



Governing Body

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Policy Development Section

POL

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DRAFT MINUTES

Policy Development Section

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DRAFT

Policy Development Section

Employment and Social Protection Segment

First item on the agenda

Area of critical importance on jobs and skills for youth

(GB.320/POL/1)

1. *A representative of the Director-General* (Deputy Director-General for Policy (DDG/P)) recalled that eight areas of critical importance (ACIs) had been identified in the Programme and Budget for 2014–15 for priority action during that biennium, in addition to the 19 outcomes in the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15. Immediately after its adoption at the 102nd Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2013, multidisciplinary task teams of staff from headquarters and the field had been established for each ACI, so the Office had been in a position to start work at the beginning of the year. While it was too early to give results in terms of impact on the ground, substantive progress had been made in preparatory work on the eight ACIs.
2. *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT)), introducing the paper, noted that the vision for the ACI was embedded in the 2012 Conference resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”¹ and was consistent with the seven-year follow-up plan adopted by the Governing Body in November 2012. The strategic focus was to build knowledge and capacity of “what worked” for youth employment in different contexts. The strategy and workplan reflected a balanced approach to demand- and supply-side policies, interaction between protection and activation, the quality and quantity of employment, and the issues of rights. A community of practice involving field and headquarters staff would monitor implementation of activities and ensure broad dissemination of findings and application of lessons learned. A key point of the strategy revolved around the importance of multi-faceted partnerships for disseminating broadly the results and lessons learned on “what works”.
3. *The Employer coordinator* agreed with the vision, strategic focus and main deliverables of the ACI but suggested that identifying both what did and did not work and in which circumstances might yield a better understanding of how best to allocate resources. Assessment of the impact of new trends and government policies, as well as of the ILO’s own work, would ensure effective and efficient use of resources. He also agreed with the four streams of work on filling knowledge and research gaps, taking a balanced approach to demand- and supply-side interventions, evaluating the effectiveness of policy packages and disseminating the findings. One approach that was missing, however, was to evaluate the rate of return or efficiency of investments in initiatives to promote youth employment, which would require the incorporation of objective indicators.
4. He noted the importance of linking the work of the ACI with other important work of the Office. However, it was a matter of concern that work under the ACI would focus only on

¹ The text of the resolution and conclusions can be found on the ILO website at: http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm.

interactions between employment and social protection policies for young people, without taking account of policies for promoting sustainability and enabling environments in enterprises, which were the main source of youth employment. The scope of the ACI should also be expanded to cover youth entrepreneurship, and development of skills in that regard could be a strategic area of intervention. The appropriate macroeconomic, sectoral and fiscal policies depended on the economic and institutional context in which they were to be applied; studies of the impact of such policies on the labour market and its regulatory and administrative institutions should be carried out before they were implemented. The reference in the paper to temporary and involuntary part-time work was also a cause for concern. The ILO and its constituents needed to understand the benefits of flexible forms of employment, both for enterprises and for workers; they were a complement to, not a substitute for, traditional forms of employment. For many young people, temporary work served as an important entry point to permanent employment. Employers were deeply concerned about the problem of youth unemployment; one initiative had been to set up the Global Apprenticeships Network (GAN), in order to exchange knowledge and experience and to foster international cooperation on tackling it.

5. Two further concepts should be emphasized in the ACI: the need to connect secondary education with the vocational training required by enterprises, and the role of innovation in giving young people the impetus to learn.
6. *The Worker spokesperson* said that the two priorities in the youth employment crisis were macroeconomic policies to determine the level of youth employment, and the quality of jobs and rights for young people. Most of the ILO's work over the previous decade, which had been marked by sluggish growth and low demand, had focused on supply-side measures insufficient for tackling youth employment; she appreciated the stronger focus on employment-centred macroeconomic policies. She also welcomed the focus on what worked for youth employment and encouraged the Office to focus on both the quantity and quality of jobs and to take into account the opinions of young people. The ILO's proactive policies should take account of all perspectives. She asked for clarification of the synergies between the jobs and skills for youth ACI and the seven-year follow-up plan; the number of countries benefiting from the ACI and the criteria for selecting them; and whether there were sufficient funds for the large number of knowledge products included in the ACI plan. She suggested that the thematic mutual learning activities and the examples of deliverables in the appendix should focus more on demand-side interventions; that rights, standards and quality of employment for youth should receive more attention in the ACI; and that the ACI should be linked to the ACIs on protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work and on promoting more and better jobs for inclusive growth. She requested information on how demand-side measures would be appropriately integrated into the ACI and on the resources available for capacity building.
7. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of the Congo stressed the importance of sustainable strategies at the country level, taking account of national circumstances, to promote decent work for young people. Africa had seen a substantial increase in the informal economy as a result of the crisis, which required policies to address gaps in jobs and skills for young people, and to promote more and better jobs, quality apprenticeships and the transition to the formal economy. A multidisciplinary approach gathering best practices and competences was required for capacity building. The results achieved in the ACI should be clearly set out, highlighting macroeconomic policies promoting youth employment and inclusive labour market institutions. The ILO should continue to play a leadership role by encouraging partnership with development partners.
8. *Speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States*, a Government representative of Italy said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland,

Serbia, Albania, Republic of Moldova and Georgia. She said that the 2012 resolution and call for action were valuable in promoting youth employment within national strategies. Current global efforts echoed those at the EU level, where youth guarantees, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, and a recommendation on quality traineeships had been adopted. Investing in young people should be a political priority. Matching skills with labour market needs was essential to tackling the problem, for which cooperation with social partners and countries was vital. The ACI strategy should also strengthen gender equality and provide tailor-made support to disadvantaged groups of young people. Dissemination of findings and the exchange of knowledge and experience were crucial to helping constituents understand what worked for youth employment. The EU thus welcomed ILO initiatives to identify strategic focus and key deliverables and the establishment of a joint field-headquarters task team. To achieve real impact in the implementation of the ACI, there should be clear criteria and transparency in the selection of countries. In the component dealing with the expansion of external partnerships on youth employment, representative organizations of young people must be involved.

9. *Speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG)*, a Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that the 2012 call for action was an appropriate basis for improving jobs and skills for youth. The youth unemployment rate varied across subregions of ASPAG, thus it was essential to take into account the variety of the constituents' needs in tackling the problem. Lessons should be learned from interventions and policies that had been effective in the past in improving the quantity and quality of jobs for young people. His group advocated deploying efficient policies to mitigate the increasing share of young people in long-term unemployment, especially those not in education, employment or training (NEET). ASPAG supported the strategy focused on building knowledge on what worked for youth employment and tailoring capacity building to each country's specific context. In order to extend the use of the ACI, he urged the Office to take stock of international initiatives on youth employment and to seek synergies with them.
10. *Speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC)*, a Government representative of Costa Rica said that the ILO should take a leading role in confronting the youth employment crisis and thereby promoting social cohesion. Some GRULAC countries' programmes to combat youth unemployment had proven successful and could be emulated elsewhere. It was the ILO's responsibility to lead the work on youth employment in collaboration with other international organizations. For policies to have a significant impact they must be tailored to individual countries; in that regard the regional offices were fundamental. Ministries of education should work together with enterprises to promote vocational and university education to prepare young people for the world of work. While good quality internships were crucial in supporting the education-to-work transition, they must not replace permanent jobs for young people; formal employment for young people was vital. He welcomed the ACI's focus on disadvantaged young people. Governments and the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) should be involved in the development of the ILO's capacity-building programme. He wondered how the pilot countries had been chosen. The Office should ensure no overlap with other ACIs to maximize the resources channelled towards youth employment. He was pleased to note the intention to boost South-South and triangular cooperation; however, they were not replacements for official development assistance.
11. *Speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)*, a Government representative of Cambodia supported the strategies presented in the document. In particular, he expressed support for the dissemination of information from the pilot initiatives and the expansion of external partnerships.

12. *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* said that, while the current rate of youth unemployment in Russia was high, the Russian Government provided significant assistance to unemployed young people, and an estimated 72 per cent of young people who used the available employment services found jobs. Various measures were in place to help young people develop skills and acquire qualifications, including temporary work placements for people from 18 to 20 years of age, internships and vocational training courses. It successfully ran vocational training courses for women who had left work to look after young children, enabling them to continue their careers. She thanked the Office for the support in the formulation of the youth employment policy of her country.
13. *A Government representative of Switzerland* highlighted the pertinence of three proposals in the document: the establishment of a mutual know-how sharing process, the reinforcement of external partnerships and the further development of policy assessment and reviews. She emphasized the need to maintain policy databases on a continuous and sustainable basis.
14. *A Government representative of Mexico* said that youth employment was a priority for the Mexican Government. An increase in the number of apprenticeships and internships would enable young people to gain experience and skills, thus facilitating the school-to-work transition. He supported the ACI strategy, particularly its intention to strengthen know-how.
15. *A Government representative of Bulgaria* said that the youth employment crisis was a common challenge and could be addressed only through coordination and partnership on a global scale with the participation of the G20 and the international community. At the beginning of 2014 the Bulgarian Government had introduced and funded a national plan to implement the European Youth Guarantee to help young people up to 29 years of age to find employment, apprenticeships, internships or appropriate further education. The programme would be accelerated with the introduction of new programmes financed by the European Social Fund.
16. *A Government representative of India* agreed that evidence-based policy assessment and identification of knowledge gaps were important. She welcomed the proposed initiatives to increase jobs and skills for young people. Pooling expertise from different domains, and ensuring that policies and ACIs complemented one another, would optimize resources and achieve synergies. India's Government was taking measures to profit from its demographic transition, implementing active labour market policies to promote work for disadvantaged groups and people in rural areas. The Government had prioritized skills development, especially for young people, and had formulated a plan that aimed to increase the number of skilled people to 500 million by 2022. The ACI should address underemployment and the unorganized sector, particularly in rural areas.
17. *A Government representative of the United States* supported the Office's proposed strategy, noting that it aimed to build and disseminate best practices and strengthen the technical capacity of constituents. She requested further information on the relationship between the ACI and the seven-year follow-up plan. She agreed that emphasis should be placed on disadvantaged youth, and was encouraged that the research was in line with the 2013 knowledge-mapping exercise. Any youth employment database created must be maintained regularly. She commended the Office for its global efforts in addressing the issue.
18. *A Government representative of China* hoped that the knowledge-sharing platform would be established early on. A global database on youth employment policies should refer to the specific national conditions of different countries. Setting up communities of practices would lead to the sharing of experiences, and enhance capacity building. He was pleased

that the ILO was working with other United Nations (UN) agencies. The best way to address youth employment was to make optimal use of existing resources and the ILO's expertise, and call on countries to take targeted measures. China had placed job creation for young people, particularly recent graduates, at the top of its agenda.

19. *A representative of the Director-General (DDG/P)* welcomed the support received from the speakers, particularly the emphasis on what worked and on the need for more analytical work and more empirical evidence on which policies were producing the results that the Governing Body and constituents wanted to achieve. She stressed that not every aspect of youth employment could be addressed; a focused, strategic approach was necessary. She pointed out that some of the issues raised were being dealt with through the 19 outcomes and through other ACIs.
20. *A representative of the Director-General (Director, EMPLOYMENT)*, responding to the questions raised, said that a rigorous impact analysis would be conducted that would go beyond the analysis of the efficiency or evaluation of project performance. The strategy and the deliverables of the ACI were indeed a subsegment of the seven-year follow-up plan. Several deliverables on demand-side interventions; quality of employment; rights; labour market segmentation and disadvantaged groups of young people were planned. Synergies were being built with other ACIs, in particular with the ACI on promoting more and better jobs for inclusive growth regarding the enabling environment for enterprises, pro-employment macroeconomic frameworks and sectoral strategies. Stronger linkages would also be made with the ACI on protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work. The countries chosen to participate in the ACI would be those from which the ILO could gain experience and improve its policy tools or which presented potential for scaling up and/or experimentation of new approaches. However, the results would inform the entire range of ILO technical cooperation in that area.
21. *The Employer coordinator* highlighted the following fundamental needs related to youth employment: constant innovation to create jobs for young people; entrepreneurship to enable young people to create their own opportunities; efficiency regarding resources and policies; training that was pertinent to the needs of enterprises and countries; creation of a bridge between education and training for work; facilities to enable young people to enter the world of work formally, and to enable enterprises to enter the formal economy; flexible hiring; consultations with workers, employers, and enterprises; and sustainable enterprises.
22. *The Worker spokesperson* was reassured that governments were in agreement over the importance of not only creating jobs but creating quality jobs based on internationally agreed standards; she would add quality to the Employer coordinator's list of points.

