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## FOR DECISION

### FIFTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Report of the Director-General

### **Fifth Supplementary Report: Collaboration between the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**

#### **I. Institutional context**

1. At its 297th Session, the Governing Body discussed developments in relation to possible collaboration between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on occupational safety and health management systems (OSH-MS).<sup>1</sup> A number of concerns were expressed. In deciding to ask ISO to refrain from proceeding with a survey on the possibility of developing an OSH-MS standard, the Governing Body thus invited the Office to submit a paper that would facilitate further discussion of the matter at its next session. This was to include a general discussion on collaboration with ISO taking into account the specific mandate of the ILO as a standard-setting organization as well as the context of voluntary standards developed by ISO.
2. The discussion at the 298th Session of the Governing Body has two purposes: (1) to consider how best to approach the general question of ISO and its standardization activities in relation to the specific mandate of the ILO; and (2) to take an immediate decision on whether there is to be cooperation with ISO on OSH-MS and, if so, how.
3. This paper draws upon views recently exchanged in consultations with the constituents and concerned units within the Office. In order to inform the discussion, the paper reviews ILO work to date in relation to ISO as well as various arrangements in effect between other public international organizations and ISO. It also considers the potential impact of engagement, or non-engagement, with ISO, and examines a range of possible approaches

<sup>1</sup> GB.297/19/4.

that the Governing Body might wish to consider. An addendum to this paper contains an informative appendix on relevant structure and processes of ISO.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Existing activities between ILO and ISO

4. The scope of ISO's activities is broad. Some 16,000 international standards published by ISO (and many more under development) address a wide range of matters including technical products, financial services and management systems. While the majority of ISO standards address technical specifications of products, in recent years, the private standardization activities of ISO have increasingly addressed policy matters that involve or could have direct effect on various aspects of the ILO's standards and activities. Some of these have resulted in ISO International Standards that seek to harmonize industry-wide efforts; on other issues, ISO has adopted recommendations or temporary specifications (see addendum) that do not require industry consensus.
5. The structures and operational processes of ISO are very different from those of the ILO. The aim of ISO is to promote the development of standardization and related activities in the world with a view to facilitating international exchange of goods and services and to developing cooperation in the spheres of intellectual, scientific, technological and economic activity;<sup>3</sup> ISO develops standards in response to perceived market demands. In contrast, the ILO develops standards to serve the ultimate objectives of social justice and respect for internationally recognized human rights and rights at work. ISO operates through a network of national standards bodies whose representation in ISO bodies is decided by national-level mechanisms aimed at industry-wide consensus; while each ISO member body has one vote, in effect the system for executive and technical work reflects the influence of more developed economies. In contrast, the ILO's recognized authority as a universal international organization to set and supervise labour standards derives from a constitutionally regulated system of accreditation of national tripartite representatives of States (governments, workers and employers); each State has equal decision-making power in the adoption of ILO standards, and this power is shared equally between governments, on the one hand, and the social partners on the other. As for the method of governance and external accountability, the two organizations are again distinct. As a non-governmental organization, ISO operates under relevant national laws. In contrast, as a public international organization, the ILO is accountable to its member States under its Constitution and relevant international law. In addition, ILO member States become accountable to each other by ratifying ILO Conventions, which are binding once in force for those countries. ISO standards, on the other hand, are considered voluntary in nature though they may have a de facto compulsory effect if they become widely accepted by the industry.
6. To date, ILO activities in relation to ISO have proceeded on an ad hoc basis, as summarized below. It should also be recalled that a number of relevant ISO initiatives proceed without ILO participation. These include a range of matters involving the safety of machinery and hazardous substances<sup>4</sup> which are relevant to ILO Conventions that were

<sup>2</sup> As detailed in the appendix, ISO is not a public international organization but is a membership organization of national standards institutes with one member per country. ISO currently operates with 156 members.

<sup>3</sup> See article 2, ISO Statutes and Rules of Procedure (14th ed., 2000).

