



Provisional Record

Eighty-eighth Session, Geneva, 2000

Report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body to the Conference for the year 1999-2000

This report on the work of the Governing Body is submitted to the Conference in accordance with article 14 of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body. It covers the period since the last general session of the Conference (June 1999), i.e. the Governing Body's 275th (June 1999), 276th (November 1999) and 277th (March 2000) Sessions. It focuses only on the highlights of the Governing Body's year, and does not cover matters that are otherwise before the Conference.

Those seeking more extensive and detailed information on the work of the Governing Body as a whole are referred to the notes at the end of the report. They may also consult the minutes of its 276th Session (November 1999) or the documents submitted to its committees and to the Governing Body itself. Other relevant material, as well as the reports and other Governing Body documents mentioned in the text and in the endnotes, are available on the Governing Body Internet site.¹

I. ILO DECLARATION ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK

In November the Governing Body appointed the group of experts foreseen in the follow-up procedure,² and considered a number of questions relating to the setting in motion of the follow-up to the Declaration which concerned the Standing Orders of the Governing Body and the Conference. It adopted a new Article 9bis of the Standing Orders of the Governing Body to allow it to meet as a committee of the whole when discussing the compilation of annual reports by the Office and the Introduction by the Expert-Advisers.³ As regards procedure at the Conference, it has invited the Conference at its present session to adopt a set of ad hoc proposals concerning arrangements for the discussion of the global report. These concern matters of principle, timing, procedure and organization.⁴

In March the Governing Body conducted the first annual review of reports from countries that have not ratified one or more of the Conventions relating to the four categories of fundamental principles and rights, meeting in a committee of the whole. It adopted a number of recommendations by the Expert-Advisers, concerning promotional activities, technical assistance, information dissemination, links with other international organizations, various practical arrangements, encouragement of participation by employers' and workers' organizations, procedures within countries for the preparation of the replies and their content, moving the due date for annual reports to 1 September each year, and revision of the report

forms.⁵ The first global report is before the Conference at its present session.

II. WORKING PARTY ON THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE LIBERALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Country studies on the social impact of globalization

In November the Governing Body completed its review of studies on the social impact of globalization in seven countries (Bangladesh, Chile, Mauritius, Poland, Republic of Korea, South Africa and Switzerland). The report⁶ provided a synthesis of the main findings and discussed a range of analytical and policy issues of relevance to ILO member countries in general. It noted the widespread view at the time of the Uruguay Round Agreement that further trade liberalization would engender increased global economic growth and that a stronger economy would translate into social progress. It also acknowledged the complexity of globalization, which it saw as a process which encompassed not just trade, but also rapid technological change, short-term capital flows and longer-term investment. Globalization had produced gains in terms of higher economic growth, but its costs in terms of increased income inequality and intensified labour market instability had been underestimated. The study had concluded that there was not an automatic link between globalization and social progress. The challenge was to consolidate the benefits of globalization while minimizing social costs. A solution advocated by the report was the strengthening of the four social pillars, which was seen by the Governing Body as a useful policy response. These are: (a) measures in favour of vocational training and education; (b) the creation of a well-functioning social safety net; (c) the implementation of employment legislation that offers protection against certain risks while at the same time providing for an adaptable system; (d) the effective application of fundamental labour standards.

Proposals were adopted on seven possible areas for research⁷ which might be included in the programme of work for the next biennium (2000-01), concerning primarily employment, training and social development. It was also suggested that research should be undertaken on macroeconomic indicators relating to globalization and on the policy principles and good practices under development in the international financial institutions. The synthesis report was circulated to other international organizations, some of which provided substantial comments both in writing and orally at the March session.

In March the Governing Body discussed the possibility, in reviewing the future of the Working Party, of pursuing the country studies in a “lighter” form in order to increase the number of countries covered. In this connection the Governing Body decided in March that a paper would be submitted to the Working Party in November 2000 (see below) on the advisability of developing an integrated approach in order to enhance understanding of the link between decent work and globalization through future country studies.

The future of the Working Party

With the completion of the country studies the Working Party in its existing form had come to the end of its agreed programme of work, and in November the Governing Body accordingly reviewed the possibilities for future work in this area.⁸ It recognized that the Working Party had achieved a genuine climate of confidence. It was regarded as a valuable forum that allowed freer debate of the broad issues raised by globalization than was possible within the Governing Body itself. Moreover, the Working Party was now acknowledged by all organizations as the international forum in which the social dimension of the liberalization of international trade and globalization could be discussed without any inhibitions. The Governing Body accordingly decided in November to maintain the Working Party.