Outcome

23. *The Governing Body requested the Director-General to take account of its guidance in implementing the strategy for the ACI on "Jobs and skills for youth".*

(GB.320/POL/1, paragraph 29.)

Second item on the agenda

Area of critical importance on productivity and working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises (GB.320/POL/2)

24. *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES)) introduced the paper. The work would be conducted at different levels and evidence would be collected in different ways, including panels of participating enterprises and control groups, micro-data panels in a number of countries, and macro cross-country analysis. A results framework had to be created so that the ACI could be evaluated as a whole. The Office faced challenges in scope and in scale. The knowledge gained would result in improved working conditions and higher productivity, through policy as well as market uptake; it would then be made available to other countries in the form of policy and technical briefs.
25. *The Employer coordinator* reiterated her group's support for the area of critical importance (ACI). However, she expressed disappointment with the Office's narrow approach, which would diminish the impact and utility of the ILO's work in that area and missed an important opportunity to inform government policies meaningfully. Three gaps existed in the workplan relating to: the concept of productivity and its measurement, its inattention to the relationship between informality and productivity, and the fact that it virtually ignored the role of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises. Research and fact-based evidence was needed on the link between investments in productivity and the return on those investments. Working conditions were not the only factor influencing productivity and the macro- and business environment could not be ignored.
26. She cautioned that the paper mentioned the need to distinguish between productivity as a general concept referring to the ratio between inputs and outputs, and labour productivity referring to the output per worker per unit of time. Of course labour productivity was important. The relationship between working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and improved productivity was more complex and reciprocal than the document suggested. She stressed the need for policy-makers to strategically focus the reforms in interventions on creating an enabling environment for SMEs to thrive. She noted the need to take into account the important distinction between conditions in formal and informal enterprises, and to distinguish between issues that were endemic to SMEs and those that related more to the causes, consequences and problems associated with informality. Furthermore, she expressed concern about the lack of focus on promoting the establishment of SMEs in the formal economy and their sustainable growth. She stressed that creating an enterprise- and business-friendly environment for SMEs to grow, sustain and create jobs in the formal economy should also be one of the main focuses of that ACI. Noting that there was no sign that the conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2007 had been used as guidance, she said that more needed to be done to incorporate in the ACI's workplan issues surrounding enterprise growth and the wider enabling environment for SMEs.
27. *The Worker spokesperson* emphasized the importance of the issue, recalling that SMEs often paid low wages and had low coverage of collective agreements, and that trade unions often faced constraints in those enterprises. While the ACI included some good proposed elements of work, she was concerned about them being developed within the context of the rationale as set out in the paper. Therefore, the underlying rationale of the proposal should be agreed upon before the work was developed further. The rationale in the paper assumed that higher productivity led to better working conditions. She cautioned that that was not

possible without work on rights and labour-market institutions, such as collective bargaining. Her group supported the improvement of productivity in SMEs but with the goal of achieving decent work and decent wages for workers.

28. Emphasizing that the work under the ACI needed to achieve rights for workers as well as mechanisms to support improved productivity, she said that the ILO should focus on extending collective bargaining to SMEs, particularly in developing countries. The role of supply chains was also important, as was the role of government. Her group had serious concerns about the System for Integrated Measurement and Improvement of Productivity (SIMAPRO) project, particularly because it was being implemented in companies that did not have trade unions. The Workers appreciated the recognition of the need to improve working conditions in SMEs and welcomed the cross-departmental work suggested in paragraph 16. The success of the ACI would be measured by the ability to allocate more resources to improving working conditions, closing the representation gap and promoting collective bargaining in SMEs. Noting that the ACI reflected the discussions on sustainable enterprises at the 2007 session of the Conference, she reiterated the hope that the standards listed in the appendix to the ensuing conclusions would be taken into account, including promoting their ratification and implementation. Referring to paragraph 25, she noted that a country's industrial policy must be related to the promotion of better working conditions and higher productivity in SMEs. The materials developed by the Office on the enabling environment should better address issues such as wages, working conditions, collective bargaining, social dialogue, respect for universal human rights and international labour standards, social protection, and education and lifelong learning, and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) should be involved in the development of such materials. She wondered why there was no link with the ACI on the protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work and asked the Office to provide details about which countries would be covered by the ACI in question. In conclusion, work should be done in the context of ILO values, rights, freedom of association and collective bargaining; the rationale underpinning that work should be based around the 2007 conclusions.
29. *Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States*, a Government representative of Italy said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia. Noting that the majority of European businesses were SMEs, and that future prosperity required investment in the growth and innovation potential of SMEs – as recognized by the Europe 2020 strategy – she agreed that productivity in SMEs could be boosted by investing in workers and working conditions, particularly occupational safety and health. She supported the link to the Decent Work Agenda and to other ACIs and suggested that other aspects of working conditions, such as working climate, work–life balance and working-time arrangements, should also be taken into account. The Office should provide a better explanation of the methodological aspects, in particular with respect to theories underpinning analysis, the concepts of productivity used and the causal relationships established, and explain the elements that helped improve productivity and working conditions. The differences between micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises had to be considered. Access to finance and markets, the reduction of administrative burdens and entrepreneurship must be priority areas. Technical progress and innovation, human resources management and social dialogue should also be included. She highlighted the importance of an enabling legislative environment, emphasized the role of social dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders, and supported capacity building of employers' and workers' organizations. An implementation strategy was needed. She called on the Office to pay particular attention to overcoming the key problems faced by workers and employers in SMEs.
30. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of the Congo said that entrepreneurship with a qualified labour force and decent working conditions could

stimulate productivity, favour competitiveness and build the basis of sustainable enterprises. The legislative environment, skills development, security and social protection were fundamental for formalization of enterprises, with the main objective being to give priority to sustainable models of production and to improve the conditions for the working population. In Africa, most SMEs were very small, productivity was variable, growth was weak, and wages were low. The ACI must extend the suggested models to developing countries and adapt them to their realities. Investing in new technologies contributed to increased productivity. Constituents and social partners should cooperate to attain the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda. The group supported the ACI's focus. However, the Office should demonstrate how it could transfer the findings of the studies conducted in OECD countries to developing countries and contribute to their development and prosperity. He stressed the need to take into account the specificities of the region in developing more employment and quality employment, inclusive growth and creating the link between enterprise development, productivity and decent working conditions.

31. *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica highlighted the link with the work on formalization and said that micro-enterprises should benefit from interventions targeting SMEs. Recalling the five-point Office response to the global economic crisis in 2009 for SMEs she stressed the need to look at all aspects of development of enterprises. She supported the ACI's focus and policies should stimulate investment to improve productivity and working conditions. Using existing national mechanisms was the best way to encourage social dialogue within SMEs. Minimum social protection standards for SMEs must be established. Greener businesses that drove the shift to a more ecologically friendly economic model were necessary. The ACI should focus on medium- and long-term challenges facing SMEs; specifically, it should examine the future impact of technological innovation and new production patterns. She requested further information on the selection of countries for pilot programmes.
32. *Speaking on behalf of ASPAG*, a Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran agreed that synergies between working conditions and productivity needed to be generated and supported the Office focus. The ACI should reflect the Conference's 2007 conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises and the Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189). He underscored the opportunities for learning that focusing both on the supply and demand sides of the economy, and on macro and micro perspectives, would create. Indicators to measure the ACI's outcome must be established. He noted that due to various challenges faced by SMEs, productivity could not be a priority. Increasing sustainability of enterprises would facilitate higher levels of productivity. The Office should conduct a study on the variation across regions in the extent of synergies between working conditions and productivity. Equally it should investigate what other factors, in addition to working conditions, might contribute to the productivity of SMEs.
33. *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* said that, while the ILO was right to concentrate on productivity, government assistance in developing labour standards could also foster labour productivity. Large enterprises had the capacity to apply labour standards, but small enterprises faced difficulties, due to the expenditure involved. Model standards could be developed to serve as a reference for SMEs, enabling them to improve their work processes and working conditions.
34. *A Government representative of Mexico* stressed that improvements in working conditions were key for the performance and competitiveness of enterprises. He drew attention in particular to the relationship between environmental performance and productivity. It was necessary to share good practices on the creation of quality employment and the inclusion in a green economy. There was no one-size-fits-all. To achieve synergies in that regard, governments and the social partners must implement employment policies that gave

workers new skills. The Office's cost-benefit analysis of such policies would be vital. For Mexico, the respect of labour rights while increasing the productive capacity of all economic sectors and population groups was the route to becoming a fairer, more inclusive society.

35. *A Government representative of Switzerland* agreed that there was a link between productivity and improvement of working conditions in SMEs. Decent working conditions improved competitiveness of enterprises. Switzerland had supported the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) and Better Work programmes since their inception and had witnessed remarkable results. The ILO should pursue its research to obtain quantifiable data to support the ACI. It should work with the private sector on the ACI, particularly in relation to global supply chains. Paragraphs 14 and 29 were especially pertinent. Switzerland would support the Office in the ACI's implementation. The Office should ensure coherence in its activities under the ACI and provide further clarification on budgetary implications.
36. *Speaking on behalf of ASEAN*, a Government representative of Thailand requested additional details on the ACI's scope and on how the Office would allocate resources to it and the related outcomes. Indicators to evaluate the impact of the strategic interventions were needed, and evaluation should be done prior to the new Strategic Policy Framework period beginning in 2016. She supported the interdisciplinary approach to the ACI's implementation described in paragraph 34, but sought assurance that there had been tripartite consultation when necessary.
37. *A Government representative of Ghana* said that the SCORE programme had already played a key role in boosting the productivity of SMEs in one economic sector in his country, and he encouraged the ILO to roll out the programme further. Ghana was pleased to be involved in the ILO's exploratory work on a capacity-building strategy for workers, and he expected the strategy to be extended to the other social partners and governments. His Government would continue to support SMEs in collaboration with appropriate agencies.
38. *A Government representative of China* said that it was essential to be clear about the problems in SMEs, such as informal employment, low quality of employment, lack of high productivity and lack of decent working conditions. Governments should create an enabling environment and facilitate the synergy between working conditions and productivity. The market played a decisive role in allocating resources that would create opportunities for SMEs. The ILO's research was very relevant with regard to ensuring basic social protection, formalizing the informal economy and promoting decent work in rural areas. He supported the ACI's four major deliverables and expected relevant knowledge platforms to be created.
39. *A Government representative of Indonesia* said that the first phase of the SCORE project in Indonesia had been successful; the project's second phase should implement all modules and enhance tripartism. Her Government prioritized occupational health and safety in SMEs and expected the ILO's support in developing relevant practices and standards.
40. *A representative of the Director-General (DDG/P)* said that the Office's approach had to be focused in order to have a real impact within the biennium. Some issues relating to the productivity of SMEs, such as the issue of energy reliability, fell outside the ILO's mandate. The Office had been careful to avoid duplication among the ACIs and the 19 outcomes. Some of the suggestions that had been made related to work that was being done within the workplans of the 19 outcomes. She affirmed that the ACI was based on the ILO's core values and confirmed that all the interventions were targeted at developing

countries. She acknowledged the important role played by micro-enterprises, but said that they were addressed by the Office's work on formalization.

