let us therefore take this opportunity, afforded by the Conference, to make important progress on this subject and also on the other topics that are included on the agenda, such as decent work for domestic workers and labour administration and labour inspection.

Given the complexity of all these problems, we should seek to retain a balance in our discussions over the next three weeks. This is why, as President of the Conference, I shall not spare any effort to ensure, to the extent possible, that the agenda items before us will be dealt with in an effective and constructive manner. I know that I can count on your support throughout the Conference and, at the same time, I am convinced that your participation in the work of the committees and the plenary will be guided by the spirit of consensus which has always prevailed within this Organization.

In acting in this way, we shall bear in mind the vocation of the ILO – which perhaps you would allow me to describe in the following manner: one, faced with the lack of jobs, to encourage research in job creation; second, faced with conflict, to promote dialogue; third, faced with social insecurity, to promote social protection; and fourth and finally, faced with inequalities, to make sure that equity and justice prevail.

We are all committed to a very important project: to ensure that the ILO is a major player in seeking solutions to bring about a better world of work and a society in which each and everyone can develop their potential. The Decent Work Agenda, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization and the Global Jobs Pact have already brought us a long way along this path. We now have to consolidate our achievements and move forward.

In this respect, I endorse the words of the Director-General, Mr Somavia, which I shall willingly repeat here. “We can have ‘efficient growth’ by combining the positive effects and dealing appropriately with the trade-offs between the following objectives within specific national and regional contexts: sound macroeconomic policies; higher level of investment and decent work creation through sustainable enterprises in the real economy; promoting inclusive and fair labour markets, including international labour standards; putting the financial system at the service of the real economy; making fiscal policies more progressive.”

In reiterating my thanks to you, I would like to emphasize that some tasks simply cannot be done single-handed. This is what we say in Africa. This is why I count on each one of you, on your intelligence, to make sure that this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference will become a milestone, a reference point, and will help us to achieve our objectives and to renew the expression of our aspirations and legitimate ambitions for economic and social success.

COMPOSITION OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

We shall now begin with the composition of the Credentials Committee. Under article 5 of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, the Conference is called upon to establish a Credentials Committee and appoint its members. I call on the Clerk of the Conference to announce the nominations made by the groups for this Committee.

Original French: The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

The nominations for the Credentials Committee are as follows: for the Government group, Mr Vokouma (*Burkina Faso*); for the Employers’ group, Ms Horvatić (*Croatia*); and for the Workers’ Group, Mr Veyrier (*France*).

Original French: The PRESIDENT

If there are no objections, may I take it that these proposals are adopted?

(The proposals are adopted.)

ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE CONFERENCE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

In accordance with article 25, paragraph 2, of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference, we shall now elect the Vice-Presidents of the Conference. I call on the Clerk of the Conference to read out the nominations made by the groups.

Original French : The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

The nominations to the positions of Vice-Presidents of the Conference are as follows: for the Government group, Mr Hernández Sánchez (*Dominican Republic*); for the Employers, Mr Lima Godoy (*Brazil*); for the Workers, Mr Hossu (*Romania*).

Original French: The PRESIDENT

If there is no objection, may I take it that these proposals are adopted?

(The proposals are adopted.)

NOMINATION OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GROUPS

Original French: The PRESIDENT

I would now ask the Clerk to indicate to the Conference the names of persons who have been nominated by the groups as their respective Officers.

Original French: The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

The groups have chosen their officers as follows:
Government group:

Chairperson:

Mr Major (*Hungary*)

Employers' group:

Chairperson:

Mr Funes de Rioja (*Argentina*)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Ms Goldberg (*United States*)

Ms Muñoz (*Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*)

Mr Oshinowo (*Nigeria*)

Mr Rahman (*Bangladesh*)

Mr Rønneest (*Denmark*)

Secretary:

Mr Peñalosa (*International Organisation of Employers*)

Workers' group:

Chairperson:

Mr Trotman (*Barbados*)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Mr Ahmed (*Pakistan*)

Ms Diallo (*Guinea*)

Ms Anderson (*Mexico*)

Mr De Leeuw (*Belgium*)

Secretary:

Ms González (*International Trade Union Confederation*)

In addition to the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairs, the following persons are also Officers of the Workers' group: Mr Ghandour (*Sudan*); Mr Atwoli (*Kenya*); Ms Kearney (*Australia*); Mr Sakurada (*Japan*); Ms Del Rio (*Italy*); Mr Shmakov (*Russian Federation*); Mr Martínez (*Argentina*); and Ms Fox (*United States*).

CONSTITUTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

Original French: The PRESIDENT

We will now move on to the constitution and composition of the Committees which will be responsible for examining the different questions before the Conference. In addition to the Credentials Committee, which has already been appointed, the Conference will no doubt wish to set up the following committees: the Committee on the Application of Standards; the Finance Committee; the Selection Committee; the Committee on Domestic Workers; the Committee on Labour Administration; and the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Social Security).

The composition of the Committees, as proposed by the groups, may be consulted here in the room. If there is no objection, may I consider that these proposals are adopted?

(The proposals are adopted.)

COMPOSITION OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

I would now like to ask the Clerk of the Conference to read out the nominations made by the groups for the composition of the Selection Committee.

Original French: The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

The nominations for the composition of the Selection Committee, in accordance with article 4 of the Standing Orders, are as follows: the 28 Government members are the regular Government members of the Governing Body of the following countries: South Africa, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brazil, Burundi, China, United States, France, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan,

Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria, Panama, Poland, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, Singapore, United Republic of Tanzania, Czech Republic, Tunisia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The deputy Government members are as follows: Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Congo, Republic of Korea, Cuba, Egypt, El Salvador, Spain, Ghana, Guinea, Hungary, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Lebanon, Lithuania, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zambia.