In March the Working Party discussed its future programme of work with a view to contributing to an integrated approach to economic and social policy. It was noted that such a framework was not an existing product, but rather a process to which the Working Party could contribute by offering a forum to discuss developments in other organizations, as well as subjects of common interest to several organizations, and possibly reconcile their different approaches. The approach proposed in the Office paper⁹ received general support from the Working Party and from speakers representing other organizations in the Working Party, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. It was understood that in November 2000 the Working Party would have before it a document concerning developments in other organizations, and two technical papers. The first would develop a method of analysis for future country studies in order to contribute to a better understanding of the impact of globalization on social progress; the second would develop understanding of the links between fundamental labour standards and development and promote the harmonization of views between the ILO and other organizations as a first step in this direction: in November the Working Party would examine the link between collective bargaining and development — which is the subject of the first global report to be prepared under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work — offering to the Bretton Woods institutions and other organizations an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

In March the Governing Body also approved the change of title of the Working Party to “Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization” in order to reflect the fact that the range of problems discussed by the Working Party would continue to extend beyond the liberalization of trade.

III. PREPARATIONS FOR MAJOR FORTHCOMING GLOBAL CONFERENCES

Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations: World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World (Geneva, June 2000)

In November the Governing Body discussed the report of the ILO International Consultation concerning Follow-up on the World Summit for Social Development (Geneva, 2-4 November 1999), which reviewed and assessed measures taken by States to give effect to their commitments under the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, and the ILO's contribution to the follow-up on the World Summit for Social Development and to the preparations for the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations: World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World (Geneva, June 2000).¹⁰ The Consultation adopted a set of conclusions covering various aspects of the implementation of the Commitments made at Copenhagen, stressing that they required renewed efforts and the political will to implement them effectively: it emphasized the ILO's central role in the global campaign for the achievement of full employment, as specified in Commitment No. 3 of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action; and it called on the ILO to develop, in collaboration with the tripartite partners and the UN-system agencies, new operational initiatives to give better effect to the Commitments in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. It also called on the ILO, as well as other UN agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, the OECD and regional organizations, to organize and develop a coordinated process of mutual learning and sharing of experience with regard to successful employment and labour market policy outcomes through a continuing process of ILO country reviews and, inter alia, the creation of an information base, coordinated website dissemination, and regional and international conferences.

The Conclusions served as a starting point for the ILO's contribution entitled *Decent work and poverty reduction in the global economy*, submitted to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the Special Session in April 2000, which was discussed in March, through the Governing Body's Committee on Employment and Social Policy.¹¹ The basic message of the paper is that the present form of globalization is facing a crisis of legitimacy because insufficient attention has been given to its social consequences and its social dimension. It stresses the need to improve distribution of the benefits of globalization and to reduce inequalities, uncertainty and insecurity in the lives of ordinary people, focusing on employment promotion, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue. Drawing on the discussions and conclusions of the ILO's International Consultation concerning Follow-up on the World Summit for Social Development, the report proposes a number of initiatives to contribute to solving some major problems plaguing the world, such as poverty, the dearth of decent work, and social disintegration and exclusion. Particular emphasis is given to gender equality and the elimination of discrimination in the world of work. The Special Session is therefore invited to call on all States and interna-

tional organizations to support the ILO's global programme on decent work.

In March the Governing Body also examined other aspects of the ILO's participation in the preparatory process,¹² including in relation to other Commitments in the Copenhagen Programme of Action, notably Commitment No. 1 (An enabling environment for social development), No. 2 (Eradication of poverty), No. 4 (Promoting social integration), No. 5 (Equality between men and women), No. 7 (Acceleration of development in Africa and in the least developed countries) and No. 8 (Inclusion of social development goals in structural adjustment programmes). That paper also covered the work of the Commission for Social Development, which at its 38th Session (February 2000) undertook an overall review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development prior to consultations in the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session on a draft text for the Special Session.

Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century (New York, 5-9 June 2000)

In March the Governing Body held a Symposium on Decent Work for Women — the ILO's contribution to *Women 2000*,¹³ which will review the implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995) and discuss how to accelerate its future implementation. The Office paper discussed the ILO's preparations for and contribution to *Women 2000*, and reviewed ILO action since the Beijing Conference in implementing the Platform in areas closely related to the ILO's mandate, for example in relation to the issues of women and poverty, education and training, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, the human rights of women, women and the environment, and the girl child. It also provided information on preparatory activities by the ILO for *Women 2000*, including its major contribution to the *World survey on the role of women in development: Globalization, gender and work*, the main background document for *Women 2000*. The paper also covered the latest developments in the ILO in implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy, including the issue of the Director-General's circular on gender equality and mainstreaming in the ILO and the adoption of an ILO Action Plan on this subject.¹⁴

The symposium was opened by the Director-General, who emphasized the importance of promoting decent work for women as a matter of human rights, social justice and sustainable development. The presentations and discussions at the symposium centred on how to promote equal opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. A strong common understanding emerged on how to promote decent work for women through the ILO's means of action and social dialogue, and many recommendations were presented at the symposium for future initiatives in this respect.

