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Report on developments relating to the resolution concerning the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization

▶ Introduction

1. At its 344th Session (March 2022), the Governing Body adopted a resolution on the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO).¹ The resolution requested the ILO to provide all possible assistance to tripartite constituents in Ukraine. It also requested the Office to work with constituents in developing programmes in support of those who fled Ukraine. Further, the resolution decided to temporarily suspend ILO technical cooperation assistance to the Russian Federation except for humanitarian assistance and to suspend invitations to the Russian Federation to discretionary meetings of experts, conferences and seminars whose composition is set by the Governing Body.
2. Following a first report on the implementation of the resolution, which was submitted to the 345th Session of the Governing Body (June 2022),² the Governing Body requested the Director-General to prepare detailed options, including budgetary information, for the possible relocation of the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern

¹ GB.344/Resolution.

² GB.345/INS/5/3.

Europe and Central Asia (DWT/CO-Moscow) for decision at the 346th Session, as part of an effort to explore options to safeguard technical cooperation or assistance to all other countries in the region.³ As part of this decision, the Governing Body reiterated the demands of the initial resolution and requested the Director-General to continue to follow the situation in Ukraine and submit a report on the application of the resolution for the consideration of the Governing Body at its 346th Session (October–November 2022). This document responds to the Governing Body's decision, providing an overview of developments and their impact on the world of work in Ukraine, in neighbouring countries and globally. In addition, it highlights actions taken by the Office and options to be considered to give effect to the resolution.

► General developments

3. The Russian military aggression in Ukraine, which started on 24 February 2022, has continued for eight months. While initial attacks covered large parts of the country, including the capital Kyiv, active combat has moved mainly to the southern and eastern parts of Ukraine. Nevertheless, a climate of fear due to regular missile strikes across the country, as well as widespread destruction of infrastructure, continue to impact the social and economic lives of the people of Ukraine. Because of the evolving circumstances, refugee flows have started to abate. According to data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, by the end of September 2022, there were over 7.4 million refugees from Ukraine registered across Europe. An estimated 7.1 million people have been internally displaced.⁴
4. On 23 June 2022, the Council of the European Union (EU) endorsed the European Commission's opinion⁵ and granted EU candidate status to Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, starting the process of formal membership negotiations, which are expected to initiate in 2023. This was followed in September by an announcement by the President of the European Commission that Ukraine's access to the EU's single market would be facilitated. In early July 2022, Switzerland, jointly with Ukraine, hosted the international Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland. The event was attended by 58 international delegations comprising representatives of governments and international organizations. The Conference provided a platform to sustain the engagement and political commitment of about 40 countries in providing coordinated political, financial and reconstruction support to Ukraine; to launch the process of recovery and reconstruction; and to establish the principles on which the recovery and reconstruction process should be based.⁶
5. At the Conference, the Government of Ukraine also presented a National Recovery Plan focusing on resilience, recovery, modernization and growth.⁷ The plan emphasizes Ukraine's ambitions for EU integration and access to EU and G7 markets; proposes the creation of a business-enabling environment; calls for investments in human capital; and presents plans to ensure macroeconomic stability and national security. Discussions on a more detailed recovery plan in Ukraine have started, but to date, the involvement of the social partners has been limited. Issues related to the role of the United Nations (UN) system in the reconstruction

³ GB.345/PV/Draft, para. 189.

⁴ UNHCR, [Operational data portal – Ukraine refugee situation](#), as at 29 September 2022.

⁵ European Commission, [Commission Opinion on Ukraine's application for membership of the European Union](#), June 2022.

⁶ Ukraine Recovery Conference, [Conference materials](#) and the [Lugano Declaration and Principles](#).

⁷ [Ukraine's National Recovery Plan](#), July 2022.

process, employment promotion, workers' rights and social dialogue remained at the margins of the Conference discussions.

