



Governing Body

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THIRTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Officers of the Governing Body

Withdrawal of regional consultative status from the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU)

1. In accordance with Annex V to the Standing Orders of the Governing Body, regional consultative status may be granted to regional organizations of employers and workers if they fulfil, in particular, the following conditions:
 - They must have aims and objectives that are in harmony with the spirit, aims and principles of the Constitution of the ILO and the Declaration of Philadelphia.
 - They must be broadly representative of interests concerned with a wide range of ILO activities in the region concerned and active there.
2. The International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions (ICATU) was initially composed of 17 member organizations and has been granted regional consultative status since 1970. However recent developments lead to the conclusion that the ICATU does not fulfil any more the conditions mentioned in paragraph 1 and that its consultative status should be withdrawn.
3. The relevant developments are as follows:
 - Due to a series of positions hostile to the popular pro-democracy movements that have emerged in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen and are still under way in Bahrain and Syrian Arab Republic, seven of the member organizations (that are affiliated with ITUC) formally and irrevocably withdrew their confidence in the ICATU.
 - One other member organization (Libya) has been dissolved, and a second (Egypt) has been suspended on the order of the Government following the political changes that occurred in 2011. As a result, in a region made up of about 20 countries (which includes, beyond the ILO's Arab States, a number of African countries), with over 30 trade union organizations that take part in the International Labour Conference

every year, the ICATU is now operating with the support of no more than eight member organizations and can therefore no longer be considered as broadly representative of ILO-related interests in the region.

- Furthermore, the actions of the ICATU are incompatible with the principles and policies of the ILO, and in particular with the principle of freedom of association, since it has consistently supported single trade union systems. The member organizations that are still affiliated with the ICATU are known for supporting regimes that oppose trade union pluralism.
- Lastly, the ICATU's trade union activity has been virtually non-existent, particularly over the last two years, being limited to internal meetings and attendance at a few international meetings.

4. Based on the abovementioned elements, the Officers of the Governing Body therefore recommend that the Governing Body withdraw the regional consultative status from the ICATU.

Point for decision: Paragraph 4