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g. Technical Committee (TC) 199 (safety of machinery, including such subtopics as airborne hazardous substances, etc.) at <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/CatalogueListPage.CatalogueList?>

given priority for revision in the ILO Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health,<sup>5</sup> as well as revision of an ISO standard on safety data sheets for chemical products which supports implementation of the Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170).<sup>6</sup> In addition, the recently established ISO Ship Recycling Working Group<sup>7</sup> has offered to collaborate with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in the development and implementation of the proposed IMO Convention on Ship Recycling, a matter in which the ILO is involved separately with the IMO.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, a number of ISO standards on containers, cranes and lifting appliances, and wire ropes are directly relevant to the practical implementation of ILO standards on port work including the Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152), many of those ISO standards are referenced in the related ILO code of practice, *Safety and health in ports* (Geneva, 2005).<sup>9</sup>

7. *ILO liaison activities with technical committees and subcommittees of ISO.* The ILO participates as a Category A liaison organization<sup>10</sup> in a number of ISO technical committees (TCs) and subcommittees (SCs)<sup>11</sup> that deal with a wide range of technical areas relevant to the world of work. Much of the work done in these ISO committees is pertinent to practical implementation of various provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155). In addition, the various subject matters also concern technical aspects of a number of other ILO Conventions and codes of practices. While much of the ILO's role is restricted to monitoring ISO activities, in part due to resource limitations, connections include a wide range of topics.<sup>12</sup>

COMMID=4512&scopelist=PROGRAMME, and TC 184 (industrial automation systems and integration).

<sup>5</sup> See conclusions concerning ILO standards-related activities in the area of occupational safety and health – A global strategy, *Provisional Record* No. 22. ILC, 91st Session, 2003, paras 7–9.

<sup>6</sup> TC 47 (chemistry) has recently accepted to revise ISO standard on safety data sheets for chemical products (ISO 11014-1:1994) to bring it in line with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. The request was made by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) which serves as the secretariat to a subcommittee in which the ILO participates; however, the ILO does not participate in ISO's TC 47.

<sup>7</sup> ISO/TC8 on ship recycling has identified various items as possible ISO standards, including methods of handling and reporting hazardous materials. See MEPC 55/3/3 (July 2006), discussed in GB.297/19/3.

<sup>8</sup> See also GB.298/STM/7.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/cops/english/index.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Liaison organizations may participate fully in the work and contribute technical documents; while they have no voting rights, their voice can carry weight. Category A is an ISO liaison status at technical committee/subcommittee level given to international or broadly based regional organizations working or interested in similar or related fields that make an effective contribution to the work of the technical committee or subcommittee for questions dealt with by this technical committee or subcommittee. Such organizations are sent copies of all relevant documentation and are invited to meetings. They may nominate experts to participate in a working group established by the committee or subcommittee. ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, sec. 1.17.2.

<sup>11</sup> For a list of the 22 ISO technical committees/subcommittees in which the ILO participates, see <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/stdsdevelopment/liaisonorglist/LiaisonOrgDetailPage.LiaisonOrgDetail?ACRONYM=ILO>.

<sup>12</sup> **JTC 1/SC 17** (Cards and personal identification); **JTC 1/SC 37** (Biometrics); **TC 8** (Ships and marine technology); **TC 8/SC 4** (Outfitting and deck machinery); **TC 11** (Boilers and pressure

8. *Biometrics and identity documents: proactive liaison at the initiative of the ILO.* This field of activity involves ISO's development of technical aspects of an established ILO Convention. Following adoption of the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (No. 185), the ILO has taken a proactive approach to its participation as a Category A liaison organization in ISO's Joint Technical Committee 1 (JTC-1), Subcommittee 37 (SC 37) on Biometrics. In SC 37, the ILO has received recognition for its contributions to the areas of fingerprint interoperability and biometric testing done to qualify biometric products for use with seafarers' identity documents (SID).<sup>13</sup> As a result of the ILO input, SC 37 has also begun work on a new profile designed to provide a better explanation of how to use biometric standards in the SID programme, and to offer alternative technology choices in line with ongoing developments.<sup>14</sup> The terms of reference for this work require consistency with Convention No. 185, as stated in the draft ISO standard's introduction:

This standard is not intended in any way to conflict with the existing international Convention No. 185 established by the International Labour Organization and ratified by various member States of the ILO. Instead, the approaches profiled in this standard can be used to satisfy the requirements of the current version of Convention No. 185 while also allowing alternative approaches outlined in this standard to be used in the future by the ILO if Convention No. 185 is modified. To this end, the concept of backwards compatibility is stressed. The fundamental choices already made by ILO of the use of a minutiae-based, two-finger template for seafarer verification, of the inclusion of a photograph and signature in the visible area of the SID, and of the use of a two-dimensional barcode as a storage medium are respected in this profile. Where alternative technology choices are promoted, they are defined in such a way that there will still be backwards compatibility with existing SIDs.<sup>15</sup>

9. *Social responsibility: collaboration at the initiative of ISO.* This field of activity is based upon a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ILO and ISO which provides a unique role for the ILO in the development of an ISO standard in the field of social responsibility.<sup>16</sup> It seeks to ensure the consistency of ISO standard with relevant ILO standards and provides for separate and independent participation of the tripartite

vessels); **TC 21** (Equipment for fire protection and fire fighting); **TC 23** (Tractors and machinery for agriculture and forestry); **TC 23/SC 3** (Safety and comfort); **TC 23/SC 17** (Manually portable forest machinery); **TC 41** (Pulleys and belts); **TC 43** (Acoustics); **TC 43/SC 1** (Noise); **TC 44** (Welding and allied processes); **TC 44/SC 9** (Health and safety); **TC 44/SC 11** (Qualification requirements for welding and allied processes personnel); **TC 58** (Gas cylinders); **TC 58/SC 2** (Cylinder fittings); **TC 85/SC 2** (Radiation protection); **TC 94/SC 3** (Foot protection); **TC 94/SC 4** (Personal equipment for protection against falls); **TC 96** (Cranes); **TC 101** (Continuous mechanical handling equipment); **TC 104** (Freight containers); **TC 108/SC 4** (Human exposure to mechanical vibration and shock); **TC 110** (Industrial trucks); **TC 110/SC 2** (Safety of powered industrial trucks); **TC 111** (Round steel link chains, chain slings, components and accessories); **TC 118** (Compressors and pneumatic tools, machines and equipment); **TC 147** (Water quality); **TC 159** (Ergonomics); **TC 159/SC 1** (Ergonomic guiding principles); **TC 159/SC 3** (Anthropometry and biomechanics); **TC 159/SC 5** (Ergonomics of the physical environment); and **TC 173** (Assistive products for persons with disability).

<sup>13</sup> See GB.297/19/6.

<sup>14</sup> ISO 24713-3 "Information technology – Biometric profiles for interoperability and data interchange – Part 3: Biometric based verification and identification of seafarers".

<sup>15</sup> SC 37 N1755 – Second working draft of ISO/IEC 24713-3.

<sup>16</sup> For the text of the MOU, click on document N18 in the list found at <http://isotc.iso.org/livelink/livelink?func=ll&objId=547513&objAction=RunReport&InputLabel1=26000>.

constituency in ISO process.<sup>17</sup> International labour standards, and the ILO's comments on ILO-related issues conveyed by the Office, are given primacy in the various phases of development of ISO standard. The ISO is to seek full and formal backing by the ILO as to all elements relating to ILO issues prior to ISO's submission of a draft standard for approval by voting members. If the ILO withholds its backing, its comments on the draft standard must be circulated with the submission to ISO members. A team of ILO officials oversees ILO inputs in the standards development process and implementation of the MOU, and ILO constituents engage with ISO in relation to this initiative.

10. *Next issue at the initiative of ISO: OSH-MS.* More than a year ago, ISO initiated contact with the ILO to explore the possibility of collaborating on the development by ISO of supplementary guidance based upon the ILO *Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems (ILO-OSH 2001)*.<sup>18</sup> As envisaged in subsequent discussions, ISO supplementary guidance would recognize and incorporate the *ILO-OSH 2001* as an unalterable base text (except as revised in the future by the ILO), and provide more detailed instructions for implementation of the ILO Guidelines. Neither the ILO base text as recognized by ISO nor ISO supplementary guidance would be designed for certification by third parties. After the Governing Body decided to request ISO to refrain from conducting a survey of ISO members on the possibility of developing such a standard,<sup>19</sup> the Office conveyed this to ISO. In its February 2007 session, ISO Technical Management Board discussed the matter and decided to await the Governing Body's decision at this session on whether the ILO wished to cooperate on ISO proposal to develop an international guidance standard on the subject.<sup>20</sup>
11. In a separate development, in January 2007, ISO requested to meet with the ILO and the World Economic Forum to discuss collaboration on a standards-related activity addressing HIV/AIDS in the workplace, perhaps in the form of an International Workshop Agreement (see addendum). The Office replied that a response in relation to any such issue would need to be deferred until after this session of the Governing Body.