The 14 regular Employer members are: Mr Ferrer Dufol (*Spain*); Mr Funes de Rioja (*Argentina*); Ms Goldberg (*United States*); Mr Julien (*France*); Mr Lima Godoy (*Brazil*); Mr Matsui (*Japan*); Mr Mattar (*United Arab Emirates*); Mr Mdwaba (*South Africa*); Mr Modi (*India*); Ms Mugo (*Kenya*); Mr Oshinowo (*Nigeria*); Mr Rønneest (*Denmark*); Mr Syder (*United Kingdom*); and Mr Traore (*Mali*).

The deputy Employer members are: Mr Allam (*Egypt*); Mr Arumugam (*Malaysia*); Mr Brauner (*Austria*); Mr Chen (*China*); Mr Echevarría Saldarriaga (*Colombia*); Ms Horvatić (*Croatia*); Mr Jeetun (*Mauritius*); Ms Muñoz (*Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela*); Mr Nacoulma (*Burkina Faso*); Mr O'Reilly (*New Zealand*); Mr de Regil (*Mexico*); Ms Regenbogen (*Canada*); Mr Thorns (*Germany*); and Mr Varela (*Philippines*).

The regular Worker members are those nominated as Officers of the Worker's group, as read out previously.

The deputy Worker members are: Mr Cortebeek (*Belgium*); Mr Gurney (*United Kingdom*); Ms Yacob (*Singapore*); and Ms Kelly (*New Zealand*).

Original French: The PRESIDENT

If there are no objections, may I consider that the proposals for the composition of the Selection Committee are adopted?

(The proposals are adopted.)

SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE CONFERENCE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

We now move on to the matter of suspension of certain provisions of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference. Under article 76, the Conference cannot take the decision to suspend a provision of the Standing Orders until the sitting following that at which the proposal to suspend the Standing Orders was made. Given that the next plenary sitting on the agenda is to be held on Wednesday, 8 June, the three Vice-Presidents and myself propose that the Conference today hold two plenary sittings to be separated by a short interval, during which I will ask you to remain in your seats. At the first sitting – now under way – the suspension of certain provisions of the Standing Orders will be proposed. Then, at the next plenary sitting, the Conference will adopt the decision for suspension which is now being proposed.

Some of these suspensions relate to the plenary, while others concern the committees. As far as necessary, and only as regards the Global Report which the Director-General presents each year under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998, as well as the panels to be held in plenary, we propose sus-

pending article 12, paragraph 3, of the Standing Orders, which limits the number of statements by each delegation in plenary, as well as article 14, paragraph 6, of the Standing Orders, regarding time limits on speeches. We also propose suspending article 23, paragraph 1, to allow summary records of the panel presentations to be made. Lastly, to facilitate discussions in these two cases, we recommend that the Conference decide not to apply the provisions of article 14, paragraph 2, of the Standing Orders, concerning the order in which the floor is given to speakers.

In addition, and only as far as necessary to enable panel presentations or statements by special guests, it is proposed to suspend the rules concerning the closure of discussion under article 16.

As regards the Director-General's reply, we propose to suspend the second sentence of paragraph 2 of article 23 of the Standing Orders, to allow the Director-General to respond fully in writing to the points raised during the plenary discussion of his Report. This reply will be published in the final *Record of Proceedings* of the 100th Session of the Conference.

As far as necessary to enable panel presentations to be made in the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion, it is proposed, should the Committee itself so decide, to suspend the following: (i) the order in which the floor is given to speakers and, to that end, the provisions of article 62, paragraph 1, after the words "of the Chairman"; and (ii) the rules relating to speaking time and, to that end, article 62, paragraph 3.

In respect of a Committee of the Whole which might be established to carry out the work of the Conference, it is proposed, should the Committee itself so decide, to suspend the presentation for approval of a report to the Committee, as mentioned in the last sentence of article 57, paragraph 3, in order to allow the report on the work of the Committee to be presented directly to the Conference, after it has been presented to the Committee Officers, but without submitting it to the Committee itself for approval.

Pursuant to article 76 of the Standing Orders, these proposals will take effect once they have been adopted by the Conference at its next plenary sitting.

(The Conference adjourned at 10.55 a.m.)

Second sitting

Wednesday, 1 June 2011, 10.55 a.m.

President: Mr Nkili

ADDRESS BY MR KASSYM-JOMART TOKAYEV, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AT GENEVA

Original French: The PRESIDENT

Before we continue with our work, I would like to give the floor to Mr Tokayev, who has recently been appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the post of Director-General of the Office of the United Nations in Geneva.

Mr TOKAYEV (*Director-General of the Office of the United Nations at Geneva (UNOG)*)

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to the Palais des Nations. It is an honour on behalf of the United Nations to congratulate you and convey to you the best wishes of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, for a successful 100th Session of the International Labour Conference. The International Labour Organization is the oldest member of the United Nations family, a highly-valued organization which makes an important contribution to realizing our core mission, ensuring security, development and respect for human rights for all.

The work of the ILO and the United Nations has taught us several fundamental lessons on which we need to build our strategy to confront effectively the long-term impact of the economic and financial crisis and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

First, employment is critical to reducing extreme poverty and hunger. Decent jobs that provide dignity, security for families and protection are essential in driving the economic growth needed to accelerate progress towards the MDGs. The target of reducing poverty by half, by the deadline of 2015, is likely to be reached at the global level. The statistics often overshadow significant differences across countries and regions. This is why job creation was recognized at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in early May in Istanbul, as a prerequisite for advancing growth in these vulnerable countries and ultimately for achieving the MDGs.

Second, in creating jobs, we need to focus on social justice and social protection to build inclusive and equitable societies. Studies show that social protection is absolutely critical to limit inequality and social exclusion, which, in turn, is important for achieving the MDGs.

The Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, has stressed that we must take swift action to create an enabling environment for social inclusion and social protection for all, in order to unlock the full productive potential for all nations and people.

Third, green growth must be prioritized. Investment in green jobs is not only critical for our ability to address the impact of climate change, but is also an avenue for further growth. Innovative strategies for green jobs can only succeed with the full engagement of enterprises and workers and they can be created in all sectors and types of businesses, in urban and rural areas and in countries at all levels of economic development. By focusing on how to generate more green jobs, the International Labour Conference can make an important contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Rio+20 Summit.