41. *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, ENTERPRISES) added that the Enterprises Department was contributing to the work under the ACI on the formalization of the informal economy, which focused among other things on micro-enterprises. The specific focus of the ACI under discussion was SMEs, where formalization was not the central concern. However, there was a link between the two areas.
42. He explained that a lot of high quality work had been done in the previous biennium on the issue of the enabling environment. That continued to be a priority under Outcome 3, on sustainable enterprises. The current focus was on new assessments, but also supporting constituents to achieve the policy changes and results they wanted. In a number of countries there would be work on both the enabling environment on productivity and working conditions and thus opportunity to understand and exploit the link between the two dimensions.
43. The Office would employ diverse research methods under that ACI and would not equate correlation with causation. Evidence on the relationship between productivity and working conditions was less firm than frequently voiced opinions would lead one to believe. The Office would work closely with the Research Department on methodology, and tie its work to the ACI on promoting more and better jobs for inclusive growth. He reiterated that the criteria used to select countries had been demand and support from constituents, thematic fit and feasibility in terms of logistics and resources.
44. *The Employer coordinator* said that the Office should incorporate a more comprehensive and subtle understanding of the relationship between enterprise development, productivity and decent working conditions. Noting that sustainable enterprises were instrumental to creating jobs and decent work, provided that they were productive, competitive and profitable, she said that her group valued the 2007 conclusions on sustainable enterprises achieved through consensus, which called for an emphasis on rights, standards, freedom of association and collective bargaining, together with an enabling environment. She cautioned about focusing on either of those dimensions at the expense of others.
45. *The Worker spokesperson* agreed that the 2007 conclusions should be used to guide the Office's work, and that the link between enterprise development, productivity and decent work should be articulated more clearly. She expressed concern that some of the products being promoted did not consider working conditions, rights at work or collective bargaining. More work needed to be done on articulating the purpose of the work and the best way to do it.

Outcome

46. ***The Governing Body requested the Director-General to take account of its guidance in implementing the strategy for the ACI on productivity and working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises.***

(GB.320/POL/2, paragraph 37.)

Third item on the agenda

Follow-up to the Tripartite Technical Meeting on Labour Migration (Geneva, 4–8 November 2013) (GB.320/POL/3)

47. *The Worker spokesperson* said that the conclusions of the Tripartite Technical Meeting provided a comprehensive workplan for the ILO. However, more detailed information should be given on how the ILO intended to promote the Decent Work Agenda in relation to migrants and the ratification of international labour standards. Two areas should be strengthened: the promotion of rights of migrant workers through advocacy campaigns of ILO Conventions on migrant workers and the provision of technical assistance to governments that indicate a willingness to ratify. Assistance to constituents in regional processes should focus on the protection of the rights of migrant workers. The ILO's leadership of the Global Migration Group (GMG) in 2014 should be used to promote the Conventions on migrant workers. Deficits in temporary labour migration schemes should be identified and the negative impacts of circular migration schemes assessed. The ILO should take the lead in developing a fair recruitment policy, allocate resources for the preparation of guidelines and convene a tripartite meeting of experts to discuss them. The Office's awareness-raising activities should emphasize not merely migrant workers' economic input but also their social and cultural contributions. The International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin Centre) should focus more on capacity building for the social partners in the area of labour migration, and appropriate indicators should be developed, with GMG partners, for inclusion in the post-2015 development agenda.
48. Her group welcomed the proposal to discuss labour migration at a future session of the International Labour Conference, on the condition that it concentrated on a specific theme or themes that had not yet been adequately addressed. A forum could be set up to continue regular tripartite discussion of international labour migration. Lastly, migration issues should be taken into consideration in the new Strategic Policy Framework.
49. *The Employer coordinator* welcomed the constructive and balanced conclusions of the Meeting. While the Workers focused on a rights-based approach, the Employers called for the promotion of policies that met labour market needs and took account of the economic contributions of migrant workers. The two agendas were not conflicting, but complementary. A number of points of consensus had not been reflected in section II of the document: the need to develop best practices to facilitate safe, orderly and regular labour migration; the promotion of positive public perceptions; the recognition of labour mobility as a factor of sustainable growth; and the promotion of comprehensive, consistent and transparent policies for the effective management of labour migration.
50. She urged the ILO to continue to protect the tripartite nature of discussions on labour migration, including at meetings organized under the auspices of the GMG. The Office's activities in that area should be adequately resourced, consideration should be given to appointing regional migration specialists, and its data collection capacity should be built up. A number of initiatives were being taken in the private sector to foster responsible and ethical recruitment, and governments should take cognizance of best practices in that area.
51. *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica placed emphasis on the need to strengthen the leadership of the ILO in the GMG and in the working group on low-skilled labour migration within the World Bank-led Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD). The ILO, with its unique tripartite structure and its rights-based approach, could play a central role in

ensuring that labour migration was properly integrated in the post-2015 development agenda. GRULAC endorsed the Meeting's conclusions. It considered that building capacity at all levels was key to ensuring adequate policy space for the ILO's constituents. GRULAC therefore supported the mechanisms proposed to improve the Office's dissemination of information on its work in the area of labour migration.

52. She recalled that at the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor held in Medellín, Colombia, in November 2013, participants had agreed to work towards a hemispheric mechanism that could facilitate the recognition of nominal social security contributions and pension rights of migrant workers in Member States of the Organization of American States. Her group supported the strengthening of labour inspection systems, especially in sectors with a high proportion of migrant workers. She supported the proposal to hold a general discussion on labour migration at a future session of the International Labour Conference.
53. *A Government representative of China* speaking also on behalf of India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, said that skills portability would greatly facilitate labour migration and reduce discrimination. He urged the Office to continue work on facilitating mutual skills recognition between countries of origin and destination, and encouraged the Office to explore collaboration on issues such as skills certification and accreditation. He also underlined the importance of cooperation on data collection.
54. *Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States*, a Government representative of Italy said that Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia aligned themselves with her statement. She urged the Office to take advantage of its leadership role in the GMG to foster coordination between all relevant agencies of the United Nations system. Key areas for future work that required joint international action included: raising awareness of the positive contributions of migrants; ethical recruitment; research into reducing the financial and social costs of migration; and the development of indicators for the possible inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda. Due consideration should be given to labour migration in the formulation of the next Strategic Policy Framework; indeed, she considered migration to be an area of critical importance. She supported the proposed work on outreach and communication, and the joint action with the Turin Centre, and supported in principle the idea of a general discussion on labour migration at a future session of the Conference.
55. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of the Congo said that it was necessary to ensure labour mobility at the regional and international levels to take the necessary steps to ensure respect and protection of migrants' rights, to assess the repercussions of international migration on sustainable development, and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation. He endorsed the Meeting's conclusions. The ILO could assist member States in harmonizing their policies on employment and labour migration, promote good practices in that field and identify how migration could support possible post-2015 development goals. In Africa, the labour migration component of the Ouagadougou+10 Plan of Action would serve as a framework for the implementation of a coherent policy on migration. The Africa group agreed with the key areas for future work and emphasized recognition of the contributions of migrants to the economy and to development. He supported the proposal to hold a general discussion at a future session of the Conference.
56. *Speaking on behalf of ASEAN*, a Government representative of Viet Nam commended the Office for its short- to mid-term priorities on labour migration. Priority must be given to assisting constituents in improving skills training and development; developing a

comprehensive pre-departure and post-arrival information programme for workers; building capacities to implement coherent and fair recruitment practices and promote labour cooperation on migration; and establishing regional and international skills- and credentials-recognition framework. A skills-recognition framework had already been developed to facilitate labour migration within the ASEAN countries. He expressed appreciation for the implementation of the ASEAN TRIANGLE Project on labour migration. Through its tripartite processes, the ILO was strategically positioned to achieve decent work outcomes on labour migration. It must capitalize on its leadership of the GMG to promote decent work in labour migration and the inclusion of labour migration in the post-2015 development agenda. He supported the draft decision.

- 57.** *A Government representative of Indonesia* agreed that promoting increased awareness of migrants' contributions to development in countries of both origin and destination would generate more positive public perceptions of migrant workers and help prevent discriminatory attitudes towards them. Protecting the rights of migrant workers was a priority for her Government, which had already taken various measures to improve the management of labour migration.
- 58.** *A Government representative of the United States* commended the Office for its efforts to translate the conclusions of the Meeting into proposals for concrete action. She noted with appreciation the ILO's plans to use its leadership of the GMG to further promote the Decent Work Agenda, advance the outcomes of the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, and foster synergies with other relevant organizations. Noting the ongoing work of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on recruitment, she urged the ILO to share with the IOM its expertise on relevant ILO standards and on engagement with social partners. She welcomed the ILO's work on research and data collection on labour migration, and wondered how those efforts fitted into the research agenda. Regularly updating, revising and sharing the good practices database that accompanied the ILO's non-binding Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration could provide a real service to constituents. She looked forward to the Director-General's Report on labour migration to the upcoming session of the Conference, and supported, in principle, the discussion of labour migration at a future Conference session, provided that it was focused on an issue within the ILO's mandate and experience. Her Government supported the draft decision.
- 59.** *A Government representative of India* welcomed the ILO's initiatives to integrate labour migration in the post-2015 development agenda. The ILO's involvement in the initiative to review the effectiveness of bilateral labour migration agreements and memoranda of understanding should go beyond recruitment practices to include the promotion of social protection and the portability of social security benefits. The promotion of labour mobility and skill portability across geographical regions was an effective policy response to growing unemployment. She welcomed the ILO's involvement in the GMG and KNOMAD, and in the research activities planned to build an effective database and strengthen statistical methodologies for analysing migration. The governance of labour migration should be undertaken in a manner that resulted in a win-win situation for both source and destination countries. Her Government supported the draft decision.
- 60.** *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* welcomed the Meeting's conclusions and requested the ILO to use them in helping member States improve their labour legislation and in drafting their migration policies. Of the topics outlined in the document, the most urgent ones for his country were: the effective protection of migrant workers, particularly low-skilled and middle-skilled workers; the issue of skills recognition certification; and the need to carry out a labour market needs assessment. He expressed regret at the closing of the migration unit of the ILO Country Office in Moscow in 2011,

and requested a review of that unit's work. The proposal to hold a Conference discussion on labour migration should be considered further.

61. *A Government representative of Zimbabwe* welcomed the decision by the Director-General to report on labour migration to the 103rd Session of the International Labour Conference, as the discussion would inform deliberations at the Ouagadougou+10 meeting scheduled for September 2014, at which labour migration would be an important topic. He urged the Office to continue working with the regional economic communities on specific initiatives being undertaken in the respective regions of Africa and welcomed the short- to medium-term priorities proposed by the Office.
62. *A Government representative of Mexico* said that the Governing Body should promote the active and constructive participation of the ILO in following up on the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development with a view to assisting member States and other stakeholders in formulating public policies on labour migration, promoting capacity building, social dialogue and cooperation, and facilitating synergies among all actors concerned, particularly the IOM, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of resources. The ILO must contribute to the preparatory work to ensure the inclusion of migration in the post-2015 development agenda. His Government supported the draft decision, in particular the Office proposal to discuss labour migration at a future session of the Conference.
63. *A Government representative of Colombia* provided an overview of the various crosscutting strategies that her Government had developed to guarantee the rights of migrant workers, not only Colombians working abroad but also migrant workers coming to Colombia. She welcomed the revamping of the website of the Labour Migration Branch (MIGRANT) and the upgrading of its online good practices database. She noted the role that the Migrandina project had played for the Andean countries, and said that she counted on the continued cooperation of the Office.
64. *A Government representative of Panama* welcomed the short- and medium-term priorities proposed by the Office, and expressed the hope that the Meeting's conclusions would help give labour migration the attention it deserved in international debates and in the post-2015 development agenda. Through international cooperation and technical assistance, it was important to promote training opportunities for low- and middle-skilled workers in order to achieve a better balance between supply and demand in the labour market; increase awareness in destination countries to make skills recognition and certification a reality; and improve synergies between all relevant international organizations to optimize communication and the dissemination of information. The ILO's Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration was an important tool for improving the governance of labour migration. Since 2010, his Government had implemented several procedures to regularize migrant workers, to the benefit of more than 30,000 foreigners who had been granted work permits and were now affiliated in the social security system. He supported the draft decision.
65. *A Government representative of Egypt* highlighted the importance of ensuring that host countries recognized the rights of migrant workers. Her Government organized meetings and videoconferences that assessed the needs of Egyptian migrants in the host countries, and in their home country as well. A conference would be held in August 2014 to raise awareness of migration issues among second and third generation Egyptians living abroad.
66. *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY)) said that in the area of skills recognition and certification, work had been recently reinforced with the recruitment of a senior specialist with expertise in that domain. Regarding the call for a campaign for the promotion of

ratification and implementation of relevant Conventions, plans of action needed to be developed, as had been done in the past with other sets of standards. Nevertheless, that would require a dedicated discussion by the Governing Body. ILO standards were being used as a reference in the review of multilateral and bilateral agreements. On the issue of fair recruitment, the ILO had launched an initiative bringing together different departments and field offices to strengthen the global knowledge of national and international recruitment practices. On the issue of outreach, the ILO and the Swiss Government had signed a strategic learning partnership that included the development of a communications strategy. In respect of internal coordination, the ACIs provided a vehicle for bringing together the Office's different areas of work, with a view to focusing on labour migration.