### III. Arrangements between other intergovernmental organizations and ISO

12. A variety of arrangements are in effect between other public international organizations and ISO. As explained below, these include liaison status with various technical committees and other ISO bodies; standing arrangements for collaboration in particular subject areas; and institutionalized relationship agreements for specific purposes.

<sup>17</sup> GB.295/MNE/3/2, paras 10–11. The ISO standard, which is to be a guidance document not intended for conformity assessment (third party certification), is being developed in a negotiating process that seeks broad inputs through national-level ISO “mirror committees” which are run by national standards bodies.

<sup>18</sup> GB.297/19/4 and GB.295/16/10.

<sup>19</sup> GB.297/PV.

<sup>20</sup> ISO Technical Management Board Res. 9/2007. The Technical Management Board agreed to take a decision on next steps in the matter in June 2007.

**13.** The international and regional public organizations that operate, as does the ILO, in liaison status with ISO<sup>21</sup> include the United Nations (UN) itself, United Nations Economic Commissions, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN-HABITAT, the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Tourism Organization, and the Universal Postal Union (UPU). In some instances, the organizations seek to ensure that industry-based initiatives for voluntary standards proceed consistently with the norms or policies endorsed by the public international organization. For example:

- the WHO has engaged ISO technical committees and in particular, industry representatives, in development of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control as well as matters involving one-way syringes and measurement units for biological reference materials;
- the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which has liaison status with ISO TC 154,<sup>22</sup> has been delegated by an ISO member to provide the secretariat for that technical committee. One of the main functions of TC 154 is review of inputs of the UNECE<sup>23</sup> for eventual conversion to ISO standards, or updating of existing ISO standards that originated in the UNECE and are effectively maintained by the UNECE.

**14.** Standing arrangements for collaboration in specific subject areas are used by some public organizations to focus on particular areas of their mandates. For example:

- in the field of laboratory accreditation, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and ISO, together with the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), entered into an MOU in 2001 to introduce a mutual recognition scheme for accreditation in seeking to eliminate barriers faced by enterprises in developing countries;
- in the field of machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has an arrangement with ISO for coordination and development in which ISO expertise, through manufacturers of such technologies, provide technical and engineering advice to the ICAO Technical Advisory Group on MRTDs by use of a liaison mechanism; the resulting draft technical standards are submitted for review and, if appropriate, endorsement by the ICAO as a technical specification, and separately for review and, if appropriate, adoption by ISO as an international standard;<sup>24</sup> and

<sup>21</sup> For a list of international and regional organizations in liaison status with technical committees, see <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/stdsdevelopment/liaisonorglist/LiaisonOrgList.LiaisonOrgList>. The organization must apply for status individually with each technical committee or subcommittee, providing supporting documentation.

<sup>22</sup> ISO TC 154 is the technical committee on processes, data elements and documents in commerce, industry and administration.

<sup>23</sup> The inputs are from the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (CEFACT) within UNECE. See <http://www.unece.org/cefact/about.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> Where the standards which are the subject of collaboration are being discussed, ISO sends a delegation to ICAO meetings which are otherwise limited to governments only. The ongoing collaboration seeks to share expertise and resources, ensure up to date standards, and facilitate quick implementation.