Fourth, we must recognize the importance of employment for social cohesion and long-term stability and, finally, the generation of employment and sustainable economic growth require partnership. The ILO, with its unique trilateral structure, employs an inclusive approach, where the key stakeholders are integrated in the policy- and decision-making process.

So we need to place employment at the centre of our joint efforts to reduce poverty. The United Nations stands with the International Labour Organization in this collective endeavour and please accept our best wishes for a successful 100th International Labour Conference.

DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY SWITZERLAND CONCERNING THE COHERENCE OF THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

Original French: The PRESIDENT

The next item on our agenda concerns a draft resolution concerning the coherence of the multilateral system, which has been submitted by Switzerland and is supported by France. You will find the text in *Provisional Record* No. 2.

According to the provisions of article 17, paragraph 2, of the Standing Orders: "The President may, with the approval of the three Vice-Presidents, permit a resolution relating to a matter not included in an item placed on the agenda by the Conference or the Governing Body to be moved, although it would not be otherwise receivable [...] if it relates either to urgent matters or to matters of an entirely formal nature."

Consequently, I propose that the Officers of the Conference, that is the three Vice-Presidents and myself, meet at the end of the morning to discuss the receivability of this draft resolution and, if necessary, the way in which the Conference can examine the draft resolution. I would also suggest that at a later plenary session we report to you on our deliberations.

Before asking if you agree, may I just say that the draft resolution is also supported by the Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, South Africa, Nigeria and, I am certain that there may be others who have not yet come forward.

Can the Conference adopt this proposal?

(The proposal is adopted.)

SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE CONFERENCE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

I would propose that we continue our work relating to the organization of this Conference and adopt the proposal to suspend certain provisions of the Standing Orders which were proposed to you during our first sitting.

If there are no objections, may I consider that this proposal is adopted?

(The proposal is adopted.)

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO THE OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE

Original French: The PRESIDENT

Inasmuch as the next plenary sitting devoted to the agenda items for this session of the Conference will take place on Wednesday, 8 June, the daily tasks linked to the organization of the Conference will be assumed by the Officers of the Conference, if the Conference agrees to delegate to them this authority.

I now give the floor to the Clerk of the Conference to read out the delegation of authority for your approval.

Original French: The CLERK OF THE CONFERENCE

By this act the General Conference of the International Labour Organization delegates to its President and Vice-Presidents the power to take any decision or to exercise any function which falls within the mandate of the Conference to deal with any matter until such time as the Conference meets again. Unless the Officers feel that the Conference should hold a sitting to discuss any particular matter, the decisions adopted under this delegation of powers shall be set out in the *Provisional Record* of the work of the Conference. This delegation of powers will take effect at the end of this sitting and will expire at the time when the Conference meets again in plenary.

Original French: The PRESIDENT

If there are no objections, may I consider that this delegation of authority has been accepted?

(The delegation of authority is accepted.)

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR- GENERAL

Original French: The PRESIDENT

In accordance with article 14, paragraph 8, of the Standing Orders, I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr Juan Somavia, to introduce his Report, entitled *A new era of social justice*.

*Original French: The SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
CONFERENCE*

Minister Robert Nkili, dear friend of the ILO, and a great representative of Africa, I congratulate you on your election as President of this historic session of the International Labour Conference, our 100th Session. You are aware of the high esteem that I have for you, and for your work with us over the years. I am very, very pleased to see you.

(The speaker continues in Spanish.)

Ambassador Homero Hernández, I am very, very pleased to see you here again. Dagoberto Lima Godoy of Brazil, a great expert on all our issues, I am delighted to see you here. My friend Bogdan Hossu of Romania, I am also very pleased to have you here with us.

(The speaker continues in English.)

Ambassador Jerry Matjila, Chairperson of the Governing Body; Don Daniel Funes de Rioja, Chairperson of the Employers' group; and Sir Roy Trotman, Chairperson of the Workers' group, I look forward to working very closely with you to make this Conference especially successful.

As we celebrate our 100th Session, our world of work is certainly in turmoil.

We know that the dangers of a global depression seem behind us, but we have in front of us the bigger danger of further consolidating inefficient growth patterns and unfair globalization rules at the root of the crisis, which have systematically increased inequality almost everywhere in the last 30 years.

So slipping back into business as usual will lead us, sooner rather than later, into another crisis. This is not sustainable economically, socially, environmentally or politically.

Let me give you some symbols of what I am talking about:

- the unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment everywhere, with the highest rates in Arab countries, sometimes seven or ten times higher than the rate for adults. Adults who define policy seemingly indifferent to the next generation;
- stagnant levels of world investment in the real economy since the 1980s, rising in emerging countries and dropping in developed countries; but if you put it all together, on balance it has produced job-weak global growth worldwide for a long, long time now;
- small enterprise creation: we know that it is the main job machine of the world, but it is basically marginalized, not a priority in public and private decision-making;
- indecent levels of income and wealth concentration, which most leaders decry but do little to change. Here is one figure to highlight this: 3,500 million people (3.5 billion) in the world

together have the same income as 61 million people – 3,500 million, 61 million people.

No wonder so many people are upset and angry. Too many feel squeezed – including the middle classes, between the immediate social impact of the crisis and these long-term trends.

At the same time, they see many governments with either too little strength or too little will to rein in the unaccountable power of financial operators which wield so much influence on our societies. Then, of course, we see that some financial institutions are “too big to fail”, while you have the feeling that many people are simply “too small to matter”.

Another visible preoccupation is the seeming inability of our political and business systems to think in the long term, to engage in dialogue among themselves, to come together on key national and international issues, to reassure citizens that *they* are the priority of policy-making.

