



## Governing Body

319th Session, Geneva, 16–31 October 2013

GB.319/WP/GBC/1(Add.)

Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference

WP/GBC

Date: 25 October 2013

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FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Improving the functioning of the International Labour Conference

### *Addendum*

#### A. A reworked two-week structure (revised version)

1. Further to the first meeting of the Working Party, taking into account the comments made by the three groups of constituents, a revised version of the second approach proposed has been elaborated to take into account the following elements:
  - The duration of ILC sessions, of two calendar weeks, would be extended to the Saturday, second week, to give more time<sup>1</sup> to the ILC committees.
  - Consequently, the official pre-ILC meetings<sup>2</sup> would be held on the morning of the opening day of the ILC session.
  - The structure of the ILC would comprise a technical first week, and a more political second week, on the understanding that the plenary would have to be run in parallel with the committees' work for parts of each week.
  - The post-ILC Governing Body would take place on Monday morning following the ILC.

#### 1. Group meetings

- Monday morning immediately prior to the plenary opening sitting at 2 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> As indicated in document GB.319/WP/GBC/1, para. 21.

<sup>2</sup> As part of the CAS follow-up, there is the issue of the arrangements for group meetings to take place upfront so as to enable the CAS to start its work on the first day (group meetings currently take place after the opening sitting of the CAS).

- Additional pre-ILC meetings could be held over the weekend if required.
- There would be an opportunity for greater preparatory work for the ILC to be undertaken by the groups by email prior to the arrival of delegates in Geneva (for example, committee membership, group statements/positions, membership of drafting groups, etc.).
- The tentative plans of work of all committees (technical committees and Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)) would ensure that sufficient time is allocated to group meetings. The current practice of having group meetings before every plenary sitting of ILC technical committees would be maintained.

## 2. **General/recurrent discussions**

(see details in the appendix)

- The duration of the general and recurrent discussion committees would continue to be nine days, with the same sequence and number of sittings as currently provided.
- In both cases, improvements of working methods may be required to avoid evening sittings.
- Committees would sit twice per day, with an option for extended or evening sittings at the completion of each phase of the discussion if necessary.
- The draft conclusions would be adopted, as usual, paragraph by paragraph during the discussion of the amendments submitted to the committee. The adoption of the report (not the conclusions) could however be done in plenary of the Conference, with the understanding that individual delegates be given the opportunity to send corrections to their own interventions. Arrangements could also be made to allow the committees to adopt the first part of the draft report (corresponding to the general discussion) Tuesday or Wednesday, second week.

## 3. **Standard-setting committees**

(see details in the appendix)

- The total duration of standard-setting discussions would continue to nine days including the Committee Drafting Committee, for both the first and second discussions. In the case of a second discussion, the report of the committee has to be submitted to the plenary of the Conference one day before the vote. If the vote is scheduled for Friday morning, second week, the adoption of the report by the plenary should then take place on Thursday, afternoon, at the latest, to allow the Conference Drafting Committee to review the texts before the vote. The Wednesday, second week, would then be used for the committee drafting committee, and for the finalization of the report in the three languages by the secretariat:
  - Two sittings per day, with extensions if required.
  - Committee drafting committee could meet on Wednesday, second week. Depending on the progress made, a first meeting of this drafting committee could also be scheduled on Saturday afternoon, first week. Should the committee decide to have a permanent drafting committee (see below), then, in the case of a first discussion only, the Wednesday, second week, could be used if necessary by the committee, for two additional plenary sittings.

- Committee drafting committee might also be convened from 7 to 9 p.m. as from the second day of discussion of the amendments (on the model of what was done in 2005 for the Committee on the Fishing Sector).<sup>3</sup>
- The draft conclusions or instrument would be adopted, as usual, paragraph by paragraph or article by article during the discussion of the amendments submitted to the committee. The adoption of the report (not the conclusions nor the draft instrument) by the committee could however be done in plenary of the Conference, with the understanding that individual delegates be given the opportunity to send corrections to their own interventions.
- Efficiencies found in working methods and preparatory work could reduce the number of evening sittings.

#### 4. Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)

- There would be no reduction in the number of days,<sup>4</sup> or amount of time available for discussion.
- The workplan<sup>5</sup> would differ from those of other committees.

#### 5. Plenary periods I–IV

- Plenary period I (opening) would occur at 2–3.30 p.m. on day 1.
- Plenary period II (discussion of Director-General's Report) would depend on the option chosen under B.13.2.
  - Discussion on Thursday and Friday of first week with further sittings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of second week for delegates' interventions.
- Plenary period III (World of Work Summit) would take place on Thursday, second week.
- Plenary period IV (formalities) would take place on Friday and Saturday of second week.

<sup>3</sup> Lessons can also be drawn from the 94th (Maritime) Session of the ILC.

<sup>4</sup> The feasibility of a shorter duration will hinge first and foremost on a binding agreement on modalities for adoption of the list of cases at the beginning of the work of the CAS.