The *Action Plan* outlines principles, goals and implementation procedures to ensure the effective mainstreaming of gender in the promotion of opportunities for men and women to obtain decent and

productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The Plan lays out the institutional framework for establishing gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in the achievement of the Organization's four strategic objectives of fundamental principles and rights at work, promoting employment and incomes, social protection and social dialogue. The Plan includes the issue of a policy statement in the form of a circular on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the work of the Office. The ultimate aim of the *Action Plan* is to improve the ILO's comparative advantage on gender, labour and employment issues with its constituents so as to ensure gender equality at work at the national level.

IV. STRATEGIC BUDGETING AND THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2000-01

In adopting the Programme and Budget proposals for 2000-01 in June 1999, the Conference requested that the Director-General "... submit to the Governing Body, at its 276th Session (November 1999), a statement as referred to in article 15 of the Financial Regulations, providing further details of the budget of expenditure". In November the Governing Body accordingly examined a paper¹⁵ providing the further details necessary to approve the budget of expenditure by item (the Operational Budget). The paper included extensive details on specific aspects of the Programme and Budget.

In March the Governing Body discussed a progress report on the issue of strategic budgeting and the preparation of a Strategic Plan for 2002-05,¹⁶ which will be discussed in further detail in November 2000.

V. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

Improvements in ILO normative activities

Consultations held during 1999 and early 2000 led to the discussion by the Governing Body in March, through its Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards, of a paper on possible improvements in the standard-setting activities of the ILO and the role of standards in the achievement of the ILO's objectives,¹⁷ which originated in Part II of the Director-General's report to the Conference in 1997. The Office paper examined the background to the issue and reviewed the main concerns expressed. It emphasized the need for a shared commitment and proposed a set of issues for more detailed discussion concerning objectives, the identification of items for standard setting, the preparation of standards and the negotiation process, ratification, entry into force, denunciation, the supervisory system, the promotion and implementation of standards, and the evaluation of standards-related activities in terms of their objectives. Taking into account the acknowledged importance of the issue, the Governing Body postponed further discussion to November 2000 and requested the Director-General to submit a document at that session reflecting the discussions within the Committee and the Governing Body and any further consultations that had taken place.

Revision of the procedure for the examination of representations submitted under article 24 of the Constitution

Following the preliminary exchange of views in the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards in November 1998 on the question of a possible revision of the procedure for the examination of representations submitted under article 24 of the Constitution, in November 1999 that Committee discussed a paper reflecting the general guidelines given by the members of the Committee and structured around the question of why certain adjustments might be needed, the objectives of the required revision, and the possible solutions envisaged.¹⁸ On the basis of the November discussion, various proposals for revision were examined by the Committee in March.¹⁹ The Governing Body took note that, in the absence of any consensus regarding changes to the representation procedure, discussion on the question was postponed until a later session.

Ratification and promotion of fundamental ILO Conventions

In November and March the Governing Body examined reports²⁰ on progress in the campaign to promote the fundamental ILO Conventions, the aim of which is the universal ratification of the Conventions considered to be fundamental — Conventions Nos. 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and now also 182, a campaign initiated by the Director-General in 1995 following the World Summit for Social Development. The papers described technical assistance provided to promote ratification and the prospects for further ratification announced in specific replies by governments or in their replies under the annual follow-up on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Since March 1999, 51 new ratifications of Conventions — or confirmations of previous commitments — had been registered by March 2000, bringing to 167 the number of ratifications since the beginning of the campaign and to 80 the number of member States to have ratified fundamental ILO Conventions since the launch of the campaign in May 1995.

Freedom of association

The Committee on Freedom of Association continued to receive numerous complaints concerning industrial relations and human rights issues, and examined over 120 different cases.²¹ A number of cases concerning Colombia, together with the complaint submitted to the Conference in 1998 under article 26 of the Constitution, were the subject of a separate report at the Governing Body's session in November, and are discussed below in the section on constitutional procedures.

Discrimination

In March the Governing Body conducted its annual review of ILO action concerning discrimination in employment and occupation, based on a general status report prepared by the Office.²² The report covered

Office activities to promote equality of opportunity and treatment, gender equality, migrant workers, disabled workers, indigenous and tribal peoples, and workers of the occupied Arab territories.

Multidisciplinary teams

In November the Governing Body reviewed the activities of the multidisciplinary teams in the area of standards on the basis of an Office paper²³ describing their work in relation to the promotion of fundamental Conventions, constitutional obligations, labour legislation, social dialogue and activities of the social partners, gender issues and the ILS Update Programme. It noted that all of the teams gave high priority to promotion of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, assisting in the preparation of reports for the follow-up while continuing to promote the campaign for the ratification of fundamental Conventions. Demands for wider-ranging standards-related work are undiminished or growing. The significance of the standards dimension of technical cooperation with which MDTs are concerned has become increasingly appreciated by constituents and other bodies covered by the MDTs.