6. During the Conference, the President of the European Commission announced the establishment of a "Rebuild Ukraine" platform that the Commission would supervise alongside the Government of Ukraine. The platform would be responsible for endorsing a reconstruction plan drawn up and implemented by Ukraine, with administrative capacity support and technical assistance from the EU. To support the reconstruction plan, the Commission has proposed to set up the Rebuild Ukraine Facility⁸ as the primary legal instrument for the EU's support through a mix of grants and loans.
7. At the time of writing,⁹ Member States involved in supporting Ukraine have mobilized significant financial resources to support its economic, social and financial resilience, primarily in the form of macro-financial assistance, budget support, emergency assistance, crisis response and humanitarian aid. The level of combined funding disbursed and pledged by Member States and international financial institutions is estimated in the region of US\$43.6 billion.¹⁰ This includes additional emergency funding approved by the World Bank in June and August 2022, which now totals US\$13 billion, about half of which had been disbursed by the end of July 2022. Most of the funding consists of grants to sustain the delivery of essential services, including social benefits and pensions. Statements by senior officials of the World Bank emphasized the need to increase attention to reforms, transparency and governance as Ukraine prepares to achieve a sustainable reconstruction.¹¹
8. On 22 July, a UN-backed agreement was reached to facilitate the export of Ukrainian grain.¹² The Black Sea Grain Initiative aims to facilitate safe navigation for the export of grain and related foodstuffs as well as fertilizers, including ammonia, from the ports of Odesa, Chornomorsk and Yuzhny. It is facilitated by the Joint Coordination Centre, which was established on 27 July 2022 in Istanbul and which includes representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Türkiye and the United Nations. First assessments by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) show that the initiative has already helped reduce the prices of grains, cereals and oils.¹³ Furthermore, noting the grave circumstances of the surrounding military conflict, the ILO mobilized social partners and other UN agencies involved in the initiative to ensure that workers' rights are taken into account, including adequate staffing of vessels, and defined rest times and observance of occupational safety and health standards. Furthermore, the Government of Ukraine recently adopted procedural requirements to grant exemptions from military conscription to some seafarers, including but not limited to those involved in the Black Sea Grain Initiative and other seafarers currently at sea in international waters.
9. Concerns are also rising about the safety of workers in the occupied Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. While all plant reactors have now been shut down, the International Atomic

⁸ European Commission, [Ukraine: Commission Presents Plans for the Union's Immediate Response to Address Ukraine's Financing Gap and the Longer-term Reconstruction](#), May 2022.

⁹ This document was finalized on 29 September 2022. Should significant developments unfold after this date, the Office will provide an oral update to the Governing Body.

¹⁰ Data derived from Arianna Antezza et al., ["The Ukraine Support Tracker: Which Countries Help Ukraine and How?"](#), Kiel Working Paper, No. 2218, 18 August 2022.

¹¹ World Bank, [press release](#), 8 August 2022.

¹² [Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports](#), July 2022.

¹³ UNCTAD, ["Black Sea Grain Initiative Helps Stabilize Global Food Markets"](#), 12 September 2022.

Energy Agency (IAEA) warned in a report issued on 6 September 2022 that substantial risks remain to the safety and integrity of the plant. These concerns are mainly due to the continued shelling of nuclear fuel storage facilities and electricity lines that supply the power needed to cool reactors.¹⁴ In addition, from an ILO perspective, there are concerns about deteriorating working conditions and the safety of workers, mainly due to potential increased exposure to radiation, which would require continuous on-site and off-site monitoring and emergency preparedness measures, as recognized by the IAEA report.¹⁵ These alarms are shared by IndustriALL Global Union and its affiliated union, the International Nuclear Workers' Union Network. In addition, Ukrainian staff continue to work in the facility.¹⁶ However, at the time of writing, it is unclear whether the work is being performed voluntarily and without coercion, raising additional concerns about potential situations of forced labour.¹⁷

10. On 22 September, a high-level meeting of the UN Security Council took place with the participation of Foreign Ministers. The debate focused on legal accountability for potential war crimes committed during the conflict in Ukraine, with Secretary-General Gutierrez and others invoking the need for full cooperation with the International Criminal Court. Multiple participants also voiced concern over the looming spectre of nuclear war and further escalation through the imposition of referendums to determine the annexation of Ukrainian territories to the Russian Federation and through the partial mobilization of Russian citizens into the military.¹⁸ On 23 September, an update by the Chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine at the 51st session of the Human Rights Council confirmed that evidence concerning the commission of war crimes had been found.¹⁹ Alleged crimes include the use of cluster ammunitions, indiscriminate attacks against civilians and the military, a substantial number of executions, and the use of sexual and gender-based violence.

► Global impact of the crisis

11. More than eight months since the beginning of the hostilities in Ukraine, the dire and direct human costs of the conflict are mounting, including the loss of lives, displacement, family separations, loss of jobs and income, further constraining access for low-income households to essential health and education services and increasing vulnerabilities and inequalities. The conflict is undoubtedly jeopardizing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly targets on reducing poverty and inequality. In parallel, it is exacerbating pre-existing gender and socio-economic inequalities and may reverse gains in gender equality.
12. Just as several lower-middle-income countries were starting to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine erupted, altering the global landscape for migration and remittances. According to World Bank estimates, remittances to Ukraine are expected to rise

¹⁴ IAEA, *Nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards in Ukraine*, 2nd Summary Report by the Director General, 28 April–5 September 2022.

¹⁵ The Russian Federation and Ukraine ratified the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), on 22 September 1967 and 19 June 1968, respectively.

