



▶ Record of Proceedings

3B

International Labour Conference – 111th Session, Geneva, 2023

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Plenary sitting: Report of the Finance Committee

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Tuesday, 13 June 2023, 3.20 p.m.
President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

Report of the Finance Committee: Presentation, discussion and approval

The President

We will now turn our attention to the work of the Finance Committee. I refer to the Committee's report, which can be found in [Record of Proceedings No. 3A](#). I should like to recall that the Officers of the Committee are Mr Shabangu (Eswatini), Chairperson and Reporter, and Mr Chacón (Mexico), Vice-Chairperson.

The report contains three resolutions concerning financial and administrative matters to be considered by the Conference: a resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 and the allocation of the budget of income among Member States; a resolution concerning the scale of assessments of contributions to the budget for 2024; and a resolution concerning the financial report and audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

I now invite Mr Shabangu to present to us the work of the Committee and its report.

Mr Shabangu Chairperson and Reporter of the Finance Committee

I have the honour to submit to the Conference the report of the Finance Committee. This report has been published earlier today as document ILC.111/Record No. 3A and contains the recommendations of the Committee on the matters that it considered. There are, in total, three resolutions proposed by the Committee for adoption by the Conference, which appear at the end of the report. A key item on the agenda of the Finance Committee was the Programme and Budget proposals for 2024–25. The members of the Finance Committee held intensive discussions on this item and expressed different positions on some issues in the programme and budget document. The interventions of all members of the Committee have been faithfully recorded in the Committee's report. In light of the views expressed and the voting undertaken, the Committee members continued their discussion with a view to finding a possible solution.

The proposed text to be included in the Committee's decision, as well as the text to be added in the explanatory note of the final approved programme and budget document, was supported by the members of the Finance Committee on a consensual basis. These texts appear in paragraphs 125 and 126 of the Committee's report, contained in Record of Proceedings No. 3A. Subsequently, the Office was able to execute the forward purchase transactions after the conclusion of the Finance Committee session on 12 June 2023. Following the forward purchase transactions undertaken by the Office, the budget rate of exchange for 2024–25 was established at 0.91 Swiss francs to the United States dollar and the expenditure budget at US\$879,800,000.

In Swiss francs, the total amount due from Member States was determined at CHF800,618,000. The summary of the proposed expenditure budget for 2024–25 by appropriation line and the proposed summarized budget of expenditure and income for 2024–25 are presented in Appendix III to Record of Proceedings No. 3A.

The resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 and the allocation of the budget of income among Member States is subject to a record vote immediately after the adoption of the Committee's report by the plenary. Therefore, I would

like to make a special appeal to all representatives of governments, employers and workers to give full support to the resolution concerning the Programme and Budget for 2024–25.

The Committee also considered the proposed scale of assessment of contributions to the ILO regular budget for 2024, based on the United Nations scale, and recommended that the resolution concerning the scale of assessments of contributions to the budget for 2024 be adopted by the Conference. The text of the resolution is included in Record of Proceedings No. 3A and the detailed scale per Member State can be found in Appendix II to the same record. Based on the budget of income in Swiss francs for the 2024–25 biennium and the scale of assessments of contributions for 2024, a statement showing the contributions due from each Member State for 2024, including any credit applied where eligible, is presented in Appendix IV to Record of Proceedings No. 3A.

The Finance Committee also had before it the financial report and audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the Office's External Auditor, the Commission on Audit of the Philippines, had given an unmodified audit opinion. Based on the positive recommendations made by the Governing Body and as recorded in the minutes of its 347th *bis* Session, the Committee proposed that the 2022 financial statements be adopted by the Conference in accordance with article 29 of the Financial Regulations. The text of the relevant resolution is included in Record of Proceedings No. 3A.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the Committee and, also, to the members of the secretariat for the tremendous efforts taken to conclude the items under consideration by the Committee, and to congratulate the Committee and the Office for the positive and consensual outcome on the approval of the Programme and Budget for 2024-25. Surely, were it not for the courage of the Committee to continue negotiating, we would not have secured the consensus decision to adopt the programme and budget for the next biennium. I would also like to recognize the work of the interpreters, the report writers and translators, which ensured the timely and accurate processing of the documents on the Committee's agenda, as well as the very comprehensive report that I am presenting to you here today.

With these remarks, I commend the report and its resolutions to the Conference for adoption.

The President

Many thanks, Sir, for this summary of the work of the Committee and of the resolutions it is submitting to the Conference plenary for adoption. I shall now give the floor to the representatives of the Workers' and Employers' groups.