From Tahrir Square to Puerta del Sol, in streets and plazas in many countries, we are witnessing the birth of, what I believe is a social and popular movement, led by youth, that may change the world if they reflect the silent disquiet of the people who believe that 3,500 million people cannot have the same income as 61 million people. So we should understand, I think, that in this context, youth are behind the movement for freedom and decent work. In some places, freedom from fear of authoritarian power; everywhere, freedom from lack of opportunities, from the insecurity and unfairness of inefficient growth, freedom to choose and to be part of the quest for social justice and peace.

And they voice a demand that we know only too well here in the ILO. In different languages and expressions, they are demanding the same things; that leaders in business, politics, civil society and international organizations agree on actions and policies that “give us a fair chance at a decent job”.

I was in Tahrir Square, and a young man told me, “Look, we cannot believe that the powers of the world cannot solve the youth employment problem. We believe it is possible. You, the International Labour Organization, have a responsibility to make the point that it is possible.”

So these are the hopes that are behind these movements, but these are also the hopes that are brought to this hall. Can we, will we, do we want to make a difference so that these types of problems are solved? This is the essence of what I believe we have to address in this session, because if you put all of this together you end up with a startling poll: in three quarters of the 82 countries with available information, a majority of individuals are becoming increasingly pessimistic about their future quality of life and standards of living.

This is of course just a snapshot, but it tells us one thing; that you were right, the ILO’s tripartism was right when you launched the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization; you were right when you reacted rapidly to the financial crisis with the Global Jobs Pact.

I will pick up the central objectives of the Report that I am presenting to the Conference, but I want to say that the issues that we are going to discuss in this Conference are directly related to the types of problem that youth are opposing and the statistics show.

So our immediate tasks are as follows.

Social protection is a responsibility all societies must address, and the time is ripe for acceleration in coverage, beginning with a broad-based floor of social protection – as you know, more than 80 per cent of people in the world do not have social security. Common challenges of course are incremental benefits and ensuring sustainable financing, but I think that together we can give leadership in achieving this formidable objective.

Extending rights at work to domestic workers is opening up a door to labour standards in the informal economy. You are aware of the problem that our standards tend to be thought of in terms of the formal economy. For the first time, you have a standard that goes into the informal economy. It is, I think, a major issue for us: bringing these workers into the fold of our values is a strong move, for them and for all workers who aspire to decent work, but it also has strong implications for migration and of course for gender equality.

We know well that *labour administration and labour inspection* are undervalued. In the overall set of policies, they are not given the place they deserve. It is time to reinforce these instruments of workplace fairness and rights, and the ILO can lead in making labour administration a prime objective of international cooperation and exchange of experiences and cooperation nationally.

Discrimination is not only wrong, but ineffective. Our Global Report shows why. Again, I would like to give you one symbol: our projections show the possibility of equal pay for work of equal value of women and men being achieved around 2080. Now, we have been fighting for gender equality for a very long time, but these are the figures showing what is actually happening in the ground. Totally unacceptable! ILO instruments, knowledge and exchange of experience, again, are central on this issue.

There is a regrettable stalemate on the rights of workers and citizens in Palestine. My annual Report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories shows hardly any improvement. The situation will not improve unless the myriads of restrictions imposed by the occupying authorities are lifted, and the occupation itself removed.

These issues are very relevant to the questions I have raised; they are all an indication of these processes. These are practical, essential, relevant building blocks towards our shared vision.

We must follow up on our 2008 Declaration.

I will now turn to my Report. I believe that it is urgent to commit to a new era of social justice, of growth with social justice, based on sustainable development. This is the heart of my Report to you. It calls on ILO tripartism to exercise leadership. As I say in the Report, whether a new era of social justice remains just an idealized vision of a desired future, or becomes a practical reality that takes hold in our societies, will depend in many ways on you, on us, on the ILO family. It will depend on the courage, convictions, ability and will power of the ILO and you, its constituents, and on our capacity to work together and with others in the multilateral world, to pave the way for this new era.

We know from our history that the ILO’s tripartism, values and policy tools have the capacity to make change happen. The fact that ours has always been a difficult task anchored in the real life of individual societies, and one which we cannot achieve alone, should not deter us.

I have used the word “history”. Yes, our history. Our International Labour Conference history. One hundred sessions in which you, and those thousands and thousands of delegates before you, have given life and form to that central value that unites us: social justice as the foundation of peace. We started this journey in October 1919, in Washington, DC, the First Session of the International Labour Conference. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, recalling the founding of the ILO, used these words in 1941: “To many it was a wild dream. Who had ever heard of governments getting together to raise the standards of labour on an international plane? Wilder still was the idea that the people themselves who were directly affected – the workers and the employers of the various countries – should have a hand with government in determining these labour standards.”

So many years down the road, we see that it was more than a dream. It was a realistic vision of something that was possible. And it is as realistic today to set ourselves the task of choosing a different growth path and more social justice in our society. It is perfectly possible. The tools, the means, the instruments, the policies are there. And it is our responsibility to think about how we will contribute to making this possible. And if we find things difficult, just think about Albert Thomas in 1919, the first Director-General of the ILO, promoting the idea that the world needed international labour standards adopted by this new, unfamiliar tripartite Organization called the ILO. And he could not fly; he had to travel by train and boat. Yet today, 92 years later, every country in the world has labour laws influenced one way or the other by ILO standards, and our fundamental Conventions have a 90 per cent rate of ratification by parliaments – that is, the political expression of countries – reflecting near-universal acceptance of these principles.

Now we know perfectly well that we still have many problems of implementation because of the impediments of unfair and inefficient growth and policies – private and public – that stifle freedom of association and other rights.

In 1944, in Philadelphia, the 26th Session of the Conference restated the aims and purposes of organization and reminded us that poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere.

With decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, the number of member States doubled and the Organization took on its universal character.

Our 48th Session in 1964 adopted the Declaration concerning the policy of “Apartheid” of the Republic of South Africa.

In 1969, the ILO was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Chairman of the Nobel Committee stated then, “There are few organizations that have succeeded to the extent the ILO has, in translating into action the fundamental moral idea on which it is based.”