¹⁶ The nuclear power plant had 11,000 personnel before the Russian Federation invaded on 24 February. Ukrainian authorities are not disclosing the current number of workers, citing security reasons.

¹⁷ The Russian Federation and Ukraine have ratified all the fundamental Conventions.

¹⁸ UN, [press release](#), 22 September 2022.

¹⁹ Erik Møse, [Update by the Chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine at the 51st session of the Human Rights Council](#), 23 September 2022.

by over 20 per cent in 2022.²⁰ At the same time, personal remittances to many Central Asian countries are expected to fall sharply, given the high numbers of labour migrants working in the Russian Federation.

- 13.** Initial fears of a global food crisis²¹ are slowly abating, partly due to the resumption in the export of grains from Ukraine following the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The Food Price Index of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) fell for the fifth month in a row in August, but overall prices remain nearly 8 per cent above levels in August 2021.²² Nevertheless, the World Food Programme (WFP) forecasts that the number of people at high risk of food insecurity will increase to 345 million people.²³ Energy prices remain elevated, although there are substantial differences between oil and gas, as well as differences between regions. Europe, in particular, is suffering from significant gas price increases due to its higher dependency on supplies from the Russian Federation. Financial markets have somewhat stabilized since the onset of the conflict. However, there are substantial headwinds, as central banks are trying to reign in high inflation that is further fanned by the impact of the conflict through rapid interest rate increases, which are expected to hamper growth and possibly even plunge the world economy into recession. According to the World Bank, “the expected steepness of the slowdown is highly unusual: the projected global growth path over 2021–23 constitutes the steepest decline in growth following an initial rebound from a global recession since 1970”.²⁴ Low-income countries are particularly affected, as the conflict has driven up trade deficits due to higher prices in fuel, food and fertilizers that are primarily traded in United States dollars, increasing sovereign debt burdens.²⁵ The mix of continuing inflation and an economic slowdown is likely to prolong what the UN has termed a “cost-of-living crisis”²⁶ and is expected to lead to further strains in the labour market. To develop an adequate response and highlight the central role of employment in alleviating the cost-of-living crisis, the ILO has been an active partner in the work of the UN Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance.²⁷

► Impact on jobs, livelihoods and enterprises in Ukraine

- 14.** The impact of the hostilities on the Ukrainian economy has been dire. The National Bank of Ukraine projects a loss of economic output of 33.4 per cent in 2022. Estimates indicate that the conflict has already produced at least US\$114.5 billion in damage, with reconstruction costs estimated at US\$198 billion. About 72 per cent (US\$82.9 billion) of these damages are accounted for by residential buildings and public infrastructure, but enterprises have also

²⁰ World Bank, [press release](#), 11 May 2022.

²¹ UN, “Global Impact of War in Ukraine on Food, Energy and Finance Systems”, Brief No. 1, 13 April 2022.

²² FAO, [World Food Situation](#).

²³ WFP, [WFP Global Operational Response Plan: Update #5](#), June 2022.

²⁴ Justin Damien Guénette et al., [Is a Global Recession Imminent?](#), World Bank Group, September 2022.

²⁵ UN Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, [Global Impact of War in Ukraine: Energy Crisis](#), Brief No. 3, August 2022.

²⁶ UN Global Crisis Response Group, [Global Impact of the War in Ukraine: Billions of People Face the Greatest Cost-of-living Crisis in a Generation](#), Brief No. 2, 8 June 2022.

²⁷ The UN Global Crisis Response Group was established by the Secretary-General to help decision-makers to mobilize solutions and develop strategies to help countries address the interlinked crisis with food, energy and finance. The Director-General of the ILO is a member of the Group’s Steering Committee.

endured losses of at least US\$9.7 billion in physical assets, while the agricultural sector has sustained US\$4.3 billion in losses.²⁸ Active armed conflict, security risks, massive outward population flows, high inflation, supply chain bottlenecks and the destruction of public infrastructure and production sites are taking a significant toll on employment. Even after eight months of conflict, it is not possible to precisely estimate employment losses in Ukraine from the conflict. The ILO estimates that during 2022, employment will be 15.5 per cent lower than in the previous year, which equals 2.4 million jobs lost during the hostilities.²⁹