Revision of standards

With its work on Conventions virtually complete, the Working Party on Policy regarding the Revision of Standards turned its attention to methods of revision of Conventions²⁴ and of Recommendations,²⁵ having decided in 1998 on the procedure to be followed for the latter²⁶ and conducted a first stage of discussions in March 1999. It also examined various Conventions and Recommendations concerning fishermen.²⁷ Summary information on the past work of the Working Party can be found in documents submitted to it in November and March, which also cover the effect given to its recommendations.²⁸

Constitutional procedures

Complaints submitted under article 26 of the Constitution

Colombia

In November, on the basis of a report by its Committee on Freedom of Association, the Governing Body postponed to June 2000 a decision on the appointment of a commission of inquiry to examine the complaint concerning the non-observance by Colombia of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), made by delegates to the 86th (1998) Session of the Conference under article 26 of the Constitution of the ILO.²⁹

In the meantime a direct contacts mission visited Colombia in February 2000 with a mandate to evaluate the situation regarding freedom of association in Colombia, in particular in relation to the cases currently before the Committee. The mission submitted an interim report to the Committee in March 2000.

Myanmar

Following the adoption by the Conference in June 1999 of the resolution concerning the widespread use of forced labour in Myanmar, in November³⁰ the Governing Body invited the Director-General — for so long as the Governing Body, or its Officers acting on its behalf, had not noted the implementation of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations — to ensure that no technical cooperation or assistance to the Government of Myanmar, except for the purpose of direct assistance to implement immediately the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry,³¹ was considered or undertaken by the Office, and to take the necessary steps to ensure that no proposal to invite or invitation to attend meetings, symposia or seminars organized by the ILO was extended to the Government of Myanmar, except for meetings that have the sole purpose of securing immediate and full compliance with the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations.

In March the Governing Body included an item on the present session of the Conference entitled: "Action recommended by the Governing Body under article 33 of the Constitution — Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Forced Labour in Myanmar (Burma)", detailing the action recommended in a resolution. This is now the eighth item on its agenda and is hence covered separately.

Representations made under article 24 of the Constitution

In the course of the year the Governing Body adopted the recommendations of committees it had set up to examine representations concerning the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina (Convention No. 111), Denmark (Conventions Nos. 87 and 98), Hungary (Conventions Nos. 122 and 111), Mexico (Convention No. 169) and Chile (Conventions Nos. 35, 36, 37 and 38), and adopted the recommendations in an interim report by the committee it set up to examine a representation concerning Ethiopia (Conventions Nos. 111 and 158).

The Governing Body declared receivable representations received concerning Colombia (two representations concerning Convention No. 169), Denmark (Convention No. 169), Ecuador (Convention No. 169), New Zealand (Convention No. 29), Republic of Moldova (Convention No. 95) and Turkey (Convention No. 158).

VI. EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

Economic and financial crises

The Governing Body in November examined an Office paper concerning *ILO policy and activities on economic and financial crises*, focused on unemployment and social protection.³² The paper was based on the outcome of recent discussions on the social consequences of crises in various forums, including the Informal Tripartite Meeting at the Ministerial Level on Economic and Financial Crises held during the Conference in June 1999.³³ One of the main conclusions of the meetings was that the severity of the social impact of the Asian financial crisis, for example, was aggravated by the relative neglect for the development

of social protection during the decades of the Asian economic miracle. The paper was hence intended to discuss how social protection mechanisms against unemployment can help prevent and cope with crises, based on a variety of studies conducted and technical advisory services provided by the Social Security Department and some of the MDTs, including studies for the *World Labour Report 2000 – Income security and social protection in a changing world*.³⁴ The paper analysed the potential impact of different types of crises (armed conflict, natural disasters, economic downturns and political transitions) on employment, earnings and social policies (social services, employment, food subsidies, social assistance and social security); reviewed the concept and role of social protection; gave a brief overview of existing unemployment protection measures in various parts of the world, summarizing the main trends and issues; and outlined a policy discussion on the function of unemployment protection measures before, during and after crises, highlighting the place of such measures in the overall set of ILO policy instruments, such as social dialogue, as well as employment and training policies.

Following up on that discussion, in March the Governing Body examined an Office paper on *ILO strategy and activities on employment and social concerns in crisis situations*,³⁵ which focused on a number of specific crisis situations and the ILO's responses to them and the lessons learnt in this relatively new area of ILO involvement, in particular through the InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction set up in October 1999. Key issues were the possible absence of representative government, the role of social dialogue and of the social partners, the importance of the ILO's early presence, the importance of funding rapid action and its links with resource mobilization, working closely with other organizations, the need for quicker administrative and financial procedures and the advocacy role of the ILO.