- in the field of electronic business, the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), ISO, UNECE and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) have established a framework of cooperation to coordinate the standardization activities of each organization with the others in order to ensure coherence and avoid divergent or duplicative approaches. The framework specifies a division of substantive responsibilities among the organizations, establishes a management group run by the executive heads of the organizations, and provides for participation of each organization's competent experts in the standardization work of the other organizations in this area.<sup>25</sup>
15. Broader institutionalized relationship agreements also exist. Some are based upon constituent instruments of the organizations concerned while others have been developed in order to coordinate and ensure coherence of respective activities between the organizations and ISO. For example:
- the agreement between ISO and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) provides for the collaborative development of standards in which documents developed within one body are notified for the simultaneous approval by the other;
  - the World Trade Organization (WTO) works with ISO and the IEC in a framework based on the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and subsequent Ministerial Decisions<sup>26</sup> to operate an information system to receive and publish notifications by standardizing bodies under the relevant provisions; these seek to ensure that activities to develop and implement technical regulations, voluntary standards and conformity assessment procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade;
  - UNIDO and ISO agreed in 2003 to establish, by means of an MOU, "a strategic partnership" that governs cooperation and coordination between the two organizations "in all areas where their functions and activities are complementary and mutually supportive"; and
  - in the field of social responsibility, the UN Global Compact, an initiative within the UN secretariat, agreed an MOU with ISO last year that seeks to mutually promote the Global Compact principles and the developing ISO standard on social responsibility.

#### IV. Considerations in approaching ILO–ISO collaboration

16. As noted above (see section II), ILO liaison with ISO technical committees and subcommittees has accompanied their development of a number of ISO standards on technical aspects of practical implementation of ILO Conventions which promote industry-level impact of the ILO standards. In addition, the ILO's ongoing engagement in the field of social responsibility, based on the special status MOU, requires sustained effort on the part of the Office and has had an effect in correcting otherwise-divergent text, but final results are not yet known. Thus, key questions for consideration include: (i) whether the

<sup>25</sup> For a copy of the MOU and a view of how the MOU works in practice, see <http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/e-business/mou/index.html>.

<sup>26</sup> See Annex 3, Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards, to the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT); and Decision on Proposed Understanding on WTO-ISO Standards Information System (to establish an information system on notifications received under the Code of Good Practice), and Decision on Review of ISO/IEC Information Centre Publication (to review the information received annually).

ILO should emphasize more proactive approaches to liaison on other topics, especially where technical inputs are deemed useful to the ILO standards framework;<sup>27</sup> (ii) whether engagement could include fields that reach significantly beyond technical areas, particularly where the defining legal parameters have already been established by ILO standards; and (iii) if so, what guidelines could be used to determine whether and how such engagement should proceed. The experience of other organizations (see section III) may also be relevant in considering whether a broader institutional arrangement might address how to coordinate standardizing initiatives to avoid duplicative or competing approaches.

17. If the Governing Body considers that ILO engagement with ISO on certain matters can offer a useful opportunity to influence the development of voluntary standards before they are endorsed by ISO, then such engagement should be accompanied by appropriate guarantees. As detailed previously,<sup>28</sup> these would include such elements as: an influential role for the ILO; the primacy of international labour standards and ILO guidelines; the avoidance of requirement standards which are used for certification by third parties; an independent role for ILO constituents; and coordination at national level between ISO members and ILO constituents. In discussions in 2006 on the OSH–MS initiative, ISO has remained open to a way forward that would incorporate such guarantees. Only with such arrangements could collaboration between the two organizations on certain matters lead to more effective implementation of international labour standards and avoid the cost to the ILO of having to compete against the non-conforming market standard.
18. In the absence of ILO engagement, ISO initiatives on matters beyond technical aspects may more likely result, in certain cases, in voluntary standards that compete or conflict with international labour standards and policies. While such a result does not compel a decision to engage, situational factors (see below) may help to determine whether more resources would be expended in countering the effects of a non-conforming ISO standard than in influencing the development of a voluntary standard that could complement ILO standards and reach additional actors.
19. In any form of engagement that may be selected, once the ILO engages in an ISO process, there is a need to exercise effective ILO presence throughout it, which requires sustained effort and expertise, and therefore resources. The time span for developing ISO standards is quite long and subject to numerous transactions, and the amount of materials to be reviewed by the Office may at times be heavy. The Governing Body may thus wish to weigh the possible cost implications, as well as potential benefits involved in either engagement or non-engagement.