Ms Passchier

Chairperson of the Workers' group of the Conference

On behalf of the Workers' group in the ILO, and of all the workers of the world that we represent in this august house – from very strong ones to extremely vulnerable ones – I want to say that we are relieved. Relieved, because yesterday, after what seemed an endless process of negotiations among Governments in the Finance Committee, there was finally a breakthrough.

As we have said from the very beginning of this session of the International Labour Conference, for the workers of the world, the ILO is their fortress. For some of them, it is the

only place they can look to for protection: protection against authoritarian regimes that put them in jail for exercising their freedom of association; protection against employers who sometimes hire gangs to kill them for standing up for workers' rights; protection against unhealthy and exploitative working conditions; and, indeed, protection against discrimination *on any ground*.

So we can assure you that our group will do whatever it takes to ensure the survival of this Organization, allowing it to fulfil all its financial obligations and deliver in all its operations, both at the global level and in the field – including the payment of the salaries and other benefits to all its staff and retirees. We therefore pledged to vote in favour of the programme and budget as adopted by the Governing Body in March.

However, at this session of the International Labour Conference, we experienced how this hundred-year-old fortress was put on the brink of financial default, while we could do nothing but stand by and watch, with increasing disbelief and abhorrence, the discussions taking place in the Finance Committee, in which only Governments participate and decide and no tripartite involvement whatsoever is allowed, other than some introductory words.

The Finance Committee is supposed to discuss the approval, allocation and collection of the budget of the Organization and any other administrative measures related to it. This is a discussion on the amount of the budget and how the amount is allocated for payment by the ILO Member States, and *not* about how, where and on what the money should be spent. This Committee should not be abused in order to take political decisions, without the social partners, challenging a programme that has been adopted in the tripartite Governing Body. Any debate on the substance of that programme should have been allowed to take place only in a tripartite format.

In the corridors outside the Finance Committee, we encouraged Governments on all sides – and I emphasize on *all sides* – to come to a consensus-based decision in the interests of their workers, social partners, economies and societies. And we are indeed relieved to see that this was, in the end, the result.

We certainly wish now to see the strong and consensus-based commitment and support from all constituents for the Director-General of the ILO, Secretary-General of the Conference, who was unfortunately given a very rough ride at his first session of the Conference, as well as for his first programme and budget and its implementation.

But let us be clear: this can never happen again. We will raise this matter in the Governing Body in order to take measures that will prevent any such situation in the future.

So, we welcome the fact that the Organization was able to come to a consensus, as I said, through a decision among Governments. And we will support the adoption of the programme and budget as adopted by the Governing Body and confirmed by the Finance Committee. This is of the utmost importance for all of us. Ultimately, we all share the goal of social justice for peace and decent work for all, in the understanding that it is only by working together that we can deliver on this key objective of the ILO.

But let us also agree that we need to address any differences and divergent views on policy matters in a tripartite manner. This is the constitutional obligation of this house.

One debate concerns the important principle of non-discrimination on any ground, to which all constituents of the ILO adhere, and which was reconfirmed in the decision of the Finance Committee by all Governments. Apparently, however, we cannot avoid having further discussions on the inclusive nature of this principle. While I will refrain from going into the

substance of the debate that took place among Governments, I must express my extreme sadness that this discussion focused on which specific *vulnerable groups* were to be protected under the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work, in order not to include but to *exclude* some groups from such protection, endangering the protection of *all groups* that are in need of it.

Let me also say that the group that some did not want to be explicitly mentioned *must* be explicitly mentioned. Regardless of your political, religious or other perspective, the group of LGBT+ workers is, in all our countries without exception, clearly a vulnerable group that is discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity – sometimes even with deadly consequences. It is also clear that we are far from reaching agreement in this Organization as to how to deal with this. So the discussion must continue in order to increase mutual understanding and reach a convergence of views. But let me repeat that this can only legitimately be done in a tripartite setting.

It was for good reason that, as early as 1919, the unique governance structure of the ILO was placed at the heart of the Organization to ensure that workers and employers were not just consulted, but would participate fully and equally with Governments in the decision-making of the ILO. As you all know, this is symbolised by the famous three keys to open the door. It was also reconfirmed in 1944 in the Declaration of Philadelphia, Part I of which states, and I quote: “The Conference reaffirms the fundamental principles on which the Organization is based and, in particular, that ... (d) the war against want requires to be carried on with unrelenting vigour within each nation, and by continuous and concerted international effort in which the representatives of workers and employers, enjoying equal status with those of governments, join with them in free discussion and democratic decision with a view to the promotion of the common welfare.”