15. This does not negate the previous prediction of the ILO,³⁰ but implies that employment losses were much higher at the beginning of the conflict, with some workers having re-entered employment as parts of Ukraine have been liberated from Russian forces. Several indicators, such as increased job vacancies and a reduction in the number of firms currently not operating, point to such an improvement.³¹ Yet, employment growth will likely occur primarily in less productive and lower paid activities. Despite improvements, there are still substantially more jobseekers than vacancies, putting downward pressure on wages. The pace of recovery is likely to be modest and highly fragile. This, together with the substantial population decline during the conflict (due to refugee outflows), will result in employment remaining well below pre-aggression levels in the medium run, at least for the duration of the conflict.
16. The ILO estimates that approximately 1.6 million Ukrainian refugees were employed in Ukraine before fleeing the aggression, accounting for 10.2 per cent of the country's total workforce. The employment losses in Ukraine stemming from the refugee outflux are not spread evenly across occupational groups. Prior to the aggression, the main occupations filled by current refugees included clerical support workers, service and sales workers, professionals and associate professionals. In terms of economic activity, some 16 per cent of Ukrainian refugees worked in education and another 7 per cent in health and social services prior to fleeing.³² The refugee outflux is likely to have had a major impact on the workforce of these sectors and occupations in Ukraine.
17. A growing number of enterprises have restarted operations, but there are still vast differences between regions and sectors, and many enterprises have to cope with the loss of investments, infrastructure and employees, as well as annual inflation expected to reach 30 per cent. According to the National Bank of Ukraine, enterprise closures reduced from an initial 42 per cent in March to 16 per cent in July, but more than half of the enterprises surveyed are operating at or below 60 per cent of their pre-conflict capacity. While the Black Sea Grain Initiative has helped to bolster exports, the agricultural sector is expected to sustain much lower production levels due to a lower harvest and continued challenges during sowing season.
18. In sum, the combination of employment losses and lower wages are putting pressure on households to make ends meet. Reduced income and limited access to work have been cited

²⁸ The estimates are regularly produced by the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), in collaboration with various government agencies and cannot be independently verified. More details can be found on the [KSE website](#).

²⁹ For details, see the forthcoming *ILO Monitor*, 10th Edition. This is the central estimate, with a wide prediction interval of losses ranging from 8.2 to 22.7 per cent, at a 95 per cent confidence level.

³⁰ ILO Brief, *The Impact of the Ukraine crisis on the World of Work: Initial Assessments*, 11 May 2022.

³¹ National Bank of Ukraine, *Monthly Macroeconomic and Monetary Review*, September 2022.

³² UNHCR, *Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine*, Regional Intentions Report #2, September 2022.

as the two most prominent concerns of Ukrainians, and approximately half of surveyed people indicated that their wages had shrunk substantially.³³

► Impact on ILO constituents in Ukraine

A. Government of Ukraine

19. The situation of the main government interlocutors of the ILO in Ukraine, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Social Policy, has not changed significantly during the period covered by this document. They remain active and operational. The Government continues running large-scale income support programmes for all workers and entrepreneurs who lost their jobs or had to stop or relocate their business because of the conflict. Pensions and other social benefits are being paid on time. As public resources are depleting, the national economy is becoming more dependent on budgetary support from the international community, estimated in the region of US\$5 billion per month.
20. The State Employment Service has been a primary partner of the ILO in recent years with several collaborative initiatives, including joint work in designing inclusive labour markets. The large public agency with more than 500 offices and 9,000 staff is undergoing a significant transformation process because of the conflict. In response to the widescale displacement of the economically active population, the State Employment Service has launched a nationwide online application for unemployment benefits. The benefit is granted based on the digital analysis of the applicant's profile in different registries. The digitalization of unemployment benefits and their integration with other social services might lead to the closure or reprofiling of State Employment Service offices throughout the country. Other new services provided in the current situation include job matching for businesses relocated from the combat zones and grants to support start-ups. At the request of the Ministry of Economy, the ILO advises on the legal changes needed to reform employment services and supports the State Employment Service on the digitalization of employment services, career counselling, especially for vulnerable groups such as war veterans, and entrepreneurship training. The case of the reforms to the State Employment Service illustrates that support to Ukraine needs to include humanitarian, budgetary and development assistance in parallel, not a phased approach with development assistance starting at a later stage.
21. Another important government partner of the ILO in Ukraine is the State Labour Service. Under martial law, the mandate of the labour inspectorate is limited. The ILO has supported the labour inspectorate in adapting services to the emergency situation caused by the aggression against Ukraine. Two hundred labour inspectors were trained to provide psychosocial first aid. The State Labour Service initiated a campaign on the risks of human trafficking and labour exploitation for refugees and internally displaced people. So far, the campaign has reached out to an estimated 400,000 persons. New web-based services provide legal advice to employers and workers on work contracts and relocation of companies and workers. Furthermore, an additional US\$260,000 was approved to collect additional data on labour markets and social protection needs under the current crisis situation and to finalize an e-learning platform for technical and vocational education and training.

³³ National Bank of Ukraine, *Monthly Macroeconomic and Monetary Review*.