Our values throughout history brought us into the struggle for freedom of association in Poland, in South Africa, in Chile and Guinea, Nepal, Zimbabwe and many other countries – not least, Tunisia, Egypt and Bahrain more recently.

The ILO is at the heart of real political and social processes. We were born out of the social struggles of the nineteenth century and we continue to be embedded in every process of change, because people change for the reasons that the ILO stands for and for the values that we stand for. This is a reality of

our existence and will continue to be so in the future. That is why people ask, “What is the ILO doing? Can you do something about what is happening in this or that field?” Because we have not invented an agenda of an international system, we have reflected the desire of people and the aspiration of the international community, and this incredible assembly of governments, employers and workers can do something about it.

In 1995, led by around 120 Heads of State and Government, the United Nations World Summit for Social Development – whose Preparatory Committee I had the honour to chair – acknowledged seven (now eight) ILO Conventions as the internationally recognized core standards, which were then put into the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Since then, the United Nations has repeatedly given political support to decent work policies, to the notion of working out of poverty, to the social dimension of globalization, to sustainable enterprises and to the Global Jobs Pact. We produce standards and policies on which the rest of the system says, “Look, it interests us; we want to see how we can make all these things happen”.

And if you go to the ILO building, through the ILO colonnades, we can walk our story over nine decades of tripartite history.

What does all of this mean? Why have I gone through this reflection on moments in our history? Because we are the proud heirs of an immense legacy.

Decade after decade, we have stitched values and fairness and dialogue into policies and markets – workers, enterprise and government finding common ground.

In this room, representing the world of work, you are the custodians of that legacy, who hold the key to addressing the inequalities of today and the peace that we all know is needed for tomorrow. And our legacy is the path to the future.

Your predecessors carried the torch for 92 years. They give us the strength to make good on their convictions and on the convictions of our founders.

So, 100 sessions later we are still here, lifted by the same values, proud of our history, determined to carry forward our mandate: if you want peace, cultivate justice.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, speaking at the Conference in 2007: “We rely on the ILO to continue its struggle to make decent work a global reality.”

And I think that he is right, because when people and workers in our society look at our agenda, they say it is so clear that the Decent Work Agenda and a working ILO tripartism bring the possibility of a more efficient, more inclusive growth, of more peace, more equity and more rights, with less poverty and less instability in economies, enterprises, workplaces and, ultimately, in society. ILO policies contribute to a world with fewer tensions, greater fairness and strengthened security. With our values and policies, we are certainly on the right side of history.

I urge you all at this 100th Session of the Conference to reflect deeply on the role of our Organization at this juncture, a new era we can help shape or we can let go by.

I argue in my recent Report for an efficient market economy growth with social justice; a produc-

tive vision with socially balanced outcomes – for the sake of growth, for societies with our values.

We are not contending that a grain of social be added to the current outcomes. We are saying that the current outcomes are leading us to the next crisis. They are not sustainable economically, politically, socially or environmentally. We seek a different growth pattern with different market outcomes; outcomes with freedom, dignity, security and equity; productive outcomes combining the strength of markets, the responsibility of enterprises, the skills of workers, the power of social dialogue and the incentives and regulations of public policies to sustain efficient growth with social justice.

The notion that we can change the patterns of growth is technically possible. There is no obstacle whatsoever in conceiving a policy mix that produces a relationship between productivity and salaries, that produces income-led growth, that produces a higher level of real investment in the economy and not in financial products that do not create either value or jobs. And I can go on with a list.

Those objectives that people would like to see happen are technically feasible. These are things that can be done. In this endeavour, international labour standards, the source of our identity, can guide us in making wide decent work opportunities possible, in all countries, relative to all levels of development.

So what does this potential of a different type of growth mean for us? What does economically and socially efficient growth demand of us? And I would say it in four words: leadership, knowledge, dialogue, cooperation.

First, this growth demands leadership. And leadership today implies daring to tackle the issues of social justice at their roots. It obviously will not happen on its own. We must acknowledge that together we can address the issues based on the 2008 Declaration. If we did not believe in social justice for a fair globalization, then why did we approve the Declaration? So the mandate is there; that we can bring this debate back home to analyse our various and different contexts.

Would it be possible for some of you, when you go back home, to decide that you would like to promote national agendas for social justice based on the Decent Work Agenda, and to get together and address it?

It would be great, for example, if next year, when, as Director-General, I greet you again, when inaugurating the International Labour Conference, you could report on efforts made at home, and report on advances agreed to; and you could tell us, look, there are 15 countries that actually helped make the effort to discuss the situations of social justice in our countries and we, the tripartite bodies decided to be together on that issue. We had a lot of differences at home but we decided to be together on that issue.

Leadership also involves tackling the issues young people in the plazas and streets are crying out for. It is not the Director-General of the ILO that is telling you this, it is out there in society. The demand is out there, in society, and people are looking to us.

Increasingly, wherever economic, trade, social, environmental and development policies are made, the voice of the ILO is sought after. The space is there for us. We must make our contribution to policy coherence – precisely because we are invited to

be part of the debates of other issues in other spaces. Certainly the G20 is one example of that and we know that the values and policies we stand for are those that most people believe bring about fairer and most sustainable futures for all.

The first issue is, therefore, leadership. Dare to do it; it is difficult, complex – no doubt – but dare to do it.

The second issue is knowledge, because there are no silver bullets or ready-made answers. We know we can contribute with our policies but it is not just our policies that are going to produce the new type of growth and more social justice. Building the future of social justice is hard, analytical, intellectual policy-making work. What are the balances, the mixes, the forces at play in so many different national circumstances? Yes, I think that creativity will have a premium. Daring to think out of the box will be rewarded. Hard-nosed knowledge development will be needed. In that context, the ILO's tools can contribute to deliver policies to achieve high efficient growth with high employment and social progress.

To help countries build their knowledge, the ILO itself must further strengthen its own capacities to measure, compare and draw lessons for policy making. New indicators and measures of a decent world of work will be needed. There must be a greater exchange of experience and expertise across countries, with more South–South cooperation, which is being asked of us. More integrated work with international organizations.