## **V. Possible ways forward for Governing Body consideration**

20. In reviewing options for engagement in non-engagement with ISO, the Governing Body may wish to consider several possible approaches, including in relation to the immediate decision to be taken on OSH–MS. Whatever approach is adopted, the Office would continue to represent the Organization in the work being undertaken with ISO, acting subject to Governing Body guidance and keeping the Governing Body informed. The

<sup>27</sup> Technical voluntary standards based on consensus within the industry could be deemed useful where they are specifically contemplated in the ILO standards framework or where technical expertise of the nature required is not available within the ILO, and where the defining legal parameters have already been established by ILO standards (e.g., Convention No. 185 and its Annex I on seafarers' identity documents).

<sup>28</sup> See GB.297/19/4, para. 3.

separate and independent participation of constituents under their own organizational identities would certainly be encouraged. The following approaches may be considered singly or in combination:

- (i) inter-institutional mechanism to strengthen ILO participation as a liaison organization with technical committees on subjects of compelling concern;
- (ii) agreement between the two organizations, on a case-by-case basis, for development of any technical ISO standard that is deemed useful to implementation of an ILO standard;
- (iii) special arrangements in particular fields between the ILO and ISO, for development, and follow-up, of an ISO standard, with provisions to fit each case individually and guarantees to ensure the primacy of the ILO and its standards and guidelines in this process and its result; and
- (iv) a standing arrangement between the ILO and ISO for regular exchange of information to permit each organization to identify issues of common interest. This could assist them in deciding action to be taken, such as a deferral by either side for a finite period, or some other type of coordination.

**21.** As the leader on standards and guidance in the world of work, the ILO may find that its interests are not necessarily served by a fixed position on engagement or non-engagement in all cases. Objective factors specific to each situation may influence whether or not selective engagement is decided upon. These factors might include: what type of standard is being developed by ISO (exclusive requirement, guidance, or temporary and non-exclusive); whether the terms for ISO work are still subject to change (to build in requirements of consistency with ILO standards); and whether ISO work is being done in a technical committee or sub committee or through a less fixed process. In addition, it would be highly relevant to consider whether technical and/or “policy” aspects are concerned; and whether an initiative affects a particular ILO standard or multiple ILO standards. In particular:

- 1. If the subject concerns existing and up to date ILO standard(s), the ILO could strengthen its participation through liaison status with technical committees.
- 2. If the subject concerns existing ILO guidance, ILO standards pending revision, or a wide range of ILO standards due to the policy orientation rather than the technical nature of ISO’s proposal, it may be useful to determine whether an ILO interest is at stake and, if so, respond with liaison arrangements or proposing a special agreement with ISO.
- 3. If the subject concerns no established ILO instrument or policy but implicates ILO principles, it may be helpful to determine whether voluntary market standardization would be likely to serve the interests of the ILO, at least temporarily, or whether an ISO standard-setting or policy response should be proposed instead. The option of a deferral on either side, combined with other appropriate forms of coordination, could be addressed through a standing institutional arrangement.

**22.** In relation to the OSH–MS initiative, it should be stressed that if a special agreement, see paragraph 20(iii), were pursued with ISO, engagement would proceed only with appropriate guarantees. As was done with the SID and social responsibility arrangements (see section II), a formal ISO decision to harmonize its standard with existing ILO standards or guidelines would be taken at the outset, and an effective follow-up presence by the ILO within the relevant ISO committee/body would be necessary until the standard is complete. In addition, ongoing consultations with the constituents would be held,

including on the form of the proposed ISO guidance standard and its relationship to the ILO standards and guidelines concerned.

**23. Accordingly, the Governing Body may wish to decide that, taking into account the Governing Body discussion of this paper:**

- (a) the Office be requested to continue to explore the approaches described above (paragraph 20), report on developments, and seek further guidance at the November 2007 session of the Governing Body; and**
- (b) the Director-General be invited to proceed to discuss a special agreement in the field of OSH-MS with ISO, taking into account the considerations expressed by the Governing Body and the need for appropriate guarantees as set out in paragraph 22 of this paper, and to report back to the Governing Body on the matter at its next session for its input, before any arrangement is concluded with ISO.**

Geneva, 9 March 2007.

*Point for decision:* Paragraph 23.