And with this, we confirm our continued support for the adoption of the Programme and Budget 2024–25.

Mr Dragún

Employer (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the Employers' group of the Conference
(Original Spanish)

I am pleased to take the floor today as the International Labour Conference considers the report of the Finance Committee. As Employers we have the status of observers in the Committee; only Governments are members.

We were saddened to witness the deep divisions between Governments and the divisive votes on the programme and budget, which jeopardized the very future of the International Labour Organization, the very future of this Conference and the very future of this house of tripartite social dialogue. After days of uncertainty, with behind-the-scenes discussions between Governments remaining inconclusive, the Employers addressed the plenary on 12 June and said that the world was watching and that Governments had to decide whether to continue using a win-lose strategy and remain in a protracted stalemate that would lead to the death of the International Labour Organization, or to adopt a win-win approach that would yield a third win: victory for dialogue – social dialogue – with an understanding of others' realities, an acknowledgment of divergent views, a determination to reaffirm what unites us and progress towards common ground.

Ultimately, Governments embraced the win-win-win approach that culminated in agreement in the Finance Committee. We are now considering its report. As Employers, we fully support the programme and budget option; this session of the Conference can count on us to vote in favour. We stand ready to participate in any discussions the Office might initiate after this session to bring Governments, Employers and Workers together in a tripartite setting to draw lessons from this acute crisis and to prevent future difficulties. We reaffirm that tripartite social dialogue between Governments, Workers and Employers is the cornerstone of the International Labour Organization, symbolized, as my Worker colleague said, by the three keys, and that dialogue requires both an effort to understand one another and room for the expression of divergent viewpoints.

We hope that the search for common ground and the spirit of consensus will prevail henceforth so that the Global Coalition for Social Justice can fulfil its promise as a flagship initiative of the Director-General of the ILO.

The President

The resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 will be subject to a vote, which will be opened in a few minutes. The other two resolutions contained in the report will be considered for adoption, one by one. Before I proceed, I would like to give an opportunity to any other delegate wishing to speak on the report as a whole to do so.

Ms Luna Camacho

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

The group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC) reiterates its strong support for the mandate of the ILO and the adoption of the programme and budget. During our deliberations, our group actively sought to reach agreements and find solutions to ensure continuity in the functioning of the ILO. The cooperation of our region with this Organization is fundamental for the promotion of the highest standards of worker protection, to achieve tripartism and social dialogue. My group supports the adoption of the programme and budget at this plenary session.

Mr Bekkers

Government (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), which thanks the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for his report and for his able chairmanship through long and, at times, difficult Committee discussions. We also thank the Director-General and the Office again for their work to develop the Programme and Budget for the 2024–25 biennium.

IMEC reaffirms that the work of the ILO is critical to achieving broad-based sustainable development and inclusive growth. Technical assistance to implement international labour standards helps Member States establish a foundation for fair and effective labour market governance. The promotion of social dialogue and the universal application of the fundamental principles and rights at work is critical to maintaining the link between economic

growth and social progress. Indeed, the ILO's rights-based mandate is the basis of its contribution to the pursuit of social justice.

IMEC endorses the programmatic vision of the Director-General with an explicit orientation towards the ILO's social justice mandate and fully supports the work of the ILO.

IMEC nonetheless reiterates our view that the requested budget increase is high in nominal terms. Having said that, we appreciate that the Finance Committee has sat for an unprecedented number of days deliberating over the programme and budget. Governments have discussed our strongly held and principled positions, including on the implementation of the ILO's mandate to combat discrimination in employment for everyone.

Through collective engagement and long hours of discussion, we have ultimately arrived at a place that allows us to move forward together, for the good of the International Labour Organization.

We express our sincere thanks to the Workers' and Employers' delegates for their patience. We regret that because these conversations took place in the context of the Finance Committee, comprised only of Governments, they were not able to take part in the most recent discussions. In the ILO we must ensure that policy-related issues are discussed and agreed among the tripartite constituents. We nonetheless commend to our social partners the agreement reached and ask for their continued support for the adoption of the budget resolution. I would like to thank them for the remarks they made just a few minutes ago.

In light of our position on the requested budget increases, IMEC reiterates our expectation that the Office will undertake necessary efforts to implement the programme and budget for the coming biennium in a cost-effective manner.

With those comments, and in furtherance of our shared commitment to the work of the ILO, IMEC can support the adoption of the programme and budget resolution.