B. Ukrainian trade unions and employers' organizations

22. Trade unions, the two main union federations – the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine (FPU) and the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine (KVPU) – and the three main employers' organizations – the Federation of Employers of Ukraine (FEU), the Confederation of Employers of Ukraine (CEU) and the Association of Employers' Organizations of Ukraine (AEOU) – remain operational but have been severely affected by the current situation. A key concern for the social partners remains the loss of membership and the resulting negative impact on their financial situation. Many workers and member enterprises are unable to pay their financial contributions. Some of the organizations have lost their entire income from membership dues. Contrary to governmental institutions, the social partners do not receive budgetary aid from the international community except for some donations from sister organizations.
23. Despite these difficulties, the social partners have been able to react quickly in providing emergency assistance to internally displaced people and enterprises that had to relocate to safer areas of Ukraine. Ukrainian trade unions opened their vacation centres and sanatoriums for refugees immediately after the outbreak of the hostilities and have provided more than 13,000 bed nights over the past months, with support from the ILO and others. Employers have distributed food and medication to people in need in the regions most affected by the conflict, with financial support from the ILO.³⁴ The ILO recently decided to provide additional support to these humanitarian assistance efforts of the social partners with US\$500,000 from its regular budget technical cooperation reserve.
24. Employers' and workers' organizations have both expressed the need for strengthened social dialogue at times of crisis, since other mechanisms are not possible under the current martial law environment. They expect major post-conflict transformations of Ukrainian society that will require the modernization of their own structures, including the development of new services. Support from the ILO has been requested to develop new services for members.

► Action on the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme and development cooperation activities in Ukraine

25. During the first months of the conflict, the ILO focused on humanitarian assistance wherever it could complement the efforts of other UN agencies. The development partners supporting ILO work in Ukraine³⁵ agreed to repurpose a part of the approved budgets to humanitarian aid without any amendments to the relevant agreements. As a result, emergency repurposing for a total of US\$1.3 million has been completed and was delivered by the end of May – primarily for shelter for refugees provided by Ukrainian and Moldovan trade unions and for campaigns to prevent human trafficking and labour exploitation.
26. Planned support in the coming months will continue focusing on humanitarian needs, economic stabilization and the preservation of jobs, as all areas are critical, depending on the geographical areas of intervention in Ukraine. Following prior consultations with Ukrainian constituents, the ILO is continuing work on the six priority areas for interventions, including:

³⁴ Cyprus Shipping News, "The Ukrainian Federation of Employers is Helping Businesses to Keep Afloat", 25 August 2022.

³⁵ Canada, Czechia, Denmark, the European Union, Germany and Sweden.

(a) humanitarian aid; (b) inclusion of refugees in labour markets and education; (c) income support; (d) economic stabilization and job preservation measures in safe regions of Ukraine; (e) support for priority reforms of the Government of Ukraine (labour law, e-learning); and (f) support to trade unions and employers' organizations.³⁶ The cost of these priority interventions can partly be covered through reprogramming the current development cooperation portfolio, amounting to US\$13 million. All development cooperation projects have been repurposed and now support one or several of the above priorities. However, additional funding will be needed. Donors are focusing on humanitarian aid and budgetary support while the work on development and reconstruction is only slowly starting. A new initiative to support the relocation of small enterprises to safer areas was launched recently. The Office intends to field a multidisciplinary mission tasked with designing a comprehensive initiative supporting a job-rich recovery and reconstruction plan as soon as the security situation enables safe access and close engagement by national counterparts.

27. Recent legal initiatives to amend the Labour Code raised concerns within the trade union movement about restricting the scope of application of labour law and international labour standards. In July 2022, the Ukrainian Parliament voted for an amendment to simplify labour relations in small enterprises, which was signed into law by the President. Under the new law, workers in enterprises with fewer than 250 workers will have insufficient protections from trade unions. The Office is analysing the details of the new legislation and will follow closely its application in relation to martial law.
28. The ILO remains actively engaged in the work of the United Nations country team in Ukraine and contributes to the implementation of the recently finalized 18-month interim Transitional Framework, which supersedes the UN–Ukraine Partnership Framework expiring in 2022. The UN Transitional Framework will also provide the basis for integrated planning and action by the UN, spanning the spectrum of its interventions in Ukraine to reduce humanitarian needs and protect the country's development gains through a humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach. Concerning UN partnerships, the ILO continues to engage in active exchange and collaboration in all relevant forums, including the Regional Refugee Coordination Forum (under the leadership of the UNHCR)³⁷ and its working groups, and the Emergency Coordination Platform of the UN, World Health Organization (WHO) and Red Cross Movement. In addition, discussions with other UN agencies are ongoing on assistance projects in Ukraine, including with the UNHCR, WHO, FAO and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