The third issue is dialogue. This is a particularly crucial element in talking to an assembly in which the parliament of labour has come together. Dialogue is our trademark. But it is not enough to come here and make tripartism work in Geneva; it is at home where it counts most and, in these difficult times, it is at home where it is missing most. If we cannot make social dialogue and tripartism a reality at home, it will certainly, in time, weaken the ILO as an institution.

Do we have the courage, the conviction, the sense of responsibility, to extend our hand to the other side? Or will we stick to our positions to be able to proudly say that we have not conceded – and then observe that because we have not engaged we have not gained anything either.

The reason this International Labour Conference exists is that it was understood from the beginning that the strength, the vitality and the *raison d'être* of the ILO stems from its Workers, Employers and Governments. And because of this, we agree on the basis of our values, which we cannot lose; we agree because that agreement produces balance – and that balance produces common sense. Whenever we refuse to cross the line and try to find a solution, we are refusing possibilities of understanding that might bring stability and better solutions for society. This is why the ILO exists and this is why, at this our 100th Session, it can be done. Yet this implies taking action at home. Every one of you has to decide to go home and take the necessary steps; or you can smile, laugh a little bit, and say “Mr Somavia is this way, he has this thing about ideals and values and he is a fighter and he has been an activist and, of course, he is telling us what he thinks”. But can you imagine saying to yourself, when you go back on your plane, “These are just words, we go to the ILO every year but we do not give a damn about what is happening with social dialogue at home”.

This is what you all have to think about; all of you have to reflect on this reality.

So these are choices – important choices that will shape the history and the pertinence of the ILO; choices that are in your hands.

So then we move on to the fourth issue – cooperation. Why cooperation? Because most of our objectives cannot be reached alone. They depend on other policy fields, other actors, other countries and, very often, conflicting interests. I think that we have reached that point. Building a strong social dimension for the fair globalization is truly more pressing than ever. For example, failure to expand income-led global demand through decent work opportunities and real economic investments at home will only shrink the global economy and exacerbate tensions between countries. We know that; it is an economic fact that we cannot do it alone. Through cooperation, globalization can be turned into a force for social justice or it will hardly survive.

This demands a significant leap forward in international cooperation, locally and internationally. South–South and triangular cooperation is becoming a vibrant source of solidarity in times of global interdependence, and the ILO is a powerful lever for that action. The G20 under French leadership offers an important opportunity to link macroeconomic policies with labour market policies. They are going to have meetings of both Finance Ministers and Labour Ministers – these need to be linked. Parallelism at the level of the G20, with the objective that it has, would be a very bad result. Integration – and the set of policies we need – is required, and this is an opportunity.

But beyond the G20 we have to ensure that this happens here and in the United Nations. We have to begin by making macroeconomic policies and labour market policies and social policies – integrated policies – at home. We can, again, have international discussions; we can even agree between the IMF, the WTO, etc.; but this presupposes action at home.

Integration is therefore another task for you. Failing this, you will be continuing with the 30-year policies you have pursued until now and be taking the decision to project inequality in the future and you will be unable to determine how to control the effects of that decision politically. Inequality in the world is increasing and no one in this room can say “No, no, no, we are going to manage this politically, this or that other way”; no one in this room. We have a responsibility because we are tripartite. The dynamics, the change, the direction has to change.

It is the time for a stronger ILO.

Let me bring you down from the heights of what I am talking about to very concrete realities. The Finance Committee – you have not heard me speak about the Finance Committee here – meets every two years to approve the budget; and the Finance Committee will consider tomorrow the Programme and Budget proposals for 2012–13. The discussions in the Governing Body demonstrated an extraordinary level of tripartite support for the work of the Organization, for the priorities detailed in the budget and for the tools with which we work.

I can report to you a full understanding of the importance of the ILO and of the tools with which we are working. Nonetheless, this has been a difficult budget discussion – not for lack of support for our work, but because many countries are faced with serious fiscal difficulties. For this reason, despite

the large majority backing the recommendation transmitted to the Finance Committee by the Governing Body, I felt it my responsibility to continue to explore ways to adjust the budget. We have already made a number of adjustments in the debate. But because of the crisis, the Office has to do as much as possible and this is not just a financial decision but also a political one that has to do with everything that I have been saying, because people are going to look to see who is for and who is against and how. I felt that my responsibility was to move as far as possible; that is why I have made some adjustments and done what I felt was possible because the support is very strong. You cannot just listen to some and forget those that have been backing you. From the Office we have made the greatest effort possible. I want to thank those that have backed the budget as approved in the Governing Body, but I felt that I had the responsibility precisely because of the moment, and that we, the Office, had to do as much as we could, given the balance within the governments to ensure that we had the widest support possible for our budget. The whole issue of efficiency and savings is central to what I believe that we have to do and I have also committed the Office to apply a strategic approach to additional measures to improve effectiveness and efficiency in its implementation.

And this is what I want to communicate to you. This redoubled efficiency drive has to apply to the Conference. I have asked all ILO staff working at this Conference to observe our activities, our methods of work, the manner in which we do things, with an eye to potential savings and to make concrete suggestions in this respect.

I would like to ask all delegates to join in this effort and to share with us your ideas on how we could make the Office's services to the Conference more effective and efficient and less costly. You know, several restraints: “I forgot the document at the hotel, could you give me another one?” – small details. If we just put ourselves into the culture that we would like to be able to show that this can be done with less money and be equally efficient, I think that would be a marvellous thing of the whole of tripartism – not just a debate on how many millions we have available in the Finance Committee – but the whole of tripartism understanding that it is very difficult to be funding the ILO today because of the crisis in which we are in.

Again, let me express a hope; next year, at this time, when I will be receiving you again for the International Labour Conference, I would like to report back to you on what costs have changed and what cost changes were introduced in the International Labour Conference as a result of the analysis made this year, and of course other things that we can look at.