The informal sector

In March the Governing Body examined two Office papers concerning *employment and social protection in the informal sector*. The first concerned a thematic evaluation of the urban informal sector: ILO action and perspectives.³⁶ The thematic evaluation covered extensive recent research and technical cooperation activities by the ILO relating to the informal sector and the policy advice provided, the results of which had greatly influenced the analysis, design and implementation of policies at the country level. There is widespread international recognition of the value of this work, which over the years has improved understanding of the characteristics and functioning of the sector. Given the current compelling issues deriving from the increasing proliferation of precarious forms of employment in most countries, the Office felt that the time was ripe to take stock of the additional knowledge and experience and to draw conclusions and recommendations for future policy orientations and programme priorities. For this purpose a thematic evaluation was carried out, providing a synthesis of the ILO's work in the urban informal sector.

The second paper discussed *employment in the informal sector: challenges and future agenda*,³⁷ highlighting emerging trends and policy issues with regard

to employment in the informal sector and their implications for the ILO's future approach to the sector, especially as regards employment promotion. Over the past three decades the informal sector has not only persisted and expanded but has also changed, and despite wide recognition of the need to assist workers and producers in the informal sector, the nature and objective of that support is still being debated vigorously. The paper outlined an integrated approach and future agenda, covering the concepts of decent work for all workers, employment promotion, workers' basic rights and labour standards, social protection, organization, representation and social dialogue, and the integration and harmonization of ILO action.

Key Indicators of the Labour Market

The Governing Body reviewed the ILO's *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (KILM) project, launched in response to a request by the International Labour Conference in 1996 to provide accurate and timely labour market information. The objectives of the project were to develop a set of labour market indicators and to widen the availability of the indicators as a means of monitoring employment trends.³⁸ The resulting products — a publication of 600 pages, a CD-ROM and the KILM website on the Internet³⁹ — had all been developed within the ILO Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch of the Employment and Training Department, in collaboration with the Bureau of Statistics. The project brings together a set of 18 indicators that together give a significant profile of the world's labour markets, both past and present, ranging from labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment to productivity, wages, labour costs and income and poverty indicators. Future activities for KILM in 2000 and 2001 will include the introduction of new indicators; disaggregation of the current indicators (increased detail); a synthesis report; the introduction of world and regional estimates and measures of labour market dynamics, as well as efforts to work with member countries to encourage the wider collection of data and to make the data available through the various KILM media in a more timely fashion.

Relations with the Bretton Woods institutions

In November the Governing Body examined a paper concerning recent developments in the Bretton Woods institutions, highlighting in particular the most important policy developments from the perspective of ILO concerns; exploring the areas with greatest potential for the ILO to take advantage of the new window of opportunity created by such developments; proposing concrete steps to materialize further progress in strengthening ILO substantive relations with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; and reviewing the current status of collaboration between them and the ILO.⁴⁰ The evidence of the consequences of recent financial crises — and the increasing voices of concern in both industrialized and developing countries — have prompted a significant change in the Bretton Woods institutions' approach to financial and economic policies, leading them to place poverty reduction as the core objective

and to give greater recognition to social concerns. The recent annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF, and in particular the meetings of the Interim and Development Committees (Washington, DC, September 1999), were eloquent in this regard, and their decisions opened up fertile ground for the ILO to become a key partner of the Bretton Woods institutions in conceiving and implementing an integrated and balanced approach to economic and social policies at the global and national levels. The paper then analysed major policy developments in the Bretton Woods institutions concerning poverty and debt alleviation, crisis management and social policy, and explored the new window of opportunity for the ILO evidenced by its achieving observer status with the Interim and Development Committees, and its role as a strategic partner in advancing the concept of decent work. It concluded with proposals for further ILO action, including active participation in the development of the new policy framework and playing a lead role in developing the new international social architecture.⁴¹

VII. SECTORAL ACTIVITIES

In March the Governing Body conducted a review of the sectoral activities programme.⁴² The Office paper described current sectoral activities in the light of the review of the programme carried out in 1995, which came into effect in 1996. In two biennia some 22 sectoral meetings were held and sector-specific activities undertaken, including follow-up on these meetings. Secondly, the paper examined to what extent the objectives of the 1995 review had been met and whether they were still relevant. The Governing Body reached a broad consensus on a number of issues: the continuing importance of sectoral activities and of meetings; the need to strengthen follow-up activities and their impact; the need to motivate constituents to nominate expert participants to meetings, including the provision of sufficient information in advance to enable them to do so; ad hoc post-meeting consultations could be useful to stimulate and guide follow-up activity; the use of new technology to disseminate information and allow additional dialogue should be pursued; regional and other meetings outside Geneva could be considered as part of the follow-up on regular meetings, together with different types of reports; and the current pragmatic approach to NGO participation should continue.