► Impact on other countries in the subregion

29. The military conflict in Ukraine has had a detrimental effect on the national economies of Central Asia. The impact has been multifaceted, and the situation is still developing and highly volatile. Still, a few trends have been identified as they have emerged. Firstly, it has been anticipated that economic sanctions on the Russian Federation would force labour migrants from Central Asia to return to their countries of origin, which would cause pressure on labour markets and social protection systems. However, according to Labour Ministries in the sending countries, as well as the IOM, no significant increase in the return of migrants has taken place. Yet, a decline in remittances of more than 20 per cent is anticipated by the end of 2022 in these

³⁶ For more detailed information, see: [ILO response to the Ukraine crisis \(Central and Eastern Europe\)](#).

³⁷ [Terms of reference of the Regional Protection Working Group](#).

countries. For instance, in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, personal remittances are equivalent to 34.5 per cent, 32.8 per cent, and 13.3 per cent of national gross domestic product, respectively. Revised projections for 2022 indicate significant declines in remittances to Tajikistan (22 per cent), Kyrgyzstan (32 per cent) and Uzbekistan (21 per cent). Countries in the subregion have also experienced substantial inflation, although mostly in line with other parts of the world.

30. Regarding fundamental principles and rights at work, the military conflict in Ukraine might result in a setback in human rights and labour rights, freedom of association, child labour and forced labour, and might cause greater gender disparity and youth unemployment, as youth and women are among the first to be excluded from the labour market during possible economic downturns.³⁸
31. Sanctions on the Russian Federation have also led to the traditional trade routes for export being blocked, as the countries of Central Asia are mostly landlocked and therefore depend on roads and railways to transport their export goods, the majority of which go through the Russian Federation. This implies an additional burden on businesses and their ability to retain and create jobs (eventually for returning migrants) and to sustain decent jobs. Employers' organizations have requested analytics to understand the trends and develop policy measures. According to the National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyzstan, exports from January to June 2022 decreased 40 per cent compared to the same period in 2021. In the latest reports, Uzbekistan's exports recorded zero year-on-year growth (June 2022), but imports registered a 13.2 per cent increase.
32. Since the outbreak of the conflict, ILO constituents have focused on the following intervention areas: (a) macroeconomic analyses, forecasts and policy recommendations; (b) support in the design and implementation of anti-crisis measures; (c) design of and capacity-building for employers/businesses on survival strategies; and (d) support to implement and comply with international labour standards, including labour rights and freedom of association. The requests received from the tripartite constituents, although not explicitly connected to the military conflict in Ukraine, are somewhat linked to the economic and social repercussions of the conflict across the region. DWT/CO-Moscow integrates these topics in its regular activities with the ILO tripartite constituents. Further, DWT/CO-Moscow has initiated dialogue with the IOM's Country Office for the Russian Federation to prepare the groundwork for a labour migration survey focusing on migrant workers from Central Asia currently employed across the Russian Federation whose occupations might become at risk as a result of the current crisis.
33. The ILO has faced a challenge in replacing Russian donor funding for the subregional long-term project on youth employment promotion. The project was terminated in May 2022 following the March 2022 resolution of the Governing Body. This resulted in an abrupt end to planned activities (peer learning through subregional youth employment networks, regional youth employment programmes in the Russian Federation, and national training of public employment services). As a solution, the Office is using funding from the regular budget supplementary account for two countries (Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan) to continue priority activities, which requires reprogramming of activities in other countries.
34. DWT/CO-Moscow is implementing a new fundraising strategy for policy support and technical interventions prioritized by the constituents, which is intended to help them to withstand the

³⁸ ILO, *World Employment and Social Outlook, Trends 2022*.

consequences of the current economic downturn. This strategy involves approaching established donors on technical areas requiring urgent attention, such as labour administration and occupational safety and health, social protection and labour rights. This reflects the importance of these technical areas, which are critical in responding to issues linked to the conflict in Ukraine. Another feature of this strategy is creating partnerships with other UN agencies in the areas mentioned above and within the UN Joint SDG Fund's Development Emergency Modality, which was activated in July 2022 in response to the unfolding global food, energy and financial crises that were further exacerbated by the military conflict in Ukraine. Within this modality, DWT/CO-Moscow has already designed three active pilot projects in partnership with relevant UN agencies in Armenia, Georgia and Uzbekistan.