I have gone on quite enough and I have brought you to the very nitty gritty of finance – but I felt it important to share with you the implications of how we address the budget issue this year.

I come to the end of my speech by urging you again to seize the opportunity of this 100th Conference to reflect on these challenges and on the future role of our Organization. Our history and values compel us; our responsibility obliges us. And let us not forget that as we speak, the daring and courageous commitment of the Arab world and beyond is giving us a powerful message: that real change demands widespread peaceful social and popular mo-

bilization that can project the voice and demands of people into the heart of the political decision-making process. We, I believe, we and the ILO – the tripartite ILO – must also hear them. And let us be bold and ambitious as our forbearers were. Let us make these possibilities of change happen and let me say in the simplest of terms – I am aware that I am enthusiastic and have my own way of saying things, and I come from a Latin culture and that is a factor – that I believe that what I am saying today to you has profound implications for this institution. The worst thing that can happen to all of us here – and I am talking to Employers and Governments, including that part of government not here which is finance and monetary, and Workers – is that the tripartite ILO transmits the image that it is not really up to this type of task, that it was in the past and is not today. I do not believe that is a reality. I believe we are up to the task because if not we would not have either the 2008 Declaration or the Global Jobs Pact. So we are up to the task. But let me put an edge of urgency, an edge of transmitting this feeling that the people that are suffering have at least one place in the international community that is listening to them. One place, and that place is the ILO.

Original French: The PRESIDENT

Thank you very much, Secretary-General, for this presentation of the salient points of your Report. I am convinced that the tripartite constituents meeting here today will take your message to this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference to heart. The crisis from which we are only just emerging provides us with an opportunity to bounce back and to make a new departure. It gives us an opportunity to take stock of the reasons for the failure of the previous globalization model – a failure of which the crisis is only one symptom.

As you have said in your Report, the ILO is a model of public-private partnership which is unique in history, and its contribution to global governance is unequalled. I am convinced that the delegations present in this room will leave with a message of hope from the ILO for the twenty-first century: hope in the advent of a new era and a better world. All this is possible and the ILO is there to help bring about such a change.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2012–13

Original French: The PRESIDENT

This year the Conference is called upon to examine the Programme and Budget proposals for 2012–13. Given that these proposals are going to be discussed in the Finance Committee, which is exclusively made up of Government representatives, the next item on our agenda for this morning is the preliminary discussion of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2012–13, as well as other questions.

The aim of this discussion is to allow the Employers' and Workers' groups to make their statements concerning these proposals.

I therefore now give the floor to Mr Funes de Rioja, Employer Vice-Chairperson.

STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE EMPLOYERS' AND WORKERS' GROUPS OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr FUNES DE RIOJA (Employer, Argentina, Chairperson of the Employers' group)

On behalf of the Employers' group, I would like to comment on the programme and budget proposals. The 100th Session of the International Labour Conference has more than just a chronological or historical relevance.

In this changing world, as the Director-General put it, we face great challenges, at both international and national levels, and the ILO has a decisive role to play. Job creation is not merely an issue that is linked to the problem of social unrest or demand, but is a precondition for peace, development and justice. The Employers' group therefore reaffirms that the promotion of sustainable enterprises in the private sector, and small enterprises in particular, in order to create new jobs and decent work, is the key to inclusiveness.

The ILO has excellent instruments at its disposal to contribute to this process and create a framework for our debates. Politically speaking, in the light of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008, the Global Jobs Pact, and the Decent Work Agenda, we are prepared to deal with the challenges we face.

At the same time, we are also working within the multilateral system, and particularly the G20. It is clear that coordination and coherence are needed, and we support the ILO's efforts to achieve them, on a tripartite basis, at Governing Body level and at the level of the International Labour Conference.

On that note, let me turn to the programme and budget proposals, which were discussed by the Governing Body in March and received majority support. The position of the Employer's group was, and remains, clear. Although we supported the proposals presented before the Governing Body in March, and acknowledge the Office's efforts with regard to presentation and transparency, we nevertheless continue to urge the Office to improve management, in order to increase efficiency, and continue to identify, wherever possible, opportunities for savings.

During that debate, we noted the concerns expressed by a number of countries, including some of the larger contributors to the ILO budget. We understand that, since March, there have been ongoing discussions to identify opportunities for further savings, in order to ensure that the programme and budget package, to be presented to the International Labour Conference for approval, will have the broadest support possible from the constituents.

I understand that revised proposals will be presented, which we are ready to support in order to achieve consensus. However, we note that the revised budget proposals will have a real impact on the delivery of ILO programme outcomes, with the proposed cuts affecting sectoral and technical meetings. These measures are not merely savings designed to improve efficiency, but mean real cuts to ILO activities. As such, they are a cause for concern for the Employers' group.

We welcome the more stable structure for the ILO's activities provided by the strategic framework, and welcome the ILO's efforts to cooperate

with other UN agencies. However, the ILO needs to remain within its mandate. In March, the Employers' group defined four priorities in relation to the proposed programme and budget.

Firstly, a knowledge strategy, to improve ILO expertise and the exchange of competencies. To that end, and as we stressed at the Governing Body in March, it is imperative to fully implement the IT and human resources strategies.

Secondly, the Office needs to take a more proactive approach in order to respond to the global crisis and strengthen its capacity to react.

Thirdly, we expect better reporting and more transparency, especially with regard to regional activities.

Fourthly, it is vital to focus on providing services to constituents, according to their needs. It goes without saying that we expect to see efforts to strengthen the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), which provides the point of entry into the ILO for employers. The budget proposals involve a cut in the budget for ACT/EMP activities.

In conclusion, the Employers stress the relevance of the ILO and recall the need for the Office to develop and improve its technical policy expertise. Product quality is crucial.

We hope that the Finance Committee will carefully consider the revised budget proposals and will join us in voting for the Programme and Budget proposals for 2012–13. The proposals are not perfect, but we can support them, as well as the revised budgetary adjustments, in the interests of achieving consensus.