Decision

67. The Governing Body:

- (a) took note of the final report of the Tripartite Technical Meeting on Labour Migration and authorized the Director-General to publish it, as well as the conclusions of the Meeting;*
- (b) endorsed the short- to mid-term priorities as proposed by the Office; and*
- (c) requested the Office to submit to the 322nd Session (November 2014) of the Governing Body a proposal concerning the possibility of selecting an item relating to labour migration with a view to a general discussion at a future session of the Conference.*

(GB.320/POL/3, paragraph 28.)

Fourth item on the agenda

Report for the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection) at the 104th Session (2015) of the International Labour Conference (GB.320/POL/4)

- 68.** *A representative of the Director-General (Director, WORKQUALITY) introduced the document.*
- 69.** *The Employer coordinator thanked the Office for the opportunity to comment on the document so well in advance and proposed the inclusion of two other topics: strengthening the global knowledge base on labour protection and a discussion of the ILO's activities for national capacity building on labour inspection. The recurrent discussion was a governance tool and not an opportunity for a general discussion, yet the document devoted a great deal of attention to sweeping undocumented generalizations and a number of policy proposals on contentious issues. The document, as currently formulated, offered limited prospects of reaching concrete consensually agreed conclusions to the discussion. The Office should therefore consult with all tripartite constituents and rethink not the subject matter of the report, but its approach.*

70. *The Worker spokesperson* agreed with the overall content of the document, which was in keeping with her group's understanding of the purpose of the recurrent item discussions. The Employers' proposal to add the topic of strengthening the global knowledge base appeared to cross the line of what the discussions should and should not cover. The report should assess misguided policies that had lowered labour protection standards and how to ensure that protection was maintained during global downturns. The Workers expected a stronger emphasis to be placed on the role of international labour standards and the problems in promoting such standards. The report should feature improvements in maternity protection and a comparison of labour protection systems, particularly identifying systems that supported widespread collective bargaining and freedom of association.
71. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of the Congo said that the economic crisis had had disastrous consequences on workers in terms of social protection, especially in developing countries. The suggestion that the number of working poor had declined was deceptive and should be put into context. He welcomed the measures taken by the ILO in the area of wage bargaining and other salary policies. He listed several proposals and underscored that they should contribute to the development and implementation of policies at the national level.
72. *Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States*, a Government representative of Italy said that Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia aligned themselves with her statement. The EU welcomed the work by the ILO to extend labour protection to groups of workers typically excluded, such as domestic workers, migrant workers, and workers living with HIV/AIDS. She encouraged the Office to pay attention to other groups such as the self-employed, older workers and workers with disabilities. Ways to implement the principle of equal pay to reduce the persisting gender pay gap deserved more attention, while working time should be addressed in light of policies that enhanced the use of flexible working hours and patterns. Regarding the prevention of occupational risks and hazards, the EU stood ready to share knowledge concerning new and emerging hazards such as psychosocial risks. Such risks could be related to both non-work and work-related factors and therefore required the integration of occupational health with other policy areas. The EU greatly appreciated the part of the document dealing with protection from unacceptable forms of work.
73. *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica said that the ILO should contribute its experience in the area of international labour standards and social justice policies to the 2015 debate. The upcoming discussion on transitioning from the informal to the formal economy would afford substantive elements for the debate. The topics of the informal economy and employment contracts had repeatedly been on the political agendas of GRULAC countries.
74. *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* said that in both 2013 and 2014, the Russian minimum wage had been increased. The Russian Federation had also recently introduced a mechanism to assess working conditions and carry out measures to correct them, and would be prepared to share its experience in that area.
75. *A Government representative of Indonesia* said that her country had ratified the eight ILO core Conventions and was in the process of ratifying the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187). Regulations on labour earnings, working time, and occupational safety and health had already been adopted by the ministry responsible.

76. *A Government representative of Niger* drew attention to the need to make labour inspection systems more effective, not least in terms of occupational safety and health. Collective bargaining should also be promoted to improve working conditions. He proposed that the social partners, and especially employers, should undergo training to bolster their awareness of working conditions.
77. *A Government representative of Switzerland* emphasized the importance of maintaining or strengthening social protection measures. Automation of work was leading to underskilled workers being employed in sectors with low wages and poor social protection. The ILO therefore continued to have an important role to play in promoting decent work and ensuring adequate protection for workers.
78. *A representative of the Director-General (DDG/P)* appreciated the many offers made by representatives to share their experience. Consultations would be held with constituents during the preparation of the report.
79. *The Worker spokesperson* noted that the aim of the recurrent discussion should be not only to review the experience gained, but also to push forward and look at policy responses to new challenges. She thanked Government representatives for the useful list of policy areas that they had suggested.

Outcome

80. *The Governing Body invited the Director-General to take note of the views expressed during the discussion on the preparation of the Office report for the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection) (2015).*

(GB.320/POL/4, paragraph 20.)

Social Dialogue Segment

Fifth item on the agenda

Sectoral activities programme

2012–13 and 2014–15

(GB.320/POL/5)

81. *A representative of the Director-General (Director, Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR))* explained that section I of the document reported on the outcomes of two meetings of experts held in 2013. Section II of the document contained a detailed proposal for a tripartite sectoral meeting for the oil and gas sector, as requested by the Governing Body. Section II also contained proposals regarding the Meeting of Experts on Maritime Occupational Safety and Health scheduled for October 2014 and the sectoral meetings to be held from December 2014 to August 2015.
82. *The Employer coordinator* endorsed the draft decision.
83. *The Worker spokesperson* welcomed the adoption of the two sets of guidelines since they were important for improving the working and living conditions of workers in both sectors. The social partners had agreed to develop a model course to assist with implementation of the Guidelines on the training of ships' cooks, and she would welcome promotion of that

course by the ILO once it had been finalized. She thanked the Office for providing a more detailed explanation of the purpose and scope of the meeting proposed for the oil and gas sector and wondered whether it would be helpful if the Office prepared slightly more detailed proposals on meetings for future biennia, in order to avoid lengthy discussions in the Governing Body. She also encouraged governments to take an active part in the advisory bodies, which discussed proposals for sectoral meetings. The Workers supported the draft decision.

- 84.** *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Togo noted that in the age of globalization, all economic sectors were constantly evolving. For that reason, his group gave particular attention to the needs of the 22 sectors in the Office's work and endorsed the publication of the two sets of adopted guidelines. He thanked the Office for the detailed proposal for a sectoral meeting for the oil and gas sector and stressed that account should be taken of work already done in that area by other international organizations. His group proposed the extension of geographical coverage to other oil-producing countries that faced difficult climatic conditions. He supported the draft decision.
- 85.** *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica recognized that the format of the document had always been very consistent and that it provided a good basis for the discussions, but stressed that the table setting out details of sectoral meetings should not contain proposals for the nomination of Government experts without prior consultations with the regional coordinators. The Government group should determine its representatives on the basis of two or more experts per geographic region, while always maintaining the geographic balance. Revision of the rules for sectoral meetings should be discussed to ensure their smooth functioning. To that effect, the group asked the Office to prepare an initial document with suggestions for the Legal Issues and International Labour Standards (LILS) Section of the 322nd Session of the Governing Body. Endorsing the proposal for the oil and gas industry meeting, he wondered whether the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) would be invited as an observer. His group had appreciated receiving GB.320/POL/INF/1, since it demonstrated that aside meetings, many other activities were carried out by the SECTOR. Such activities should be further strengthened. He supported the draft decision.
- 86.** *A Government representative of the Netherlands*, speaking also on behalf of Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States, said that if the proposed oil and gas meeting were to last five days, governments might be hindered from attending. Given the wide focus of the meeting, he also wondered whether it could yield useful results. He invited the Office's views on whether resources intended for the meeting might be better used for research on occupational safety and health (OSH) and skills challenges in that industry. The speaker asked the Office to take into account the above concerns when preparing proposals regarding the meeting's focus, composition and duration, should the meeting be endorsed by the Governing Body.
- 87.** *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* supported holding the meeting on the oil and gas industry. Since much of his country's mineral resources were located in the polar and subarctic climate zones of the northern hemisphere, it had a clear interest, as well as significant existing experience, in drilling for oil and gas in those regions. Great attention was paid to workers' safety and health under such conditions, including through special legislation and social welfare guarantees. He had no objection to the Africa group's proposal to expand the sphere of the sectoral meeting, in which his country's experts were ready to participate. He supported the draft decision.

88. *A Government representative of India* welcomed the ILO's continued sectoral work, since it presented an important aspect of its work in promoting the Decent Work Agenda. She appreciated that due to their nature, guidelines could be implemented in ways that would allow for national social and legal circumstances to be considered. Concerning the proposed oil and gas meeting, she pointed out that the reference to migrant workers could be understood to imply that governments outside the geographic scope also had certain responsibilities. A clearer definition of those seemed appropriate. She stressed that coherence efforts should not lead to encroachment on other agencies' areas of work. The ILO had the global mandate on OSH matters, which should not be diluted: thus, partnerships with other agencies should be guided by ILO labour standards. Welcoming also the Office's other proposals in section II, she endorsed the draft decision, noting that the Office should rationalize the number of activities to be undertaken with regular follow-up to sectoral work.
89. *The Worker spokesperson* said that research by the Office, which had been proposed as a possibility by the Netherlands, was no substitute for tripartite discussions aimed at identifying specific solutions to skills and OSH issues in the oil and gas industry.
90. *The Employer coordinator* thought that the meeting document reflected the best efforts of all parties concerned in relation to a complex and difficult issue. On that basis the Employers continued to support the proposal, though they were willing to defer to the Government group in that regard.
91. *The representative of the Director-General (Director, SECTOR)* said that, if the draft decision was adopted, the Office would submit proposals relating to the date, duration and composition of the meeting to the Governing Body at its November 2014 session. All interested governments would be invited to attend the meeting. The Office would also submit a proposal to the Governing Body concerning the invitation of the ISO as an observer.
92. *Another representative of the Director-General (DDG/P)* said that it was important to determine whether there was consensus among the members of the Governing Body on expanding the geographical scope of the meeting, as proposed by the Africa group.
93. *The Worker spokesperson* said that the meeting proposal had been formulated to address specific problems arising from conditions of extreme cold. Her group was not in favour of expanding the geographical scope.
94. *The Employer coordinator* said that the subject of the meeting had been discussed at length and that he had understood that there was broad consensus on the meeting proposal contained in the document.
95. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Togo said that full consensus had not been reached on the meeting proposal. Certain regions of Africa exhibited conditions of extreme heat. That had to be taken into account when determining the geographical scope of the meeting.
96. *The Worker spokesperson* noted that the geographical scope of the meeting was limited because its subject was conditions of extreme cold and the problems arising from those conditions.
97. *The Employer coordinator* said that another meeting on conditions of extreme heat, like those found in certain regions of Africa, could be held in the future. That possibility could be examined when setting the agenda for sectoral meetings for the following biennium.

98. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Egypt said that, following consultations, her group would prefer to cover conditions of extreme cold and heat in the same meeting. Failing that, her group would prefer to cancel the meeting in favour of conducting research in that area.
99. *The Worker spokesperson* said that the proposed meeting had been included in the Sectoral Activities Programme because the oil and gas industry in those geographical areas was an emerging industry and there was a lack of guidance on that subject. Expanding the geographical scope of the meeting would require the examination of a different set of problems, which could become unmanageable. Her group wished to retain the meeting proposal contained in the document.
100. *The Employer coordinator* said that his group concurred with the Workers' group but considered that the governments should have the final say on the matter.
101. *A Government representative of the Netherlands* clarified that his remark concerning whether research would be a feasible alternative to holding a meeting was not meant as a formal proposal, and that all the concerns voiced should be taken into account.
102. *The Worker spokesperson* wondered whether, instead of preventing the meeting from taking place, the Africa group could submit a proposal for the following biennium for holding another meeting on conditions of extreme heat to the sectoral advisory bodies.
103. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Togo said that his group was prepared to consider and accept the suggestion made by the Workers' group, provided that there was a clear time frame for examining the proposal.
104. *The representative of the Director-General* (Director, SECTOR) explained that the sectoral advisory bodies met once every two years. Workers, Employers and Governments were invited to express their views on what should be included in the Sectoral Activities Programme for the following biennium. The Office developed proposals based on the guidance provided by the advisory bodies and those proposals were then submitted to the Governing Body for endorsement. The following meeting of the advisory bodies would take place in autumn 2014, at which time the Africa group could submit a proposal for holding a meeting on conditions of extreme heat.
105. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Togo said that his group had taken note of the information provided by the Office and would submit a proposal to the advisory bodies' following meeting in autumn 2014.

Decision

106. The Governing Body:

- (a) took note of the final reports of the two meetings of experts mentioned in section I of document GB.320/POL/5;*
- (b) authorized the Director-General to publish the Guidelines on the Training of Ships' Cooks and the Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel;*
- (c) requested the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for future work, the recommendations for future action by the ILO made in*

the Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work for Early Childhood Education Personnel;

- (d) endorsed the proposal to hold a tripartite sectoral meeting for the oil and gas industry with the title, purpose and scope set out in section IIA of document GB.320/POL/5, as part of the programme for sectoral work for 2014–15; and*
- (e) endorsed the proposals made in the table appended to document GB.320/POL/5, relating to the dates, duration, official title, purpose and composition of the meetings listed therein.*

(GB.320/POL/5, paragraph 26.)

Sixth item on the agenda

Update on the Better Work programme (GB.320/POL/6)

- 107.** *The Branch Chief of the Better Work Branch (Better Work) introduced the document.*
- 108.** *The Worker spokesperson said that her group supported the goals of Better Work and recognized its achievements. Given the programme’s ambitious intentions and the scope and depth of the problems in the sector it sought to address, there had been some difficulties with implementation. In view of the challenges faced, the programme, its staff and donor countries were to be commended for the programme’s accomplishments. At the same time, it was important to acknowledge the obstacles to achieving full compliance with labour standards for improvements to be made.*
- 109.** *The programme was not a panacea, as was demonstrated by falling wages, increases in temporary employment contracts and the recent shocking events in Cambodia. The programme could not substitute a national-level industrial relations system. It could, however, assist governments and social partners to create and operate such a system. Greater emphasis should be put on promoting minimum living wages.*
- 110.** *In relation to the mechanism for monitoring factory-level compliance, a more detailed description of that process and procedures to attain compliance was of great interest to her group. Similarly, more information on the training of local staff and national-level labour inspectors was requested. The speaker noted that in Cambodia the reporting of factory-level compliance data had been resumed and asked for all other programmes to also publicly disclose their findings.*
- 111.** *Given the key role of the social partners in Better Work, the scarcity of funding for trade union training was an issue. It was important that such capacity building was built into core programme budgets. Worker participation in Performance Improvement Consultative Committees was stifled by a lack of adequate enabling environments for union organizing and collective bargaining, particularly in Haiti, Lesotho and Bangladesh. For that reason, Better Work needed to focus more on supporting social dialogue mechanisms and find ways to enable workers to more easily voice their concerns in those committees. Her group was interested in an assessment of the programme’s contributions to organizing and the promotion of collective bargaining and further information on resources and the number of its staff.*

- 112.** There was scope for increased collaboration between Better Work and other ILO departments to make use of relevant in-house expertise on international labour standards, labour administration, industrial relations and capacity building of employers and workers. Noting that strategies were being developed to ensure that the programme could become self-sustaining, the speaker requested more information on those efforts.
- 113.** *The Employer coordinator* said that his group welcomed the discussion and recognized that Better Work was more than a technical cooperation programme, having scope for wider impacts on industrial relations, business development and future ILO work in those areas. In its delivery, the ILO should focus on companies' competitiveness and compliance. His group shared many of the views of the Workers' group regarding improvements to be made to the Better Work programme, notably on capacity building of local institutions and social partners.
- 114.** There had been some important successes, but it was important to acknowledge the challenges that existed so that constructive solutions could be found. If the following challenges were not addressed, Better Work could be negatively affected. Firstly, the ILO needed to make a sound business case for participation in the programme. The mandatory nature of the programme in some participating countries could interfere in attaining employers' buy-in. Secondly, Better Work could benefit from a more effective involvement of national constituents, in particular local employers, given their central role in ensuring the proper functioning of the programmes. Thirdly, advisory and training components should not be overshadowed by the factory assessment component. Capacity building needed to be reinforced through enhanced training, not only in technical areas but also in "soft" competencies. Fourthly, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) should engage more in the programme, to increase its productivity and competitiveness aspects. While the IFC was represented on an equal footing in the management group, it was not as engaged at the country programme level. Finally, given that the premise that compliance would improve working conditions and in turn increase productivity was central to the programme, he noted that further evidence would be welcome.
- 115.** Greater competitiveness from improved factory compliance had been reported in Vietnamese factories, but that effect had not yet been observed in other countries. Productivity and competitiveness needed to be given the same importance as compliance aspects. A comprehensive strategy was needed to identify and demonstrate the economic and commercial benefits of the Better Work programme.
- 116.** *An Employer member from the United States* highlighted the importance of transferring best practices and lessons learned through the Better Work programme to the broader economy. Whereas the programme could improve the business and labour climate in a country as a whole, Better Work was not meant to replace Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs), governments or local business communities. Capacity building and promoting sustainability were the principal means of achieving its objectives. It was important to determine at what point programmes could be considered sustainable. More information on the programme's financial sustainability was welcome. Further thought should be given to the programme's ultimate goal, its parameters and its larger promise for enterprises not directly associated with it.
- 117.** *An Employer member from Australia* said that sustainability should be at the heart of the Better Work programme to avoid creating unattainable expectations. The programme's value lay in its ability to increase capacity at the national level. Its business case and sustainability depended on its quality, stakeholder buy-in and its adaptability to different local economic and social dialogue conditions. From a business perspective, achieving participation should not be an act of charity or corporate responsibility, but should be driven by institutional and structural drivers. Two principal ways of achieving that

objective were to ensure the centrality of local participation and to match improvements in labour conditions with improvements in productivity. His group would act, particularly on one of the responsibilities given to it by the programme, namely to strengthen relationships between buyers and local employers' organizations.

118. *An Employer member from Germany* noted that European companies engaged in the programme were particularly interested in ensuring a better local buy-in. Rather than engaging in political discussions, Better Work should consider practical realities on the ground, and should cooperate with and take advantage of synergies with other ILO departments, in addition to those mentioned by the Workers in their statement, the Enterprises Department.
119. *An Employer member from Bangladesh* said that while the current compliance framework of Better Work was limited to national labour laws and fundamental principles and rights at work, the scope of the work to be undertaken in Bangladesh seemed to be wider, since it included fire safety and structural integrity of buildings. Should the compliance framework still evolve, clarity was needed regarding responsibilities of the countries involved. He noted that substantial progress regarding labour laws had already been achieved in Bangladesh and hoped that when the programme was launched in Bangladesh, it would match its success in other countries.
120. *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Togo said that the Better Work programme had improved labour conditions, company results and development indicators, and had helped constituents to strengthen the capacities of national institutions and labour market governance. He called on new donors to join the programme in order to make achievements sustainable, and urged the Office and its partners to extend the programme to other sectors and countries following the end of the five-year plan adopted in 2012.
121. *Speaking on behalf of ASPAG*, a Government representative of Australia said that there was no need to discuss Better Work as an individual item in the Governing Body. His group nevertheless considered that, among its many qualities, Better Work was a strong example of how ILO principles and interventions could advance economic development, resulting in tangible and potentially long-lasting improvements, in support of the Millennium Development Goals. It had been particularly successful in improving the lives of female workers in the garment manufacturing industry. Given the programme's benefits, the Office should allocate more resources to bridge the gap between demands for the programme and its ability to meet them. Where that was not possible, transitory measures could be taken prior to the start of a Better Work programme. The programme should be a promoter of trade. Labour standards must not be used for trade protectionist purposes, but neither should the violation of fundamental labour principles and rights be used as a comparative advantage. He encouraged all Better Work partners to continue their cooperation with a view to achieving the programme's objectives. His group supported the draft decision. It did not endorse the proposed amendment circulated earlier on behalf of the Employers.
122. *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica said that his group welcomed the achievements of the programme, in particular its engagement in a growing sector that provided a major source of revenue for developing countries and employment for young, and predominantly women, workers. GRULAC particularly valued the programme's inclusion of all stakeholders and its direct impact on working conditions, especially in respect of female workers, on competitive advantages for enterprises, and on strengthening labour legislation and implementation. While GRULAC supported the programme's roll-out to other countries, it considered that supervisory and follow-up mechanisms should be further developed to protect the programme's sustainability and

quality; additional information on how the Office intended to address that issue was welcome. The group supported the draft decision.

- 123.** *A Government representative of the Netherlands*, speaking also on behalf of Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, said that the programme enabled the ILO to develop stronger relationships with multinational companies, who wanted to commit themselves to comply with international labour standards in their supply chains. It also served as an entry point for the ILO to address broader issues with national governments, such as the capacity of labour inspectorates. It had, however, still to more clearly demonstrate its business case to participating companies. The programme's expansion to Bangladesh held great promise, in particular through close coordination with other ILO-led initiatives. The speaker welcomed impact assessments throughout the programme and the measures planned to respond to national business sector needs. While the programme had grown considerably in recent years, both in coverage and its quality, it still had further potential to benefit many additional workers and businesses in the countries where it operated. The Governments of Switzerland and the Netherlands aligned themselves with ASPAG in supporting the decision, as originally proposed in the paper.
- 124.** *A Government representative of Cambodia* said that, as part of the Better Work programme, Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) provided evidence of the programme's benefits in terms of increased exports and improved compliance with labour standards. BFC received both non-donor and donor funding and carried out core activities such as monitoring, advisory services, training, research and social dialogue. The national tripartite project advisory committee was important for its success in improving tripartite capacities. Monitoring was at its backbone and had made a positive and tangible impact on labour law enforcement. His Government was fully committed to workers' rights but was obliged to intervene when strikes became violent. A draft law on trade unions was currently under examination and a committee had been established to discuss wage fixing. He requested ILO assistance to reconcile the demands of all parties in that regard and called for the continuation of the partnership between the ILO and the IFC.
- 125.** *A Government representative of Indonesia* said that the Better Work programme supported constituents in building the capacity of national institutions and strengthening the governance of labour markets. In Indonesia the programme involved 85 garment companies and 140,000 workers, and helped to improve the capacity of labour inspectors and mediators. She asked the programme to continue focusing on the garment sector and considered that sustainability was of critical importance. A major challenge in that regard was the future funding of the programme. For that reason, more details on a proposed strategy were welcome.
- 126.** *A Government representative of India* said that since Better Work was a technical cooperation programme, it should not have been included on the Social Dialogue Segment's agenda. Even though it was not part of the programme, India sought more information regarding its work in influencing policies and employment conditions. As most of the members were developing Asian countries and primary suppliers of agricultural goods, they were in need of programmes that facilitated trade. Any funding arrangement for the programme should not be subject to conditions and lead to supply-chain standards. Since the programme had an OSH component, her delegation asked for that component to also include cheap access to the latest technologies for participating countries.
- 127.** *A Government representative of the United States* said that in view of the significant reporting done on the programme, any reintroduction of the subject to the Governing Body session in March 2015 would be an unnecessary burden on resources, which could better be devoted to the actual running of the programme.