Mr Hashmi

Government (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

The programme and budget envisages important work in the areas of strengthening social justice, promoting social dialogue between tripartite constituents, equal opportunities, social protection, inclusive growth and decent work.

We appreciate the drift of the envisaged outcomes towards promoting social justice – the foremost objective enshrined in the ILO Constitution. The vigour and commitment demonstrated by all Member States to discussing aspects of the programme and budget in the Governing Body, as well as in the Finance Committee, reflected the importance they attached to its outcomes. Our discussions were wide-ranging and these covered various aspects surrounding the ILO's future work on discrimination. These aspects included a conceptual framing of vulnerable groups, mandates, legality and relevance, as well as procedures.

We believe that these discussions have only underlined the importance of cooperating against discrimination and set a tone for our future work. As an intergovernmental organization and a specialized agency of the United Nations, our work in the ILO should be guided by the principles and purposes of the UN Charter. Article 1 of the UN Charter encourages us to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of a social and cultural character, and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinctions as to race, sex, language or religion.

The protection of rights and fundamental freedoms is essential to creating an enabling environment for promoting decent work for social justice. In this context, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries reaffirm their respective obligations under international law, including the international labour Conventions, to support the ILO's work on social justice and to counter discrimination.

As our discussions in the Governing Body and the Finance Committee have amply demonstrated, both through words and votes, in the future, our work on protecting vulnerable groups will be productive and sustainable only if it is conceptually framed in accordance with existing international labour Conventions. This should be without any ambiguity on promoting a framework around discrimination that does not have international consensus and which reflects the priorities of the few, which risks undermining the spirit of cooperation, both in developing future programmes and budgets, as well as implementing them. Implementation must be in line with Governments', Workers' and Employers' tripartite agreed priorities in accordance with Member States' national laws.

With this, we are pleased to assure the President that the OIC countries support the Programme and Budget for the biennium 2024–25, based on the agreement reached between the Member States in the Finance Committee.

Mr Janson

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

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Georgia, Iceland, Norway and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

We have arrived at a compromise for the Programme and Budget for the biennium 2024–25, after long and difficult discussions. We welcome this compromise and wish to thank all parties, including the social partners, for their patience, commitment and willingness to find consensus. Over the past days, we managed to find a way to bridge the divide. The ILO now has a programme and budget and can continue its important work. We would also like to acknowledge the support given by the secretariat, in particular the Secretary-General and his team, in this demanding process.

We can now take the next step towards implementing the new programme and budget. The EU and its Member States support the resolution as presented by the Finance Committee to the plenary. I would also like to add that we support and align ourselves with the IMEC statement.

Ms Mbouzie Ahanda Épouse Abah

Government (Cameroon), speaking on behalf of the Africa group (Original French)

The Africa group applauds the willingness of Member States once again to choose dialogue and consensus despite the profound differences that were observed and acknowledged. The group remained available and open to negotiation throughout various consultations at several levels. This willingness to make concessions was aimed at converging on a common, consensual position that was respectful of individual ideologies and at accurately reflecting the image that the Africa group holds, and wishes to preserve, of our institution: that of an orchestra in which nations agree to harmonize their instruments to promote social justice further through decent work and to move towards a more democratic and therefore fairer Organization.

The ILO must pursue the social justice that we all advocate and that we seek to prioritize on the multilateral global agenda. Inequalities are often a major source of frustration, and even withdrawal. The Africa group's positions were not intended to exclude any particular group, but rather to contribute to the inclusion of all those who are victims of marginalization in the world of work. Mutual respect and consideration are measured by the capacity of Member States for understanding and the ability to be flexible in their positions.

We thank all those involved for their patience and mutual understanding and the Office for its diligent efforts to uphold the fundamental values of our Organization.

In conclusion, we reiterate that openness to dialogue and consensus and a willingness to exchange ideas are essential if we are to respect differences of opinion, values and consensual terminology, taking into account the views of all who are part of our Organization.

Mr Gamaleldin
Government (Egypt)
(Original Arabic)

I wish to thank the President of the Conference for his wise leadership of the work of this Conference and, also the Chairperson of the Finance Committee for his presentation.

My delegation associates itself with the statements of the Africa group and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). I should like to underscore Egypt's firm support for the ILO and the vital role that the Organization plays in promoting the Decent Work Agenda and achieving social justice, through its support for the Organization's goals and objectives, set out in the Declaration of Philadelphia, and by strengthening its capacities to carry out the functions assigned to it in accordance with its mandate, governed by the ILO Constitution and international labour Conventions.