Through its Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues the Governing Body also took note of the reports of various meetings and endorsed the recommendations adopted by them.⁴³

VIII. ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Evaluation and monitoring

In 1999 the Conference adopted a set of Conclusions concerning the role of the ILO in technical cooperation, in which it renewed its commitment to technical cooperation as one of the ILO's fundamental means of action for the achievement of its mission. The Conference requested the Office to provide the Governing Body with an implementation plan, including a timetable for implementing reforms in the

management of technical cooperation; examining the current field structure with a view to making it more coherent and efficient, with the active assistance of the national authorities involved; reviewing the Active Partnership Policy, as called for by the Director-General; and formulating a new evaluation strategy.⁴⁴

In November, the Governing Body accordingly examined an implementation plan prepared by the Office⁴⁵ which addressed not only the specific issues mentioned by the Conference, but also the other measures required to take the technical cooperation programme in the direction set by the Conference. It reflected the outcome of extensive internal consultations and consensus on the action to be taken. The Conference also called on the Director-General to take its conclusions into account when finalizing the Programme and Budget for the 2000-01 biennium. This Plan should therefore be read in conjunction with the programme and budget.

The Governing Body also decided to conduct two on-the-spot reviews of field activities in each year of the 2000-01 biennium, which will be undertaken in conjunction with a regional or other meeting. Each review will be conducted by three members of the Governing Body, one from each group, who will be participating in the regional or other meeting, from the regions concerned. Reviews will be carried out in Europe and the Americas in 2000 and in Africa and Asia in 2001. The reports of the four reviews will be consolidated during a two-day meeting in Geneva of the members of all four review teams immediately before the 282nd Session (November 2001) of the Governing Body. The Governing Body also approved the establishment of a Working Group of its Committee on Technical Cooperation to examine the involvement of the Governing Body in such activities beyond the present biennium. As part of the review process, the Governing Body also decided on changes in the format of the annual report on ILO technical cooperation.⁴⁶

Annual report on ILO technical cooperation, 1998-99

The annual report on ILO technical cooperation in 1998-99 was examined by the Governing Body in November.⁴⁷ Like that of the previous year, it assessed ILO technical cooperation activities in the framework of the Organization's major objectives: employment promotion and poverty alleviation, workers' protection, and the promotion of democracy and human rights. The report examined performance, expenditure and new approvals. While overall delivery improved during the period, expenditure declined in certain regions both for reasons of absorption capacity and because of the shortage of follow-up personnel. The report highlighted regional trends and the activities that focus on gender issues and the employment and working conditions of women. Regarding workers' and employers' activities, the strategic and parallel approach to strengthening the institutional capability of constituents was noted. Other parts of the report concerned the impact of standards on technical cooperation programmes, which should be viewed in the light of the annual report on standard-setting activities by the multidisciplinary teams⁴⁸ and follow-up on the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The report contained extensive statistical data. Two of the critical issues

brought to the attention of the Governing Body were programme follow-up and assessment, and delivery rates. References were also included to the global programmes in addition to the information available in reports dealing specifically with these programmes, and before their incorporation into the InFocus programmes for 2000-01. Inter-agency collaboration was also discussed. In future, by providing predetermined indicators for each InFocus programme, the strategic objective approach should make it possible to assess progress and the difficulties encountered in implementing the programme and its principal means of action, as was requested by the Conference in June 1999 and as indicated in the Plan of Action.

Thematic reviews

In March the Committee reviewed a thematic report on ILO projects and programmes concerning occupational safety and health, which reviewed eight projects in different regions and focused on action in relation to policies and legislation; action by agencies, institutions and employers' and workers' organizations; and action at the enterprise level. Training, information dissemination, the application and promotion of international labour standards and tripartism were also discussed. The Governing Body proposed that in future such reviews should be more closely integrated with the overall Office approach to evaluation. Overviews of the extent to which objectives had been met and what revisions had been necessary, as well as a review of indicators and targets would also be welcome. Dialogue with programme managers was also proposed.

IX. REGIONAL MEETINGS

In the past year two regional meetings have been held, for the Americas and the African region. The report and conclusions of the Fourteenth American Regional Meeting (Lima, 24-27 August 1999) were adopted by the Governing Body in November.⁴⁹ The conclusions concerned, inter alia, support for the strategic objectives and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, social policies related to growth, the elimination of child labour, social dialogue and international labour standards, while an addendum emphasized the value of ILO technical cooperation and values in relation to the social and labour consequences of the adjustment programmes and policies advocated by other organizations, and the need to strengthen the capacity of ministries of labour.