► Situation of ILO staff in Ukraine

35. The ILO continues to employ 14 staff members in Ukraine who used to work in Kyiv before the conflict (1 National Coordinator, 3 international staff members and 10 national staff members). All staff members are continuing to work from safe locations outside Kyiv. As the UN lifted the relocation status for Kyiv in July, the ILO is currently examining options for bringing staff back to the capital city. An ILO business continuity plan and a contingency plan have been prepared. The plan proposes a staged return of staff to Kyiv. Implementing the plan would require renting new offices that are considered safe according to UN security standards and purchasing additional safety equipment. The office space has been secured on a preliminary basis from the UNHCR (on the basis of co-location). An ILO Field Security mission to Ukraine took place in late September, which confirmed the adequacy of the newly identified office space and recommended the staged return of all staff to Kyiv pending the final decision of ILO senior management.
36. A further challenge is the limited capacity of the ILO to promote constituents' and the ILO's involvement in the crisis response, recovery and reconstruction efforts. With its limited footprint, the team in Ukraine is too small to participate in and contribute to all the different national and international coordination mechanisms established to support Ukraine. Experience from other countries shows that humanitarian assistance can quickly turn into development approaches, with the risk that other development partners will cover core ILO topics. One solution could be to temporarily add technical and coordination capacity to the Ukraine team.

► Options for possible temporary relocation of the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

37. Following the adoption of the resolution by the Governing Body on 22 March 2022, the ILO temporarily suspended its technical cooperation and assistance activities to the Russian Federation. The Office has also suspended invitations to the Russian Federation to all ILO meetings where participation is at the discretion of the Governing Body. These include technical meetings, meetings of experts, the International Conference of Labour Statisticians, the Tripartite Working Group on the full, equal and democratic participation in the ILO's tripartite governance, symposia, seminars, workshops and similar meetings. The provisions of

the resolution have also been applied to the participation of Russian applicants in training activities implemented by the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin.

38. At the time of writing, DWT/CO-Moscow has 11 positions in the Professional category funded by regular budget resources, 3 staff members in the national Professional category funded by regular budget resources and 1 national Professional staff member funded by voluntary contributions. There are 7 staff members in the General Service category funded by regular budget resources and 3 by voluntary contributions. In total, DWT/CO-Moscow has 25 staff members based in Moscow holding fixed-term or without-limit-of-time contracts. An additional 2 national staff members hold short-term contracts.
39. At the time of writing, DWT/CO-Moscow continues to operate from its present location with no significant impediments in respect of travel restrictions, visa issuance, limitations on the use of information and communication technologies or difficulties in completing financial transactions arising from the current situation. It continues to provide services to constituents around the subregion without operational problems or significant financial implications. For that reason, the Director-General does not see cause at this juncture for action in relation to the temporary relocation of DWT/CO-Moscow. Should the current situation deteriorate and require urgent attention and action, the Director-General will consult with the relevant ILO policymaking organs and determine the most appropriate course of action to safeguard the technical cooperation or assistance provided to all other countries in the subregion and exercise the required duty of care towards ILO staff. It should also be mentioned that the Office has received communications from the Governments of Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (the largest beneficiary of development cooperation funding) indicating their satisfaction with the services provided by DWT/CO-Moscow from its present location and noting the particular importance of continuing assistance without interruptions as well as the possible implications of a relocation.
40. As requested by the Governing Body at its 345th Session (June 2022), the Office presents below detailed options, including budgetary information for the temporary relocation of DWT/CO-Moscow, in keeping with the provisions of the resolution. The recalculated costs based on the present staffing situation for relocating the entire team, either to Geneva or Budapest, are US\$5.65 million and US\$2.94 million, respectively, for the first year. All considerations related to office space, purchases of equipment, the situation of locally recruited staff and their dependants, increased mission costs, and rental obligations for the present office premises in Moscow remain unchanged.³⁹
41. The Office also calculated incremental costs for the possible temporary relocation of DWT/CO-Moscow to two UN hubs in the region – Istanbul (Türkiye) and Almaty (Kazakhstan) – as well as Tashkent (Uzbekistan), where the ILO has a substantial development cooperation portfolio. The budgetary implications for the first year are estimated at: US\$2.11 million for Istanbul; US\$2.73 million for Tashkent; and US\$1.87 million for Almaty. As indicated in the Office's previous report of June 2022, office space in Geneva and Budapest can be made available at no additional costs, whereas in Istanbul, Tashkent and Almaty, adequate premises would need to be leased, with additional estimated costs varying between US\$180,000 and US\$250,000 a year. The indicated cost for all the above options implies moving the entire DWT/CO-Moscow staff to the identified locations.

³⁹ GB.345/INS/5/3, paras 35–36.