The Egyptian delegation once again expresses its appreciation for the vision set out in the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 of how the Organization might deal with many of the challenges and risks facing the world of work, with a view to supporting the capacities and response of the Organization and of Member States to challenges while remaining committed to rationalizing expenditure and exercising targeted fiscal discipline.

With regard to the adoption of the programme and budget, after reaching consensus on how to record differences over the concepts contained therein on which there is no international agreement, after the two rounds of votes held by the Finance Committee on the proposed amendment submitted by the Africa group and, also, the decision of the Governing Body, on behalf of the delegation of Egypt I should like to welcome the consensus reached in the Finance Committee, which allowed the Organization to take the financial measures required to submit the programme and budget document in its final form to the Conference for adoption. I should also like to thank the President of the Conference, the Director-General and all who contributed to reaching this consensus.

The delegation of Egypt reiterates that it is against all forms of discrimination and wishes it to be noted on record that the approved programme and budget document must be read in light of the paragraphs inserted in the report of the Finance Committee and those that will be included in the explanatory note annexed to the Labour Conference resolution adopting the document in the final report that will be published after the Conference. These paragraphs document the divergence of views and positions in the Governing Body and the Finance Committee and the fact that more than one vote was held in this regard during their meetings.

On the basis of the foregoing, the delegation of Egypt wishes to record that the implementation of the ILO Programme and Budget for 2024–25 at the national level in the Arab Republic of Egypt must be consistent with the international commitments of Egypt in accordance with the ILO Constitution, with the labour Conventions that it has ratified and with the relevant national legislation. The substance of paragraph 160 and indicator 5.1.2 in the programme and budget document falls outside this scope and will therefore be considered void.

In conclusion, the delegation of Egypt expresses the hope that in future, the Organization will not use controversial terminology that has not been universally agreed upon, since doing so would lead only to divisions and would restrict its capacity to achieve its lofty goals and objectives, which would have a negative impact on its capacity to provide the required support to countries for the implementation of their national priorities.

In this connection, the delegation of Egypt emphasizes the importance of accepting divergence when it occurs; no party should strive to impose its views on another or restrict the sovereign right of States to register their non-acceptance of non-agreed language, as doing so would be contrary to the foundations of multilateralism. At the national level, each of us works in his own country with respect for its international obligations, for the relevant national legislation and for the national priorities agreed between the social partners. Our guiding principle should be constructive cooperation to advance the Decent Work Agenda, for the good of all humanity.

Mr Haider
Government (Pakistan)

I would like to congratulate the Director-General on the adoption of the programme and budget that outlines the ILO's priorities for the next two years. Pakistan aligns itself with the positions that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has taken during consideration of the programme and budget document in the meetings of the Governing Body at its 347th Session and the Finance Committee of this International Labour Conference. Pakistan views itself as a partner and a beneficiary of the ILO's work undertaken at the country level, in line with the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) developed with national priorities and in consultation between tripartite constituents. At home, the Government of Pakistan is undertaking several social welfare programmes aimed at facilitating the situation of workers in areas such as health and education. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and climate-induced events, our efforts to support our social partners continue. We are also committed to strengthening our legal architecture in line with our obligations under international labour Conventions and building our implementation capacity to support the policy outcomes envisaged in this programme and budget. This requires robust cooperation with the ILO at the country level, which should not only be aligned with the policy priorities of this programme and budget, but also with the national priorities as developed, while considering local laws, culture and some specific needs. In this context, Pakistan would like to echo concerns of the OIC on using controversial and divisive concepts, as these can undermine the international cooperation that underpins the ILO's work worldwide. We look forward to our continued cooperation in the days ahead.

Ms Patio

Government (Paraguay)
(Original Spanish)

We welcome the diplomatic efforts made to ensure that this afternoon we can adopt and approve by consensus the biennial programme and budget of this Organization. We express thanks for the work done, as we are aware of the global challenges that exist in the sphere of work of the ILO. Paraguay is committed to continuing to promote non-discrimination of any kind among workers on the basis of ethnicity, sex, age, religion, social status, or political or trade union preference. In this respect, the approved document will be implemented taking into account the national legislative framework in force, together with institutional priorities.

Mr Elquaifri

Government (Sudan)
(Original Arabic)

First of all, I would like to congratulate the President again on his assumption of the presidency of the Conference, and the Secretary-General on his participation for the first time as Director of the Organization in the deliberations of the International Labour Conference. I would also like to congratulate the constituents for the success of the lengthy discussions which have identified the priorities of work for the coming period.