<sup>5</sup> Implications for the workplan will have to be closely identified and examined by the CAS tripartite working group.

## Tentative plan of work

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Opening sitting	■												
Recurrent discussion committee	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■			
General discussion committee(s)	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■			
CAS	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■		■	■	
Standard-setting committees	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■			
World of Work Summit											■		
Plenary: individual speeches				■	■			■	■	■			
Plenary: vote (if required)											■	■	
Adoption of reports in plenary											■	■	■
Plenary: closing sitting													■
Conference drafting committee (if required)											■		

## B. Trials proposed for 2014

2. In the light of the discussion held during the first meeting of the Working Party on Part A (Lessons learned), and taking into consideration the requests for further improvements made in relation to the reforms trialled in 2013, the proposals for trials in June 2014 could include the following measures:

- **Side events:** The number of formal or informal side events should be reduced to the minimum. The experience of this session demonstrated that a clearer definition of the different types of formal (tripartite) events versus other types of informal (information) sessions is needed. Criteria should be established to identify the different categories of events held on the fringes of the ILC committee meetings (usually at lunchtime) which may or may not conflict with ILC work.
- **Plenary structure:** The division of the plenary into four broad sections (opening sitting; plenary discussion on the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body; World of Work Summit; formal plenary with the votes and adoption of reports) was widely supported, subject to the following observations.
- **Opening sitting of the plenary:** The opening sitting should be shortened, and amendments to the ILC Standing Orders will be proposed to avoid an extra sitting for the suspension of Standing Orders provisions.
- **Discussion of the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body:** The Report of the Director-General was widely praised as being focused and well structured. The Director-General's introductory statement during the opening ceremony, his reply to the discussion of his Report in his closing remarks and his proposal to place the follow-up of this discussion on the agenda of the autumn session of the Governing Body were also welcomed and should be retained.
- **World of Work Summit:** The World of Work Summit was supported as an important initiative. Despite mixed results this year, it was felt that it would be worth testing it again next year (with more time for preparation). Invitations should be sent earlier (February–March) targeting exclusively a specific day during the Conference. It was

felt that the choice of a stronger theme for the Summit would generate a more dynamic and interactive discussion.

- ***Plenary period IV:*** It was felt that the ceremonial adoption in plenary of the committee reports should be shortened to avoid duplication with the adoption procedure by the committees. In that respect, it might be worth exploring further the proposal to have, for the technical committees only, a single adoption of the committees' reports by the plenary.
- ***Transparency, predictability and objectivity:*** The reports submitted to ILC committees were acknowledged as being of high quality and the timely distribution of these reports to the Conference was welcomed. Communication should however be further improved, in particular regarding tentative plans of work, discussion points, programme changes and voting procedures.
- ***Selection of Committee chairpersons:*** In the future, every effort should be made by the Government group (with the support of the Office, if requested) to identify committee chairpersons. A clear calendar/time frame should be set, with the objective of securing selection by February/March at the latest to ensure appropriate pre-Conference briefings from the Office.
- ***Time management:*** Time management could be still further improved with careful pre-planning. The attention of the Conference or committee Officers should be drawn to the importance of maximizing the use of time available. Furthermore, considering the ever-increasing number of speakers in plenary, time limit for interventions in plenary should be strictly enforced.
- ***Provisional Record:*** The translation and production of the *Provisional Record* (for plenary statements on the Reports of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Governing Body only) was deferred until after the Conference, and each such speech made in plenary was Web-posted. The *Provisional Record* containing these statements was published on the Web in July, with a two-week deadline for submission of amendments. It was felt, however, that the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups and the Regional Coordinators should be better informed of the timing of their publication on the Web and of the deadlines for submission of corrections to the individual statements.
- ***Committee drafting committee:*** In the light of the two standard-setting items placed on the agenda of the 103rd Session of the Conference, in June 2013, and subject to the decision the committee itself might take in this regard, it might be worth reactivating the practice of the permanent committee drafting committee which had already been implemented in 2005.

### **Draft decision**

#### **3. *The Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference, may wish to recommend that the Governing Body request the Office to prepare for its 320th Session (March 2014):***

- (a) ***a detailed proposal for a two-week Conference, which would take into account the concerns and requirements expressed during the present discussion, and elaborate on the areas of consensus reached;***

- (b) a detailed plan of work for the 103rd Session, which would take into account the abovementioned reforms which could be further improved and/or trialled at the 103rd Session of the ILC;*
- (c) additional information on pending issues requiring further consultations and discussion.*

## Appendix

### Outlines of possible plans of work for the technical committees in the framework of a revised two-week session of the Conference

#### *Standard-setting committees*

##### First discussion

- Opening: Monday afternoon, first week.
- Four–five receipts of amendments (2.30–3.30 p.m.), starting on Tuesday, first week.
- 14–15 plenary meetings (including one or two evening sittings during the first week).
- End of the discussion in the committee: Tuesday afternoon, second week.
- Committee drafting committee would meet on Wednesday, second week. Depending on the progress made, a first meeting of the committee drafting committee could also be scheduled on Saturday afternoon, first week. Should the committee decide to have a permanent committee drafting committee (on the model of what was done in 2005), then the Wednesday could then be used by the committee, for two additional plenary sittings.
- The draft report of the committee would be posted on the Web on Thursday or Friday, second week.
- The adoption of the draft report and conclusions by the Plenary of the Conference would take place either on the last Friday, or on Saturday, second week.