42. Another alternative could be temporarily relocating only some of the international professional staff to one of the above locations while the locally recruited staff continue to work in the present premises in Moscow or telework from within their duty station with adequate supervision. In that case, the additional costs for the first year are estimated to be: US\$1.90 million for Geneva; US\$1.04 million for Budapest; US\$780,000 for Istanbul; US\$990,000 for Tashkent; and US\$630,000 for Almaty.
43. Finally, when looking at possible relocation, the Office must also consider whether the ILO has a host country agreement governing the legal status and the privileges and immunities of the Organization and its staff or other persons working for the ILO. Further, the identified location must have the facilities necessary to operate effectively in the country, which includes, among other operational elements, adequate connectivity with the countries to be served, in conditions that are no less favourable than those granted to other UN organizations; this is the case with Switzerland and Hungary, which have in place a tested and verified operational infrastructure. As indicated in the June 2022 report to the Governing Body, the options for a possible relocation to the two UN hubs in the region or where the ILO has a substantial development cooperation portfolio would require the conclusion of a host country agreement, including provisions addressing the specific needs of the ILO for delivering development cooperation activities in the countries concerned and facilitating arrangements for in-country activities within the region.
44. Based on past experience, finalizing a host country agreement might take several months. In this context, it is particularly important to consider whether the country concerned has ratified the UN 1947 Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex I relating to the ILO. Among the three countries indicated above – Kazakhstan,⁴⁰ Türkiye and Uzbekistan – only Uzbekistan is a party to the 1947 Convention and its Annex I, which it signed in February 1997.
45. Should it become necessary to act on any of the above options to safeguard technical cooperation or assistance to other countries of the region, the Office will consult staff representatives on the implications for staff members, in accordance with existing mechanisms.
46. For the time being, other UN agencies with an active presence in the Russian Federation are maintaining their footprint in the country.⁴¹ Following the resolution adopted on 10 May 2022 by the WHO [Regional Committee for Europe](#), the 75th World Health Assembly passed a resolution reiterating most of the proposals made by the Regional Committee for Europe.⁴² In this context, it should be noted that the decisions of the Regional Committee on the possible relocation of the WHO [European Office for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases](#) based in Moscow remain pending. At the same time, a hybrid working arrangement has been put in place by the regional management. Meanwhile, the WHO Country Office for the Russian Federation remains operational within the parameters set by the resolution.⁴³

⁴⁰ There is no specific agreement with Kazakhstan governing the legal status of the ILO. In 2021, Kazakhstan deposited an instrument of accession to the 1947 Convention with reservations, which has not yet been registered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations due to the nature of the reservations, one of which concerns the ILO's exemption from custom duties.

⁴¹ [United Nations in the Russian Federation](#).

⁴² WHO, [EUR/RCSS/CONF./2 Rev.2](#), 10 May 2022 and [WHA75.11](#), 28 May 2022.

⁴³ WHO, [A75/A/CONF./6](#), 23 May 2022.

▶ Draft decision

47. In the light of the developments in Ukraine outlined in document GB.346/INS/14 and the resolution on the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine from the perspective of the mandate of the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted at its 344th Session (March 2022), the Governing Body:
- (a) noted the information provided in the document;
 - (b) reiterated its most profound concern at the continuing aggression by the Russian Federation, aided by the Belarusian Government, against Ukraine and at the impact this aggression is causing to tripartite constituents – workers, employers and its democratically elected Government – in Ukraine, and to the world of work beyond Ukraine;
 - (c) urged the Russian Federation again to immediately and unconditionally cease its aggression;
 - (d) urged the Russian Federation to meet all the obligations following from its ratification of ILO Conventions, including the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), as amended, in particular in relation to the repatriation of seafarers and access to medical care, and the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), in relation to the exposure of workers to ionizing radiations in the course of their work;
 - (e) noted the temporary suspension of technical cooperation and assistance to the Russian Federation, including the termination of the public-private partnership project, and invitations to attend all ILO discretionary meetings, including the training activities offered by the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin;
 - (f) expressed sincere appreciation for the efforts of the ILO staff in Central and Eastern Europe and in Ukraine for their continued work to support the tripartite constituents in Ukraine, and for the support and volunteering efforts of workers' and employers' organizations in Ukraine;
 - (g) continued to express its unwavering support for the tripartite constituents in Ukraine, and requested the Director-General to continue responding to constituent needs in Ukraine and expand the ILO's resource mobilization efforts;
 - (h) noted the detailed options, including budgetary information, and the considerations made by the Director-General in relation to the temporary relocation of the Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (DWT/CO-Moscow) and requested the Director-General to continue monitoring the operational capacity of DWT/CO-Moscow to safeguard the technical cooperation or assistance to all countries in the subregion; and
 - (i) requested that the Director-General continue monitoring the impact on the world of work of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and report to the Governing Body at its 349th Session (October–November 2023) on developments in the light of the resolution.