My delegation supports the statement made by the Africa group and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. In Sudan, we are happy to see the budget document adopted by consensus. This is the approach that my country has been pursuing with our social partners in order to propose effective solutions to deal with urgent issues and to develop and implement programmes and strategies.

We are delighted that consensus was reached today, which underscores our determination, openness to dialogue, and readiness to make concessions and compromise in order to reach agreement through recognizing differences on important and sensitive issues. We are making our future work more precise on these sensitive issues through consultation with the Member States of the Organization, with a view to reaching consensus on the non-use in the Organization's documents of controversial language and concepts not agreed upon and the non-inclusion of non-conventional terms not stipulated in international law and human rights Conventions.

Sudan will continue to support the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 and its subsequent implementation, particularly in relation to country programmes, on the basis of the agreement reached and consistent with the morals, values, cultures and customs of its people and its national priorities and laws. Sudan requests that this statement be included in the records of this meeting.

Mr Pakseresht

Government (Islamic Republic of Iran)

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on the report of the Finance Committee and adoption of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2024–25. We attach great importance to the programme and budget of the International Labour Organization, which enables the Organization to conduct its endeavours based on the constituents' shared knowledge of the priorities in terms of the policy goals and resource mobilization.

We commend the efforts made during the lengthy discussions we had on the matter in order to find common ground and make it possible to move forward despite the quite divergent views we have on terminology with regard to non-discrimination. We are of the view that the practice of valuing and giving due weight to the socio-cultural context and legal environment of Member States during the development, promotion and implementation of the ILO programmes should be respected, continued and protected as a basic principle of the house and as our shared commitment to multilateralism.

Ms Mesdoua
Government (Algeria)
(Original French)

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the Africa group and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. My delegation also wishes to express its satisfaction with the adoption of the programme and budget by consensus and to thank the President, all delegations, the Office and the Director-General, and particularly the groups of which my delegation is a member, for the spirit of dialogue and cooperation they displayed in order to secure a minimum agreement on a matter that is very sensitive in that it concerns the values, cultures and religions of many countries.

Algeria reiterates its attachment to the principles of our Organization and to the fight against all forms of discrimination. It advocates respect for the principle of sovereignty of States and their civilizational, cultural and religious values, and calls for the use of agreed and universally accepted language to avoid future discord over a matter of such vital importance to the Organization.

Our Organization, which has always favoured constructive dialogue in all circumstances, should continue and strengthen its efforts to contribute to restoring an atmosphere of trust among all its constituents.

Mr Özkan
Government (Türkiye)

Türkiye aligns itself with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the OIC. We would also like to register that Türkiye will support the implementation of the resolution to the extent that it is in line with its existing international commitments and its national legislation. The text of the resolution cannot be construed in any way as a change in the previously expressed position of Türkiye or as any new commitment on its part. We reiterate Türkiye's commitment to support the ILO's work on social justice and we emphasize the need to combat all forms of discrimination and racism, including Islamophobia and xenophobia, also under the general umbrella of dialogue.

The President

If there are no further requests for the floor or objections, may I take it that the Conference approves the report of the Finance Committee, paragraphs 1-153 and its Appendices I-IV, as a whole?

(The report - paragraphs 1-153 and Appendices I-IV - is approved.)

We shall now proceed with the adoption of two of the resolutions stemming from the work of the Finance Committee.

Resolution concerning the scale of assessments of contributions to the budget for 2024

The President

Let us begin with the resolution concerning the scale of assessments of contributions to the budget for 2024.

If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts this resolution?

(The resolution is adopted.)

Resolution concerning the financial report and audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

The President

Let us move swiftly on to the resolution concerning the financial report and audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts this resolution?

(The resolution is adopted.)

On behalf of the Conference, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the Finance Committee and to the secretariat. I am aware that a great deal of effort and negotiation has taken place to ensure the adoption of the report and these resolutions. The Conference, as a whole, thanks them for their hard work and dedication.

(The Conference continued its work in plenary.)

Tuesday, 13 June 2023, 9.40 p.m.

President: Mr bin Samikh Al Marri

Resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 and the allocation of the budget of income among Member States

The President

I am honoured to reconvene this 13th plenary sitting of the 111th Session of the Conference to announce the results of the record vote on the resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 and the allocation of the budget of income among Member States. The results are as follows: 477 votes in favour, 11 votes against and 7 abstentions. The quorum of 303 votes was reached, as was the required two-thirds majority of 326.

(The resolution is adopted.)