The Report and Conclusions of the Ninth African Regional Meeting (Abidjan, 8-11 December 1999) were adopted by the Governing Body in March.⁵⁰ Discussions at the Meeting were structured around the four strategic objectives. They focused on promotion of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, child labour (a special sitting was held on the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention), the Jobs for Africa programme, social protection, HIV/AIDS (which included a panel discussion resulting in the adoption of a resolution concerning HIV/AIDS in the context of the world of work in Africa and the appended Platform for action on HIV/AIDS in the context of the world of work

in Africa), and finally strengthening tripartism and social dialogue.

X. FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

In November the Governing Body took note of an information paper which reviewed procedures for the appointment of the External Auditor.⁵¹

In March the Governing Body took note of the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 1999,⁵² and of a report on follow-up action taken by the Office on the report of the Chief Internal Auditor for 1998.⁵³

XI. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

In November the Governing Body held an initial discussion on items for the agenda of the 90th Session (2002) of the Conference, based on the portfolio introduced in 1997.⁵⁴ In the 1999 consultations the Office received the views of 61 governments and of employers' and workers' organizations. A considerable number of replies referred to preliminary tripartite consultations held at the national level, and in several cases the separate opinions of the national employers' and workers' organizations are appended to the governments' replies. The process was hence seen to be furthering social dialogue. As a result of the discussion the Governing Body requested law and practice reports or more detailed proposals on the following subjects to be submitted to it in March 2000): new measures concerning discrimination in employment and occupation — Extension of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited in Article 1 of Convention No. 111; employment of women; the informal sector; investment and employment; migrant workers; and the recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases. It also requested the Office to submit to it in March a progress report on work concerning contract labour in the light of the Conference resolution of 1998 and preparations for the Meeting of Experts on Workers in Situations Needing Protection, held in May.⁵⁵

In March the Governing Body accordingly discussed proposals concerning these items and for the withdrawal of a number of Recommendations.⁵⁶ It decided to place on the agenda of the 90th Session (2002) of the International Labour Conference an item relating to the withdrawal of Recommendations Nos. 1, 5, 11, 15, 37, 38, 39, 42, 45, 50, 51, 54, 56, 59, 63, 64, 65, 66, 72 and 73. It deferred all other decisions concerning the agenda of that session of the Conference until November 2000.

XII. OTHER MATTERS

UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, 1997: Monitoring

In November the Governing Body discussed the outcome of consultations with UNESCO to determine the feasibility of an extended mandate for the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (CEART), so as to permit its monitoring of the UNESCO Recommendation

concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, 1997.⁵⁷ The paper noted that the Office had concluded that there were no legal obstacles to the extension, that the extension could be accommodated with a minimum of resources, and that the extension was desirable from the perspective of the ILO's normative concerns, including the viewpoints on this matter expressed by the Governing Body since 1995. The Governing Body approved the draft revised mandate.

Notes

¹ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/realm/gb/index.htm>

² It appointed the following persons to serve as Expert-Advisers for an initial period, and decided to review the situation not later than at its session in November 2001: Dr. Ahmed El Borai, Ms. Mária Ladó, Ms. Nora Lustig, Mr. Jean-Jacques Oechslin, Ms. M.A. Nieves Confesor, Ms. Zoe Mumbi Tembo, Mr. Robert White. For short biographies, see GB.276/3, Appendix.

³ This article is worded in general terms, as follows: "*Committee of the whole*: The Governing Body may decide to meet as a committee of the whole in order to hold an exchange of views, in which representatives of governments that are not represented on the Governing Body may, in the manner determined by it, be given an opportunity to express their views with respect to matters concerning their own situation. The committee of the whole shall report to the Governing Body."

⁴ For details, see GB.276/10/1, Appendix I.

⁵ Introduction by the ILO Declaration Expert-Advisers to the compilation of annual reports — GB.277/3/1; Compilation of annual reports by the International Labour Office — GB.277/3/2.

⁶ GB.276/WP/SDL/1 and Add.1.

⁷ para. 101.

⁸ GB.276/14/1.

⁹ GB.277/WP/SDL/1.

¹⁰ GB.276/5.

¹¹ GB.277/ESP/3(Add.1).

¹² GB.277/ESP/3.

¹³ GB.277/5/1.

¹⁴ GB.277/5/2.

¹⁵ GB.276/PFA/9. Two separate addenda concerned resources and activities proposed for questions concerning equality between men and women — GB.276/PFA/9(Add.1); and estimates of expenditure on technical cooperation funded from extra-budgetary sources, 2000-01 — GB.276/PFA/9(Add.2).

¹⁶ GB.277/PFA/3.

¹⁷ GB.277/LILS/2.

¹⁸ GB.276/LILS/2.

¹⁹ GB.277/LILS/1.

²⁰ GB.276/LILS/6 and GB.277/LILS/5.