Mr TROTMAN (*Worker, Barbados, Chairperson of the Workers' group*)

I wish to say, on behalf of the Workers' group, that 100 is a very significant number and when it relates to time it should particularly be a cause for celebration. It should be a cause, as well, for reflection, and, so far as the Workers' group is concerned, it should be an occasion for recommitment. It is, in fact, a marvellous landmark and history should have some way of showing what was done after that landmark was arrived at.

This 100th Conference should be such a moment. Indeed, the Director-General said that this should represent the time for a stronger International Labour Organization.

We in the Workers' group think that the agenda we have for this 100th Conference gives us an excellent opportunity to make plans for that stronger, more vibrant, more responsive Organization. The items we have include domestic work, or the domestic workers item – hopefully a Convention – and, in discussing this, we naturally need to recognize the implications which such a discussion will have for women workers, particularly, for children workers – child labour – and for migrant labour. During the next couple of weeks, we have no doubt that significant progress should be made in understanding those particular difficulties with which the world is faced and in mapping out some course of action which could make the lives and the conditions of employment, in the case of the migrants and the women workers, better and which will allow children to enjoy their school life, rather than to be made to work under conditions of severe exploitation.

Success in this item should see us all reflecting on our efforts to build that better community, that bet-

ter society, envisaged by our founding fathers at the time of the very first International Labour Conference.

Social security is another item before us and everyone is naturally concerned – I think you would agree – with the quality of life. We may have some differences regarding the levels of concerns that people have and, in fact, we do have criticisms regarding the way in which this is sometimes expressed, particularly where workers and workers' representatives are either denied their freedom, they are discriminated against, sometimes they have to face violence and, ultimately, regrettably, sometimes they meet with death, but our having to say that does not mean there is not, from time to time, the question of regard by governments and by employers and by society at large for the improvement of social protection and social security. The concern has to do with how far we will go in that national commitment about this and, indeed, about other matters.

The Director-General, himself, has said that as far as he is concerned, speaking for the ILO, that what is required is leadership, knowledge, dialogue and cooperation, and, while I support those four requirements, I wish to add that we need to have moral courage and political will and if we can present those then, perhaps, we might be able to make this 100th Conference a very outstanding moment, a moment from which we will be able, in the coming years, to look back at our contributions and at what we have been able to contribute to the enhancement and improvement of life of people around us.

Labour inspection is, I think, another of those areas where we should see such possibilities. I regret that we cannot claim that we have planned these technical items with the 100th Anniversary – if you like – in mind. But the fact that we have had the good fortune to be looking at these matters at this time ought to be a very good sign for us because, if we are looking at values and we are looking at having standards, then I think that with regard to labour inspection, the whole house should agree that there has to be an inspectorate and a labour administration programme that will ensure that the centre stage is taken by this particular item on our agenda. Moreover, we should not just pass laws or pass or adopt resolutions and Conventions for the sake of doing so, but rather because we have the intention to respect those Conventions, rules and laws.

I ask myself then, at this, the 100th Conference, is there room for the 21 gun salute so we can congratulate ourselves? And my answer to that is no! Of course not. It is true that we have done well, but I think it is the moment for us properly to recognize that, in doing well, we ought, at the same time, to reflect on what we have accomplished and to what extent those accomplishments might be further enhanced.

The Workers' group thinks that we have performed well in reducing violence around the world. We have done well in fighting poverty all over the world. We can also be proud that we have been promoting work and not just any work but decent work. Because we have been doing that we have been able to assist in the prevention of war and the reduction in many instances of war. There have been other institutions that have spent plenty of time and much money in dealing with the effects of war and of the poverty which war brings on. Poverty leads to war and the war leads to poverty and the

other institutions are fighting to deal with the after effects. Where I come from there is an English idiom that says that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. That is to say that, it is better to prevent war than to deal with the effects of war by looking to rebuild after we have created destruction through those wars. And we have done much in the ILO to prevent wars and we should take credit for it. Then once we do that we might be able, in our reflection, to see exactly what we have managed to do over those 100 Conferences. When we reflect on these issues we should also reflect on two matters of great significance to the Workers' group today. One has to do with the budget debate and one has to do with the resolution concerning the coherence of the multilateral system.

The clear message from the Director-General this morning was a call for equity and fairness and in supporting that call we think that it makes the resolution, not merely urgent, but urgent and critical and we must go beyond those words to a discussion of, and support for, a Global Jobs Pact and for a global social floor. If we do not do this, we will be missing a great opportunity on a momentous occasion.

The Workers' group respects the financial and the economic environment facing us at the time of this particular budget debate. This environment will lead to a situation in which governments will have to deal with the predicament of how to contribute to a better world and to make sure that they do whatever is possible to create a climate and an environment that will reduce violence, while at the same time addressing their individual financial difficulties. We understand that and we sympathize. However, the

Workers' group today must make yet another plea to governments to reflect on the vast contribution which the ILO has made over those 100 Conferences. Governments should take into consideration the ILO's contribution to human life and to human values and recognize that a reduction of the programme would reduce that commitment to social values and social livelihoods. We therefore ask you to determine that the budget proposed in March, though in the face of some very strong objections, be agreed on, or where agreement is not possible, that there only be minimal changes to that budget which was placed before the Governing Body back in March which is now being subjected to further examination and let us hope that those will not be major changes.

Our Workers' group also wishes to say that this 100th Session of the International Labour Conference is a great moment to recommit to our fundamental values and to pursue initiatives which will sustain and enhance those objectives. The resolution concerning coherence is an excellent step in this direction and the Workers' group commends it to this Conference.

We could not conclude these introductory remarks without expressing grief and regret at the loss of life across the world, occasioned by natural causes, as well as by human conflict, particularly since December 2010. Nor should we fail to recognize the continued conflict in the Palestinian region and to challenge human political authority, to take human action to save human lives and to sustain the livelihoods of all people in the Middle East.

(The Conference adjourned at 12:15 p.m.)

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