(The detailed results of the vote are available on the [Conference website](#).)

I understand that the Director-General would like to take the floor. I will then give the floor to any other speakers who wish to comment on the results of the vote.

Mr Hougbo**Director-General of the International Labour Office and Secretary-General of the Conference**

I just wanted, with your indulgence, to take a few minutes to express, on behalf of the Office and on my own behalf, our greatest appreciation to you for giving us this budget, so that we can proceed with the programme for 2024–25 that you have approved. I want, in particular, to thank all those among you that have been very active in helping us to find a solution, and I know that all the groups, including the social partners, have been very helpful, and I just felt that it was necessary for me to express how grateful I am.

I also want to be very clear. If it is true that we have had intense discussions around the budget, it is also true that we did come together and find a consensus-based way forward. I know that the past few days, since Friday in particular, have been quite difficult for us all, particularly for those countries – from all regions – whose ambassadors were involved in the final discussions. I want to give particular thanks to all of them, but also to all of you who behind the scenes have contributed to finding this common ground. I also want to thank the President, because I know that he and his team have also been contributing by reaching out to various countries or groups.

I also want to thank the staff of the ILO. Needless to say, the anxiety has also been high among our staff. But if it is true that we have had this budget approved, it is also true that you expect us to deliver on what is in the programme, and here I can only reiterate my commitment, and the commitment of the Office, that we will do our best to deliver what is planned in the programme and budget document.

One final point: I want to reassure all of you that, as per our mandate, as per our *modus operandi* and as per our rules and regulations, the ILO does not impose itself on countries. All our programme activities, particularly our Decent Work Country Programmes, have to be approved by Member States, obviously in consultation with the social partners.

It is important that part of our core mandate as the ILO is to continue to fight against any kind of discrimination, regardless of the form or the country in which it is taking place. Again, I have been reassured, particularly in the last few days, to know that all of you, without exception, have reiterated the importance for the ILO of fighting against all discrimination, and I want to thank you all for that. I hope that the rest of this session of the Conference, including the World of Work Summit, will go smoothly.

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

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Georgia, Iceland and Norway align themselves with this statement. The European Union (EU) and its Member States and the ILO have a shared vision: that economic and social progress should go hand in hand. We therefore support the ILO through normative action as well as through assessed and voluntary contributions, and thereby support decent work and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Since 2018, ILO programme and budget documents have stressed the importance of anti-discrimination policies. A reference to LGBTI was first introduced in the Programme and Budget for 2018–19 and was included again in 2020–21. The Programme and Budget for 2022–23 included a reference to LGBTI+ persons. The recognition of the needs and rights of all persons is a commitment to social justice and rights at work.

The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations has also noted in its most recent General Survey a clear trend towards the inclusion in national legislation and policies of additional prohibited grounds of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

The EU and its Member States reiterates their commitment to equality and non-discrimination; to the entitlement of all persons to enjoy the full range of human rights and fundamental freedoms; to the participation of, inter alia, young people, girls and women, persons with disabilities and LGBTI persons; and to the protection of those who are in disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized situations, including children.

The European Union will continue to strongly support ILO action to combat all forms of discrimination within the world of work, with a specific focus on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including on grounds of sex, race, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity. We see this as an essential part of the ILO's work. We therefore strongly support the ILO's continued activities combating discrimination in all its forms, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Ms Norton

Government (Canada), speaking on behalf of a like-minded group of countries ¹

Over the past week, during and on the side of the Finance Committee sittings, we deliberated for long hours. First, we want to stress that, while discrimination based on any grounds – including sexual orientation and gender identity – became the most discussed issue during the Finance Committee sittings and is the focus of our intervention today, this should not be interpreted in any way as lessening the importance of all the other priorities and guidance the constituents provided to the Office in previous Governing Body discussions on the Director-General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2024–25.

We want to thank all those engaged in the collective efforts undertaken to bridge the divide in the spirit of reaching consensus in the Finance Committee. We stand by the compromise reached in the Finance Committee and have supported the resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25. But we want to make a few points clear. The consideration of the ILO Director-General's programme and budget is an important governance matter. The programme and budget must be transparent and detailed, reflecting the full programme of work of the ILO at all levels – global, regional and national – and for all constituents. The details and indicators are an integral part of the ILO results-based management system, as is regular reporting on the results and use of resources.