128. *The Worker spokesperson* said that one of the inherent limitations of the programme had been its focus on improving compliance at the factory level, since it did not address the real forces driving downward pressure on wages. With reference to Bangladesh, Better Work had been operating at the time of the introduction of the Accord on Fire and Building Safety, an example of buyers taking responsibility and making a long-term commitment. Highlighting that the workforce in the garment industry was largely female, the speaker asked for more attention to be paid to the issues of gender-related violence and sexual harassment. Whereas a future update on the programme was a good idea, the screening group should decide on its inclusion on a future agenda.
129. *The Employer coordinator* said that Better Work had policy implications, and that a follow-up discussion was required. It was contradictory that more information had been requested by member States, while at the same time there was opposition to having that agenda item come back in future sessions. For that reason, his group had asked for the draft decision to be reworded to request the Office to provide another update in March 2015 and to reflect the requests for information on the programme's contribution to national capacity building and the involvement of national tripartite constituents.
130. *A representative of the Director-General (DDG/P)* said that the Better Work programme had improved conditions for over 1 million workers, largely female, as well as for their households, in raising them out of poverty. Nine hundred firms had benefited, allowing them to survive the adjustments resulting from the end of the Multifibre Arrangement and the financial crisis of 2008–09. Better Work had also helped national economies to expand. The programme was not, however, a panacea. It was not meant to replace the ILO's labour law reform programme or the ILO's labour inspection programme. It was neither responsible for interpreting international labour standards, nor a substitute for ACTRAV or the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and their work in building the capacities of workers and employers.
131. Better Work did not duplicate those efforts: instead, it leveraged the relationships between the different parties to the supply chain in order to improve working conditions, competitiveness and economic development, as well as to open a door for the ILO to further strengthen capacity building and technical advice on inspection, monitoring and enforcement in participating countries.
132. A key element to ensure that its efforts were sustainable was that social partners' capacities were built with a view to enabling them to transition to collective bargaining. Financially, Better Work was overwhelmingly supported by extra-budgetary funds: not only from donors, but also governments, employers' associations, trade unions and buyers. The arrangement found in Cambodia set a goal for the other programmes.
133. In closing, the speaker thanked the Governing Body for showing great interest in the programme. As could be demonstrated by the large amount of information available on the website, the programme was very willing to provide information to all interested.
134. In view of the statements made, *the Employer coordinator* withdrew the proposed amendment to the draft decision on the understanding that the right forum to decide on the inclusion of a follow-up item on the agenda of future sessions was the screening group.

Outcome

135. *The Governing Body took note of the information contained in the document and requested the Office to take into account the comments made during the discussion in its joint management of the Better Work programme with the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group.*

(GB.320/POL/6, paragraph 28.)

Technical Cooperation Segment

Seventh item on the agenda

Regional perspectives on technical cooperation: Europe and Central Asia

(GB.320/POL/7)

136. *A representative of the Director-General (Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia) introduced the document.*

137. *The Employer coordinator said that it was important to take the region's diversity into consideration to ensure that constituents' needs were met. Her group would have liked to receive information on the measures that the ILO had taken to address the decrease in extra-budgetary technical cooperation (XBTC). Partnerships should be used to maximize opportunities for capacity building and the role of the Turin Centre should also be enhanced to that end. While her group welcomed information on the results achieved, it would have appreciated a greater emphasis on lessons learned. Greater emphasis should be placed on the Oslo Declaration, especially with regard to its bearing on resource mobilization. Priority areas of the Declaration included: the promotion of decent employment and job creation, particularly for youth; the promotion of enterprise sustainability, particularly for SMEs; support for innovative technologies and the green economy; addressing skills mismatches in the labour market; and improving the regulation of labour migration and the protection of migrants' rights. Her group supported the draft decision, provided that a clear link was made to the Oslo Declaration.*

138. *The Worker spokesperson said that the ILO had been notably absent during the difficulties experienced by the countries in the region most affected by the onset of the financial crisis. He questioned why the ILO had not taken a more proactive stance on the troika's socio-economic policies. The increased demand for technical cooperation should focus thinking on the future distribution of funds. In that regard, the following should be considered: increasing efforts in countries suffering from the negative effects of fiscal consolidation, focusing on employment, social security, and the protection of labour rights; setting up rapid fiscal consolidation and austerity response mechanisms within the ILO to protect labour rights and standards; ensuring that greater efforts in Western Europe did not weaken support to other subregions; and mobilizing resources for technical cooperation. Strategic collaboration with the European Commission (EC) could be an important means of mobilizing resources and, to that end, work was needed to overcome regulatory obstacles to European social fund access. Any agreement with the EC should contain specific provisions for the development of the social partners' capacities. Similarly, the role of the Turin Centre should be strengthened, especially given its capacity to attract EU funds. In the distribution of resources, work on labour migration, collective bargaining and the*

development of legislation should be prioritized, and resources should be rebalanced across the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda. Cooperation with other organizations should be based on the promotion of decent work, and public–private partnerships (PPPs) should be conditional on consultation with ACTRAV and ACT/EMP at both the planning and implementation stages, and on participants’ compliance with fundamental labour standards and ILO principles. The group supported the draft decision.

- 139.** *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Zambia said that the priority was to mobilize technical cooperation resources and focus on constituents’ needs. DWCPs continued to provide the key to resource mobilization and the effective implementation of proposed strategies. He urged the Office to continue its efforts on labour migration in order to establish the ILO as a reference on the subject. It should also scale up its strategic partnerships with governments, new donors and relevant institutions in his region, and engage in PPPs. His group also encouraged the ILO to continue its work with UN and EU funding bodies.
- 140.** *Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States*, a Government representative of Italy said that the following countries aligned themselves with the statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia. Technical cooperation in the region should be demand-led and needs-based and, to that end, the ILO should strengthen the exchange of information with all its constituents, and in particular with governments, prior to and throughout the technical cooperation process. The ILO should be a reference in the world of work. Therefore, evidence-based, high-quality research and analysis were essential. The Office should pay special attention to monitoring and quality control through technical cooperation processes, carefully assessing needs for additional resources. In view of resource constraints, the ILO should make the most of its existing structures, and technical cooperation activities should aim to establish decent work as a national goal throughout the region. The group welcomed plans to strengthen partnerships with EU institutions and other international and regional organizations. New activities in EU Member States should not however replace activities outside the EU on core labour standards. Her group proposed an amendment to the draft decision.
- 141.** *Speaking on behalf of the member States of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC)*, a Government representative of Canada said that his group would appreciate additional and recent information with regard to UN system coordination. Unnecessary duplication of work should be avoided and resource mobilization efforts should be part of an overall coordinated and coherent resource mobilization strategy. He requested confirmation from the Office that the general review of the ILO’s Technical Cooperation Strategy would include a coherent strategy for resource mobilization, taking into account the reform of human resources management and the field structure review.
- 142.** *A Government representative of the Russian Federation* said that her Government welcomed the extension of technical cooperation in Europe and Central Asia on the basis of new sources of funding. An important partnership had been established with the Russian company, Lukoil. The company supported the Turin Centre training programmes on professional and occupational skills. In addition, training programmes were provided in Russian for a large number of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Regional technical cooperation had resulted in a number of achievements, particularly in the area of youth employment, and such work should be extended. Activities organized by the Moscow Office included work to expand labour inspection services, most notably through Russian Federation–Mongolian cooperation. She recalled that the Oslo Declaration called upon the ILO to cooperate with the Eurasian Economic Commission. Her Government requested further assistance in the modernization and strengthening of inspection services.

143. *The representative of the Director-General* (Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia) expressed her appreciation for the guidance provided, which had been duly noted by the Office. The annual report on the implementation of the Oslo Declaration requested in October 2013 would provide further opportunities to engage on the proposals and recommendations that had been voiced.

Decision

144. *The Governing Body requested the Office:*

- (a) *to take into account its guidance on priorities and challenges to be considered in determining and monitoring demand-led and needs-based technical cooperation in the European and Central Asian region, so as to anchor decent work firmly as a national goal throughout the region;*
- (b) *in line with the Oslo Declaration, and in view of the need to improve the ILO's technical cooperation programme in Europe and Central Asia within existing resources, to develop a strategy to mobilize resources for the region to be discussed in the context of the general review of the ILO's Technical Cooperation Strategy during its 322nd Session in November 2014, also taking the ongoing field review into consideration.*

(GB.320/POL/7, paragraph 37, as amended.)

Eighth item on the agenda

Follow-up to the Brasilia Declaration on Child Labour (GB.320/POL/8)

145. *The representative of the Director-General* (Director, Governance and Tripartism Department) introduced the document.
146. *The Employer coordinator* thanked the Government of Brazil and the Brazilian mission in Geneva for their role in the Brasilia Conference. The Brasilia Declaration reaffirmed that child labour was an issue for all nations and therefore must be tackled through public policies and joint international action. Analysis of current data showed that, despite vast differences between countries, the reduction in child labour was directly connected to the promotion of adult employment, the adoption of social protection policies, improvements in education and the creation of an enabling environment to prevent and eliminate child labour. However, the level of countries' socio-economic development also played a role, so the enabling environment needed to include better conditions for the creation of formal and sustainable enterprises with a view to creating the wealth that was essential for sustainable development. Accordingly, he welcomed the Declaration's recognition of efforts to formalize all economic activities. Extensive provision of vocational training was a key component of government action, in addition to free, compulsory, high-quality education. He welcomed the opportunity for the Office to incorporate the Declaration into the ILO Global Action Plan on Child Labour and into the work of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) in consultation with other departments, especially ACT/EMP and ACTRAV. Elimination of the worst forms of child labour should be given top priority by the ILO in terms of action, as well as regular and extra-budgetary resources. Employers needed to be involved in strengthened national and

international cooperation and enhanced social dialogue. The Employers thanked the Government of Argentina for its offer to host the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in 2017 and endorsed the draft decision.

- 147.** *The Worker spokesperson* said that no child should be obliged to work anywhere; all children everywhere should have the right to play, study and develop. There were no “best” forms of child labour and so it might be appropriate to amend the title of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). The Brasilia Declaration underlined the need for a coherent and integrated approach, based on the Decent Work Agenda, to eradicate the socio-economic causes of child labour, with the focus on free compulsory education, social protection floors, access to justice and effective labour inspection. An integrated institutional approach was needed, as were larger-scale projects, in order to further reduce the number of children involved in child labour. The latter was partly driven by the vulnerability of households affected by poverty, unemployment and the economic crisis, and social protection was therefore essential. Brazil provided a clear example of the effectiveness of promoting social protection floors, boosting employment and offering financial incentives tied to school attendance. He urged governments to ratify the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and Convention No. 182. Since most children worked in the informal economy, it was necessary to continue working on the transition to the formal economy to ensure greater protection, with special emphasis on agriculture and the role of labour inspection. He welcomed the Government of Argentina’s proposal to host the IV Global Conference and hoped that it would provide trade unions with the opportunity to share their views and experiences. The Workers supported the Declaration and backed the call for additional resources for IPEC, which should also be included in the revised Technical Cooperation Strategy. The group endorsed the draft decision. The spokesperson said that it was his last appearance in the Governing Body.
- 148.** *The Chairperson* said that the Worker spokesperson would be missed and wished him every success in his ongoing work outside the Governing Body.
- 149.** *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica said that the Agenda for the Hemisphere 2006–15 included the complete elimination of child labour by 2020. The issue continued to deserve the fullest attention, in view of the estimated 12 million children involved in child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean. She welcomed the support of the ILO Office in Lima for regional initiatives, which included a “South–South” exchange of experience, and also the fact that the elimination of child labour remained a top priority for the Office. IPEC should follow up on countries’ commitments and review progress in the coming years and therefore needed continued support. Welcoming the Government of Argentina’s proposal to host the IV Global Conference, she endorsed the draft decision.
- 150.** *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, the Government representative of Zambia said that even though the target of complete eradication of child labour by 2016 was unlikely to be met, efforts in that direction should continue on the basis of recorded achievements. A coherent and integrated strategy was needed, as highlighted by the Brasilia Declaration. Observing the results of “Delivering as One” in the United Nations, he welcomed the strengthened coordination of public service workers. The focus needed to be on specific follow-up action. The group supported the draft decision.
- 151.** *Speaking on behalf of the EU*, a Government representative of Italy said that Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia aligned themselves with the Brasilia Declaration. The EU and its Member States continued to uphold its commitments to the eradication of child labour, which were laid down in the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy adopted in 2012. The EU had actively

participated in the Brasilia Conference and fully supported its key outcomes, in particular the Declaration. Despite significant progress in reducing child labour, more work was needed to achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms by 2016. The EU was promoting the establishment of up-to-date lists of hazardous types of work and called on all ILO member States to ratify Convention No. 182. Although international cooperation was very important, national governments had primary responsibility for the elimination of child labour. The mainstreaming of efforts against child labour was vital, as was the need to keep the focus on the interests of children themselves. The group supported the draft decision.