²¹ 318th Report (GB.276/7/1); 319th Report: Colombia (GB.276/7/2); 320th Report (GB.277/9/1).

²² GB.277/LILS/6.

²³ GB.276/LILS/7.

²⁴ GB.276/LILS/WP/PRS/2.

²⁵ GB.277/LILS/WP/PRS/4.

²⁶ GB.273/LILS/WP/PRS/3.

²⁷ GB.277/LILS/WP/PRS/2.

²⁸ Information note on the progress of work and decisions taken concerning the revision of standards (GB.276/LILS/WP/PRS/1) and Follow-up on the recommendations of the Working Party (GB.277/LILS/WP/PRS/1/1). An account of follow-up on consultations concerning Conventions regarding seafarers can be found in GB.277/LILS/WP/PRS/1/2.

²⁹ GB.276/7/2 and GB.276/8.

³⁰ GB.276/6.

³¹ Forced labour in Myanmar (Burma): Report of the Commission of Inquiry appointed under article 26 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization to examine the observance by Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), ILO, Geneva, 2 July 1998. See also GB.273/5, GB.274/5 and GB.276/6.

³² GB.276/ESP/4/1.

³³ GB.276/ESP/4/2.

³⁴ To be issued on 20 June 2000.

³⁵ GB.277/ESP/2.

³⁶ GB.277/ESP/1/1.

³⁷ GB.277/ESP/1/2.

³⁸ GB.276/ESP/2.

³⁹ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/polemp/kilm/index.htm>

⁴⁰ GB.276/ESP/5.

⁴¹ A further paper prepared in March (GB.277/ESP/4 and Add.1) pursued these ideas further, but was not discussed owing to lack of time. This covered the replacement of the IMF's Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) by a new Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF), and the move to link all concessional lending — through the World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) and under the PRGF, as well as relief under the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Relief Initiative — to the preparation of nationally-owned Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). It also discussed the role of the ILO's Decent Work agenda and its links to the PRSP.

⁴² GB.277/STM/1.

⁴³ These included the Tripartite Meeting on Voluntary Initiatives Affecting Training and Education on Safety, Health and Environment in the Chemical Industries (Geneva, 22-26 February 1999 — GB.276/STM/1/1); the Tripartite Meeting on Managing the Privatization and Restructuring of Public Utilities (Geneva, 12-16 April 1999 — GB.276/STM/1/2); the Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues in Small-scale Mines (Geneva, 17-21 May 1999 — GB.276/STM/1/3); the Symposium on the Social and Labour Consequences of Technological Developments, Deregulation and Privatization of Transport (Geneva, 20-24 September 1999 — GB.276/STM/2); the Meeting of Experts on Labour Inspection and Child Labour (Geneva, 27 September-1 October 1999 — GB.276/STM/3); the Symposium on the Social and Labour Consequences of Technological Developments, Deregulation

and Privatization of Transport (Geneva, 20-24 September 1999 — GB.277/STM/3/1); the Tripartite Meeting on the Human Resource Implications of Globalization and Restructuring in Commerce (Geneva, 25-29 October 1999 — GB.277/STM/3/2); the Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Health in the Fishing Industry (Geneva, 13-17 December 1999 — GB.277/STM/3/3); the Meeting of the Joint IMO/ILO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on liability and compensation regarding claims for death, personal injury and abandonment of seafarers (London, 11-15 October 1999 — GB.277/STM/4); the International Symposium on Trade Unions and the Informal Sector (Geneva, 18-22 October 1999 — GB.277/STM/5); the Meeting of Experts on Safety in the Use of Insulation Wools (Geneva, 17-26 January 2000 — GB.277/STM/6), which adopted a Code of practice on safety in the use of synthetic vitreous fibre insulation wools (glass wool, rock wool, slag wool); and the Second Session of the FAO/ILO/IMO Working Group on Fishermen's Training ((London, 18-22 January 1999 — GB.277/STM/7/1). See also GB.276/12 and GB.277/14.

⁴⁴ GB.276/TC/2.

⁴⁵ GB.276/TC/2, Appendix.

⁴⁶ GB.277/TC/2 and GB.277/15.

⁴⁷ GB.276/TC/1.

⁴⁸ GB.276/LILS/7.

⁴⁹ GB.276/4.

⁵⁰ GB.277/4.

⁵¹ GB.276/PFA/7.

⁵² GB.277/PFA/5/1.

⁵³ GB.277/PFA/4. For further information on financial questions, see Report II: Information concerning the Programme and Budget for 2000-01 and other financial and administrative questions, submitted to the Conference at its present session.

⁵⁴ GB.276/2.

⁵⁵ Included in GB.276/2.

⁵⁶ GB.277/2/1 and GB.277/2/2.

⁵⁷ GB.276/LILS/9.

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