In an Office programme and budget document that provides the framework for ILO staff to advance this work, groups in the most vulnerable situations must be recognized and named. This includes those discriminated on the grounds of their sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBTI persons disproportionately experience violence, harassment, discrimination and exclusion throughout the employment cycle, from education to access to the labour market, conditions of work and security of employment. The ILO is a United Nations organization with social justice and rights at its centre, including the universally accepted

¹ The group of countries consisted of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Uruguay, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

fundamental principle on the elimination of discrimination in employment, particularly for those who are historically or disproportionately discriminated against.

Over the past week and, indeed, throughout two Governing Body sessions at which the programme and budget was previously discussed, we heard a wide range of views. We listened to each other. But we could not and did not compromise on the key mandate of the ILO to promote the elimination of discrimination on any grounds, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Let us recall that the ILO mandate to develop policy tools and research on how best to support all groups vulnerable to discrimination existed before this debate. To diminish the recognition of the needs and rights of one particular group – LGBTI persons, who disproportionately experience violence, harassment, discrimination and exclusion – would have been a regression that goes against our deep commitment to social justice and human rights, not only in the world of work, but more broadly across our global community. This explicit mandate was agreed by consensus and in multiple past programme and budgets. So, throughout this debate, we have insisted that the ILO must uphold this existing mandate and not take a step back by erasing it, at a time when persons and groups in marginalized situations are more than ever in need of our support. We welcome the consensus reached, which does not take a step back, but rather helps us continue to make progress in the effective realization of the rights in the world of work for all workers. If the ILO is to be a leader in the multilateral system for social justice, social justice must be for all.

Groups in the most vulnerable situations must be recognized and named. This issue goes to the core mandate and to the credibility of the ILO. The ILO's founding principles require the Organization to be a leader in promoting and protecting the rights of all workers. The ILO must not shy away from its responsibilities in this regard.

Ms Crocker **Government (United States of America)**

I would like to deliver an explanation of our vote. May I recall that the United States aligns itself with the statement made by the like-minded group of countries and shares the concern expressed in the statement made on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries that the requested budget increase was high in nominal terms. We appreciate the Office's efforts to identify additional budgetary efficiencies and share the expectation that the Office will undertake the necessary efforts to implement the programme and budget for the coming biennium in a cost-effective manner.

The United States welcomes the consensus that has enabled us to adopt the programme and budget today. This consensus was the product of long and, at times, difficult discussions and we appreciate the concerted engagement of Government partners to ensure that we could adopt the budget for the good of the Organization. That said, in the light of the discussions in the Finance Committee this week, the United States would like to make clear our unequivocal support for the ILO's uncontested and universally agreed mandate to promote the elimination of discrimination in employment for all workers as a fundamental principle and right at work.

The United States would like to state for the record our understanding that this mandate to promote the elimination of discrimination is inclusive of any grounds of discrimination, including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics. The United States is committed to advancing the rights of all workers; this is a cornerstone of both our domestic policy and our foreign policy. Respect for labour rights contributes to a stronger, more resilient and more inclusive economy. Workers both in our own country and around the

world should be treated with dignity and respect; this includes taking steps to protect all workers against discrimination based on race, disability, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, and against other forms of discrimination.

The United States Supreme Court issued a landmark decision in June 2020 which held that the prohibition against sex discrimination in the United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 includes employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status. In the United States, we are making concerted efforts to provide equal employment opportunity for LGBTQI+ workers, including through the Executive Order on Advancing Equality for LGBTQI+ Individuals, which was signed by President Biden on 15 June 2022.

A growing number of countries around the world, including my own, recognize discrimination on the basis of sex to include sexual orientation and gender identity. The ILO must continue to support the constituents in their efforts to progressively eliminate discrimination on any grounds in the world of work to ensure that all workers enjoy equal access to opportunity and that we are working together towards the progressive realization of a more socially just world. This will require the ILO to continue to develop its research and expertise to effectively advise and assist those constituents prioritizing the elimination of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

The United States affirms that the ILO's rights-based agenda, grounded in international labour standards and the promotion of all the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work, is the cornerstone of its mandate and its comparative advantage.

With the adoption of the Programme and Budget for the biennium 2024–25 today, it is the firm expectation of the United States Government that the ILO will continue to deliver technical assistance to the ILO's tripartite constituents in furtherance of its mandate to promote the elimination of discrimination in employment on all grounds.

The President

I believe that there are no further requests for the floor. I also believe that it is worth taking a moment now to celebrate the fact that, once again, this august assembly has been able to overcome differences and reach a consensus on an issue of the utmost institutional importance. I thank you all for your contribution to today's debate.

(The Conference adjourned at 10 p.m.)