- 152.** *A Government representative of Brazil* said that her Government was striving to devise a sustainable national strategy for the elimination of child labour. It also stood ready to expand cooperation with the international community to that end and would therefore give the ILO active, constructive support for its work in that field.
- 153.** *A Government representative of Cuba* said that the current economic order was making it difficult for developing countries to tackle the root causes of serious social problems such as child labour. The fact that Argentina had offered to host the IV Global Conference was, however, proof of Latin American countries' commitment to combating child labour.
- 154.** *Speaking on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)*, a Government representative of Angola commented that the CPLP had been cooperating with the ILO in efforts to abolish child labour for almost ten years. In 2006 the CPLP had adopted a four-pronged plan of action to combat child labour, the methodology of which was consistent with that used by the ILO in South-South and triangular cooperation and by IPEC. Ten tripartite CPLP initiatives in particular had made it possible to achieve progress towards the elimination of child labour. The CPLP supported the draft decision.
- 155.** *A Government representative of Argentina* highlighted the need for closer tripartite and international cooperation to end the scourge of child labour. At national level, his Government had undertaken measures specifically aimed at the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and participated in the action of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) to combat child labour. He agreed with the draft decision.
- 156.** *A Government representative of the United States* underscored the importance that her Government attached to the ILO's work to combat child labour. She stressed the need for reinforced national and international action to achieve the target of eradicating the worst forms of child labour by 2016. She wondered whether in subparagraph (c) of the draft decision it would not be more appropriate to refer to the "effective abolition" of child labour, rather than to its "elimination", for the sake of consistency with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. However, she could accept the draft decision as it stood.
- 157.** *A Government representative of Indonesia* said that her Government supported the recommendations contained in the Brasilia Declaration. She emphasized the need for concerted global action on the part of governments, the social partners, civil society and regional and international organizations in order to tackle the many and various root causes of child labour, since the latter deprived young workers of their childhood and hindered their growth. The ILO could play a vital role in assisting member States to achieve the total elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2016. She supported the draft decision.
- 158.** *A Government representative of the Netherlands* said that the III Global Conference on Child Labour had renewed the momentum needed to effectively abolish child labour. Her Government regarded IPEC as the lead international programme for the elimination of

child labour and would therefore contribute €2 million to the programme specifically for its work on education and the elimination of child labour in rural areas.

- 159.** *A Government representative of Niger* expressed his support for the Brasilia Declaration. Cooperation between governments, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations was essential if child labour was to be eliminated. In many countries one of the main reasons for child labour was adults' inability to earn enough to sustain their family. That situation should be remedied through countries' decent work programmes and international transfers of funds to support national IPEC programmes. He supported the draft decision.
- 160.** *A Government representative of Mexico* emphasized the need for an integrated approach in order to enable the formulation of appropriate policies to address the root socio-economic causes of child labour with a view to the latter's elimination. National and international cooperation and, above all, technical cooperation had to be stepped up. He endorsed the draft decision.
- 161.** *A Government representative of India* said that, when tackling the various dimensions of child labour, her Government followed a proactive and multipronged approach aimed at creating an environment where families were not compelled to send their children to work. Government and civil society partnerships were also taking part in an integrated scheme to protect children in difficult circumstances. She supported the draft decision.
- 162.** *A Government representative of Ghana* said that although much had been done to eliminate child labour in agriculture and fishing, more effort was needed in other sectors. His Government remained committed to the goal of totally eliminating child labour. He was in favour of the draft decision.
- 163.** *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, Governance and Tripartite Department) was pleased that delegations unanimously supported the ILO's work on the elimination of child labour. He had taken note of the comments and suggestions made during the debate.

Decision

164. The Governing Body:

- (a) *requested the Office to convey its thanks to the Government of Brazil and the Brazilian social partners for hosting and ensuring the success of the III Global Conference on Child Labour and welcomed the offer of the Government of Argentina to host the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in 2017;*
- (b) *endorsing the Brasilia Declaration, requested the Office to ensure its integration into the ILO Global Action Plan on Child Labour and the work of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour; and*
- (c) *reconfirmed its commitment to the elimination of child labour as one of the fundamental principles and rights at work, and thus as one of the Organization's highest priorities in the realization of the Decent Work Agenda, and requested the Office to put in place all necessary means to achieve this objective.*

(GB.320/POL/8, paragraph 21.)

Ninth item on the agenda

ILO technical cooperation in fragile States (GB.320/POL/9)

- 165.** *The Director-General* welcomed H.E. Sheikh Ahmed, Prime Minister of Somalia. He thanked the Prime Minister for sharing with the Governing Body the aspirations of the Somali people and his plans to bring Somalia onto the path of peace, stability and sustainable development as well as the country's expectations of the ILO to assist in those endeavours. The ILO's mandate was relevant in diverse situations and its responsibility was to all member States, whatever their circumstances. He acknowledged the high level of political commitment and leadership that the Prime Minister was giving to decent work and youth employment. The Prime Minister had been instrumental in signing the New Deal Compact for Somalia with the international community to support a programme of peace building and stability. The decent work programme for Somalia, developed between the ILO, the Government of Somalia and the Somali social partners, to be signed later that day, would be an important contribution to meet the objectives of that Compact. Somalia would also be depositing instruments of ratification of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and Convention No. 182. The Prime Minister's visit marked a milestone in the relationship between the ILO and the Government and people of Somalia.
- 166.** *H.E. Sheikh Ahmed* (Prime Minister of Somalia) thanked the Director-General for the opportunity to engage with the ILO and to speak at the High-Level Panel on Decent Work in Fragile States later that day. He also thanked the Governments of New Zealand and Timor-Leste for organizing the Panel.
- 167.** Somalia had been affected by civil war for more than two decades, resulting in the collapse of public services, the country's infrastructure and government institutions. International agreements had helped to support peace- and state-building efforts, the security situation had improved, and the economy was starting to recover. Some 70 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line, although the country had vast, yet untapped natural resources. There was an alarmingly high level of poverty, unemployment and underemployment among young people, making them vulnerable to recruitment into criminal and violent activities. The Government believed that broad-based economic growth, which could deliver employment, raise incomes and reduce inequality, would be critical to Somalia's future. He outlined the Government's plans to address those social and economic issues by putting in place integrated policies for growth with targets for timely and effective job creation. The Government was ready to sign and implement a DWCP for Somalia. Trust should be built through tripartism and social dialogue in order to achieve peace based on social justice. He appealed to the ILO to act upon its mandate to strengthen the institutional capacities of its Somali constituents, particularly the workers of Somalia. He called on other countries in the subregion to strengthen economic integration to ensure continued economic growth and stability.
- 168.** Recent fighting in the country had destroyed the local infrastructure and essential services, leaving behind a growing humanitarian crisis. As well as short-term action to respond to immediate humanitarian needs, the Government aimed to rebuild the country's infrastructure. Job creation would be a more productive, sustainable and cost-effective method to achieve stability than peace-making, peacekeeping or any other conventional military solution. A number of challenges must be addressed to guard against a return to civil war, such as fair access to resources, fully inclusive political engagement, and institutionalization of the protection and promotion of human rights.

169. Finally, he requested the ILO to waive Somalia's outstanding contributions and for its voting rights to be reinstated and asked the ILO to extend its technical support to the preparation of Somalia's candidature for membership of the Governing Body.
170. *A representative of the Director-General* (Director, Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV)) introduced the document.
171. *The Employer coordinator* said that the Employers recognized the specific challenges of fragile States and crisis situations. The ILO's approach met some of those needs, but the document had not addressed the need to build sustainable capacity to enable rapid responses by local constituents. The term "fragile States" covered countries with different realities and should be better defined and differentiated so that a tailor-made response could be designed for the diverse challenges. The g7+ definition was too broad and should be further refined. It would be useful to have guidelines for developing country-specific approaches, focusing on areas where the ILO had a comparative advantage. She supported building partnerships with the United Nations and its agencies, as each agency would contribute in its areas of expertise. The ILO was not a relief agency, but it was positive if partnerships would enable it to be on the ground at the start of a crisis situation.
172. The role of the private sector in reconstruction and crisis response was important. Enterprises played a significant part in rebuilding the economic fabric of fragile nations and it was vital to create an enabling environment for enterprise creation and development. The lessons learned from disaster response were critical as they would enable the Office to build important expertise and knowledge for future interventions in fragile States. A fragile State task team should be established across the Office to raise awareness and develop a fragility strategy, and to coordinate ILO operations and inputs into joint UN responses so as to rapidly respond to emergencies in fragile settings. It was important to involve decent work teams and country offices, which had the best knowledge of the context and challenges involved. Task teams should include employer and worker specialists when developing appropriate response strategies. She supported the proposal to mobilize voluntary contributions to establish a rapid response fund in order to second staff temporarily to countries where ILO capacity was limited, launch emergency response activities and participate in joint agency operations. However, the terms and conditions of such a fund should be established. The fund could also be used to establish strategic partnerships with a wide range of organizations from the international development community. Her group supported the draft decision.
173. *The Worker spokesperson* said that, despite the progress achieved in promoting social dialogue and decent work in fragile States, a number of challenges remained, including building the capacity of the social partners and making resources available to promote DWCPs. Figure 3 showed that nearly 80 per cent of expenditure had been allocated to the strategic objective of employment. His group would like to know the reasons behind that imbalance and whether any steps had been taken to correct it. The figure did not specify the expenditure allocated to standards and social protection. The Office should provide more disaggregated data in future. Regarding the way forward, his group agreed that it was important to build the capacity of the tripartite constituents and to promote social dialogue. The list of fragile States should be revised, as it did not include all the fragile States in the different regions. There was a need to rebuild the capacity of trade unions to represent workers in tripartite and bipartite forums and in social dialogue institutions, and to strengthen their role in the face of institutional fragility. DWCPs should be tailored to constituents and should receive adequate funding. The need to support fragile States should also be included in the post-2015 discussion. His group agreed that it was important to develop specific responses targeting inequality, exclusion and the fight against poverty. Improved coordination among social institutions in fragile States could help to promote decent work and to build the capacity of constituents. More emphasis should have been

placed on the role of DWCPs in preventing crises or fragility. The Turin Centre, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP should develop training programmes for constituents in fragile States. His group endorsed the draft decision.