It is worth noting that the possibility to submit corrections to the report would remain and that the President would refer to these possible corrections by identifying the paragraphs concerned at the moment of submitting the report to the plenary for final adoption (on the model of what was previously done at the Governing Body before the reform).

##### Second discussion

- Opening: Monday afternoon, first week.
- Four–five receipts of amendments (2.30–3.30 p.m.), starting on Tuesday, first week.
- 14–15 plenary meetings (including one or two evening sittings during the first week).
- End of the discussion in the committee: Tuesday afternoon, second week.
- Committee drafting committee would meet on Wednesday, second week. Depending on the progress made, a first meeting of the committee drafting committee could also be scheduled on Saturday afternoon, first week. Should the committee decide to have a permanent committee drafting committee (on the model of what was done in 2005), the workload of the Committee Drafting Committee, on the last Wednesday, would be considerably reduced.
- The draft report of the committee would be posted on the Web on Wednesday night, second week.
- The adoption of the draft report and draft instrument by the Plenary of the Conference would take place on Thursday afternoon, second week.

- The Conference drafting committee would meet immediately after the adoption by the plenary on Thursday, end of the afternoon, last week.
- The vote on the instrument would take place on Friday morning, last week.

It is worth noting that the possibility to submit corrections to the report would remain and that the President would refer to these possible corrections by identifying the paragraphs concerned at the moment of submitting the report to the plenary for final adoption (on the model of what was previously done at the Governing Body before the reform)

### ***Recurrent discussion committees***

- Opening: Monday afternoon, first week.
- Five–six plenary sittings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (if possible morning only) first week: general discussion on a limited number of points.
- Distribution of tentative conclusions on Thursday, first week, beginning of the afternoon.
- Drafting group: four–five meetings on Friday and Saturday, first week.
- Distribution of the draft conclusions: Monday morning, second week.
- Group meetings on Monday morning, second week.
- Receipt of amendments: Monday afternoon, second week from 3 to 5 p.m.
- First part of the draft report (corresponding to the general discussion) posted on the Web on Monday, second week. Possible corrections to this first part could be received in plenary, and the first part of the report could be adopted in plenary on Tuesday afternoon, second week.
- Examination of the amendments to the draft conclusions in plenary: Tuesday – Wednesday, second week (four–five sittings).
- Draft report (first part with the corrections and second part corresponding to the discussion of the amendments) posted on the Web: Thursday evening, second week.
- Adoption of the draft report and draft conclusions by the Plenary of the Conference: Friday or Saturday afternoon, second week.

It is worth noting that the possibility to submit corrections to the second part of the report would remain and that the President would refer to these possible corrections by identifying the paragraphs concerned at the moment of submitting the report to the plenary for final adoption (on the model of what was previously done at the Governing Body before the reform).

### ***General discussion committees***

- Opening: Monday afternoon, first week.
- Five–six plenary sittings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday (if possible morning only) first week: general discussion on a limited number of points.
- Distribution of tentative conclusions on Thursday, first week, beginning of the afternoon.
- Drafting group: four–five meetings on Friday and Saturday, first week.
- Distribution of the draft conclusions: Monday morning, second week.
- Group meetings on Monday morning, second week.

- Receipt of amendments: Monday afternoon, second week from 3 to 5 p.m.
- First part of the draft report (corresponding to the general discussion) posted on the Web on Monday, second week. Possible corrections to this first part could be received in plenary, and the first part of the report could be adopted in plenary on Tuesday afternoon, second week.
- Examination of the amendments to the draft conclusions in plenary: Examination of the amendments to the draft conclusions in plenary: Tuesday–Wednesday, second week (four–five sittings).
- Draft report (first part with the corrections and second part corresponding to the discussion of the amendments) posted on the Web: Thursday evening, second week.
- Adoption of the draft report and draft conclusions by the Plenary of the Conference: Friday or Saturday afternoon, second week.

It is worth noting that the possibility to submit corrections to the second part of the report would remain and that the President would refer to these possible corrections by identifying the paragraphs concerned at the moment of submitting the report to the plenary for final adoption (on the model of what was previously done at the Governing Body before the reform).

### ***Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)***

Pending the outcome of the CAS follow-up and the consultation of the tripartite working group of the CAS, the Office is examining the options so as to ensure that the CAS can fulfil its mandate in accordance with its working methods, taking into account the shorter duration proposed for the session of the Conference.