- 174.** *Speaking on behalf of the Africa group*, a Government representative of Zambia said that his Government welcomed the support provided by the Office to a number of African countries. His group supported the proposal to create a task team. While his group supported the establishment of a fragile States fund, the modalities for allocating aid should be clearly defined in view of the ambiguity of the terms “fragility” and “fragile State”. The Office should extend support to other African countries that were fragile States but that were not included in the current list. His group welcomed the proposed action relating to strategic partnerships and encouraged the Office to continue its efforts in that regard. His group endorsed the draft decision.
- 175.** *Speaking on behalf of IMEC*, a Government representative of Italy said that her group appreciated the work carried out by the ILO since 2004 in 15 of the 18 g7+ countries. Her group supported the strategy outlined in paragraph 28 but had concerns over the ILO’s involvement in disaster and emergency responses, as humanitarian work and emergency relief did not fall within the ILO’s scope of action. As to the mobilization of voluntary contributions, unnecessary duplication should be avoided and the Office should effectively coordinate, track and manage ILO resources. Her group endorsed the draft decision.
- 176.** *A Government representative of Japan* said that technical cooperation played a vital role in helping fragile States and disaster-affected countries to recover, the Japan Earthquake Project: Disseminating Lessons from Employment and Labour Measures for the Recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake being a notable example. His Government had allocated US\$1 million through the ILO to Kenya and Somalia to assist returnees and their communities. Moreover, his Government had allocated US\$3.5 million through the ILO to the Philippines to aid its recovery in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan. His Government endorsed the draft decision.
- 177.** *A Government representative of Brazil* said that, although the g7+ countries proposed their own definition of fragility, the scope and use of the term were still the subject of debate in various forums. Noting that the document suggested the same treatment for situations of conflict, disaster and violence, his Government requested the Office to reconsider, as those were distinct phenomena. The fact that the document identified crisis response as a priority instead of prevention should also be addressed. He proposed an amendment to the draft decision.
- 178.** *A Government representative of Mexico* said that the Office should continue developing, adapting and improving its Technical Cooperation Strategy. The Office should also evaluate and follow up the results of the 15 DWCPs already carried out and promote the implementation of the remaining programmes. The review of the Technical Cooperation Strategy should focus on employment and economic recovery. Given that the development of future technical cooperation programmes would be contingent on the mobilization of financial resources, it was necessary to strengthen links with private institutions. His Government endorsed the draft decision.
- 179.** *A Government representative of India* said that a proactive action plan was required to address the situation in fragile States. Furthermore, poverty eradication and job creation should be included in the post-2015 discussion. The ILO should continue to develop innovative strategies to tackle youth unemployment and to promote decent work through technical cooperation projects. The action plan should seek to upgrade the skills of the labour force in fragile States of Africa and Asia to afford them access to better working conditions in the post-crisis situation. Her Government was pleased to note that, during the

period 2004–13, the highest share of XBTC expenditure had been in Asia. Technical projects funded by extra-budgetary resources could be affected by unpredictability and changes in the economic climate. Regular dialogue between the relevant stakeholders was essential to correct imbalances in geographical or sectoral resource allocation. Given their vulnerability, efforts should be made to ensure that the flow of funds to fragile States remained regular. All initiatives should take into account the national priorities and the socio-economic situation of the individual countries. The ILO should focus its efforts on building the capacity of the social partners and stakeholders, and should also strengthen partnerships with the UN system and other multilateral institutions.

- 180.** *A Government representative of Egypt* said that the proposed task team should identify the specific needs of the country in question and determine the projects that would be most appropriate. The Office sometimes launched projects targeting different population groups in different regions within one country in an uncoordinated manner. It would be better to group all those projects in one region and, if they proved successful, to roll them out to other regions.
- 181.** *The representative of the Director-General (Director, PARDEV)* said that the Office intended to refine the different categories of fragile States and fragility. As to the concerns raised over the g7+ definition of fragile States being too broad, the Office had chosen the g7+ definition and list of countries because the countries in question considered themselves to be fragile. The use of any other definition would have imposed that status upon the countries. The ILO could also intervene in fragile countries that did not appear on the list. From the ILO's perspective, emergency response entailed the provision of emergency employment or emergency employment services but not the provision of humanitarian aid. In fragile States, there were often no social partners or, if there were, their capacity was often limited. All ILO programmes in such States did however include activities to support workers' and employers' organizations. The strategic objective of employment received the highest share of XBTC so as to meet the demands of the ILO's member States in situations of fragility. Activities aimed at creating jobs always sought to also promote labour standards, social protection and social dialogue. The technical cooperation programme for fragile States would be included in the post-2015 discussion. The Office had noted that more attention should be given to crisis prevention. That and other lessons would be fed into the revised Technical Cooperation Strategy to be submitted to the Governing Body at its session in November 2014.
- 182.** *A representative of the Director-General (Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships)* said that it was not the ILO's intention to stray beyond its area of competence. Instead, it wished to focus its efforts on generating employment, carrying out activities to provide a means of livelihood and promoting social dialogue in the wake of natural disasters or similar crisis situations. The Office had taken note of the concerns raised regarding the allocation of aid and the need to build the capacity of the social partners. The Office had no objection to the amendment proposed by the Government representative of Brazil.

Decision

- 183.** *The Governing Body requested the Office to take action on the way forward, taking into account the suggestions in paragraphs 28 and 29, points (a) to (c) of document GB.320/POL/9, and the guidance given in the discussion, and to reflect this in the revised ILO Technical Cooperation Strategy to be submitted to the Governing Body at its 322nd Session (November 2014).*

(GB.320/POL/9, paragraph 30, as amended.)

Multinational Enterprises Segment

Tenth item on the agenda

Implementation strategy for the follow-up mechanism of and promotional activities on the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration)

(GB.320/POL/10)

184. *The Employer coordinator* spoke highly of both the proposals set out in the document and the intense consultation process leading up to the proposed implementation strategy. The MNE Declaration and the need for a proper follow-up mechanism continued to be a high priority for the Employers, especially in the context of the global debate on corporate social responsibility, including as the interface between the ILO and other international instruments such as the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UN Global Compact and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. She complimented the Office on the new promotional activities. Concerning the network of focal points, the intent of the Tripartite Ad Hoc Working Group had been to raise awareness of the MNE Declaration among ILO officials so that more synergies could be created. In the broader context of the new enterprise initiative currently under discussion, care should be taken to ensure that the Office worked with the relevant constituents on the ground in order to approach companies, respecting the tripartite structure of the Organization. ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, policy departments and the field structure also needed to be involved in the network. Regarding the promotion of the MNE Declaration in PPPs, she said that although the Tripartite Ad Hoc Working Group had agreed to promote the Declaration, adherence to its principles should not become a condition for enterprises to engage with the ILO. Lastly, the Employers' group appreciated the alternative survey approach presented by the Office. The new questionnaire was pragmatic and very useful; questions could be easily answered and it allowed space for country-specific comments. The Employers' group considered that the approach would give new impetus to the follow-up mechanism. It therefore endorsed the draft decision.

185. *The Worker spokesperson* commended the Office on the document and expressed the continued commitment of his group to the MNE Declaration. He noted that it was important for the Office to maintain its universal follow-up mechanism in assessing whether MNEs adhered to the principles of the Declaration. He also referred to the relevance of the MNE Declaration in the current discussions on the ILO enterprises initiative. He warmly welcomed the list of promotional activities and appreciated the progress made to date, including the global network of focal points and the e-learning tool developed in collaboration with the Turin Centre. Collaboration with the Turin Centre should continue and resources should be made available for further capacity-building activities. The focal points in the global network should indeed lead the promotion of the MNE Declaration and integrate it in broader work of the ILO. Country-level activities needed to be increased, with a subregional and sectoral focus to exchange experiences. ILO interventions at the country level needed to address the right priorities, the most important being to combat violations of workers' rights, particularly when the violations had triggered an intervention in the first place. Sectoral and company-union dialogues were also a priority for the Workers and a clear strategy was needed in that respect. The group was strongly in favour of promoting the MNE Declaration within other international

organizations and at ILO Regional Meetings. The revised proposal on the survey was a good compromise, allowing for an institutionalized discussion space. The four options together would provide sufficient information on the effect given to the MNE Declaration. Data gathering was a priority; research must address the needs and gaps identified in global and regional reports, and focus on company behaviour and adherence with the principles of the MNE Declaration. The simplified survey questionnaire could help to raise awareness of the instrument and to identify the level of promotional work at the national level. A universal reporting mechanism was necessary; however, it should not be onerous in terms of cost and time, needed to be linked to other information and should help identify needs for further promotional activities. His group welcomed the proposal to incorporate the outcomes of the questionnaire into discussions at Regional Meetings. The Workers endorsed the draft decision.

- 186.** *Speaking on behalf of GRULAC*, a Government representative of Costa Rica said that her group welcomed the suggestion to address enterprise engagement, PPPs and multinational enterprises together, as that would lead to greater coherence and a more effective use of Office resources. The promotional activities undertaken by the Office provided a good basis on which to improve the understanding and application of the principles of the MNE Declaration. In view of the American Regional Meeting scheduled for October 2014, the Office should prepare the questionnaire to be as clear and interactive as possible, so that the information obtained could be used effectively. She supported the draft decision.
- 187.** *Speaking on behalf of IMEC*, a Government representative of the Netherlands stressed the invaluable contribution of the MNE Declaration to decent work all over the world. It was also relevant for ILO engagement with the private sector. The MNE Declaration needed to be effectively mainstreamed in all relevant ILO programmes, activities and products. Efforts by the ILO constituents to raise awareness of the MNE Declaration should complement Office activities, for instance by raising awareness at the national level of what the ILO had to offer. Concerning the global network of MNE Declaration focal points, further information was requested on how it related to the existing enterprise specialists in the field structure and its cost implications. He welcomed the integrated approach towards gathering information on the follow-up to the MNE Declaration and the proposal to make better use of data already available, and proposed a more general approach towards developing the capacity of national statistics offices. Concerning the questionnaire, he appreciated the considerable efforts to limit the reporting burden but remained unconvinced that it would lead to useful results and provide value for money. The Office should already be in touch on a regular basis with constituents on MNE activities and keeping track of those contacts. More direct outreach to MNEs might be more useful than a focus on ILO constituents only, and might foster more direct engagement between the ILO and the private sector. Engagement of ILO constituents and MNEs on efforts by the Office to collect data should be on a voluntary basis. Resources for the questionnaire would be better used for promotional activities. If a questionnaire was used, reassurances were needed that the length and complexity would not exceed the draft annexed to the document. Lastly, the group supported the review of the follow-up to the MNE Declaration in 2018, which should focus in particular on the MNE Declaration focal points network and the questionnaire.
- 188.** *A Government representative of India* noted the e-learning module and resource kit, as well as the network of focal points. Concerning PPPs, governments must also be involved in all dialogue with the private sector. She recalled that, under the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), governments had ultimate responsibility for labour inspection; MNEs should therefore adhere to national legislative frameworks with regard to state inspection mechanisms. She requested that, in the future, all information on and reports of Regional Meetings, including those concerning multinational enterprises and corporate

social responsibility, should be sent officially to member States. Subject to those observations, she agreed in general with the draft decision.

- 189.** *A representative of the Director-General (Director, ENTERPRISES) appreciated the very helpful debate and explained that the new global network of MNE Declaration focal points has been established with marginal cost implication but with an outreach well beyond the network of ten enterprise specialists. All 50 members were existing staff based in ILO departments and field offices. Their role, as determined by the Governing Body, was to promote knowledge and services on the MNE Declaration. That might evolve in the light of the Governing Body discussion concerning enterprise engagement. Lastly, the Office remained convinced that the proposed survey met the requirement of universality and contained only questions that could be answered, providing a global picture at a low cost.*

Decision

190. The Governing Body:

- (a) affirmed the operational plan for the MNE Declaration follow-up mechanism comprising promotional activities and an information-gathering system, as outlined in document GB.320/POL/10 and discussed at its 313th (March 2012) and 320th (March 2014) Sessions;*
- (b) adopted the four elements proposed in part B of document GB.320/POL/10 for collecting information on the effect given to the MNE Declaration, thereby superseding its decisions taken at its 209th (March 1979) and 258th (November 1993) Sessions;*
- (c) instructed the Office to commence the approved implementation strategy in 2014;*
- (d) requested the Director-General to seek extra-budgetary resource mobilization especially for the promotional activities; and*
- (e) decided to review the adopted MNE Declaration follow-up mechanism in 2018.*

(GB.320/POL/10, paragraph 27.)