



TWELFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues

1. The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues (STM) met on 19 March 2007.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr L. Héthy (Hungary). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr G. Trogen and Mr J. Zellhoefer, respectively.
3. The Chairperson announced that, given the importance of the discussion on the future of the Sectoral Activities Programme, the Director-General had decided to address the STM. He also indicated some changes in the discussion of the agenda. As agreed by the Officers, there would be three additional points to be discussed under “Other business” (item 7), which would be introduced by oral presentations.

I. Future orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme and proposals for activities in 2008–09

4. In his introductory remarks, the Director-General stressed that he wished to be present with the Committee because it would begin to discuss the key question of the future direction of the ILO’s sectoral work. He congratulated the Committee for the preparatory work accomplished and looked forward to the discussion. Referring to his introductory remarks in the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee he reaffirmed his strong commitment to continuing the agenda for ILO renewal.
5. The document submitted proposed a new way forward. It suggested grouping sectors in a way that reflected the changes that globalization brought to the world of work. The changes would result in a more dynamic, timely and flexible setting-up of priorities, and thus make way for a Sectoral Activities Programme that would better address the restructuring of industries and services. Given the major shifts in the world of work, it was natural for the Office to reorganize its work accordingly.
6. The consultation process with the social partners and governments would be deepened through the introduction of advisory groups for each grouping of sectors. That would strengthen consultation with the constituents directly engaged in economic sectors and result in a more focused programme that would respond to the needs of workplaces, improve working conditions and assist in creating opportunities in specific sectors. In addition, improved linkages between the Programme and Decent Work Country

Programmes (DWCPs) had the potential to ensure that countries' tripartite priorities were addressed and that a maximum impact at the workplace could be achieved. That was very important, since he had witnessed that many countries had achieved strong social dialogue at sectoral levels, while at the national level social dialogue was still lagging behind.

7. The process that led to the adoption of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, had confirmed that a sectoral approach could facilitate the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda. A strengthened sectoral perspective was important as part of a wider effort in ILO reform, as it would reinforce its capacity to serve constituents.
8. He had asked the Office to improve the coordination of research to strengthen the knowledge base on sectoral issues and to reinforce in-house collaboration, in order to sharpen the focus of the Office for the sectoral dimension of the four strategic objectives. It was very important to use the convening power of the Organization and pair it with the knowledge base and networks created through sectoral work. In order to enhance that potential, it was crucial for the ILO to appoint the most competent people for the work on the specific sectors, so that they could exert leverage on existing networks and be respected counterparts.
9. The Chairperson thanked the Director-General for his statement and introduced item 1. Two issues were to be discussed: the future orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme and concrete proposals for main activities in 2008–09.

(a) Future orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme

10. Ms Walgrave, Acting Executive Director of the Social Dialogue Sector, indicated that, while she had initiated the process, it was now up to Ms Tinoco, who had taken over as Chief of the Sectoral Activities Branch, to introduce the paper to be discussed.¹ The paper sketched out the benefits of a sectoral approach and proposed a new way of working. It was based on extensive consultations over a long period of time and drew on ideas raised in the last session of the Committee.
11. The paper's main recommendations sought to increase flexibility and broaden consultation in order to increase the relevance of the Sectoral Activities Branch's work by more directly responding to the needs and priorities of the tripartite constituents. The proposal to group sectors was a departure from the rotation system. The existence of clusters or groupings would also allow more flexibility in order to take advantage of opportunities in specific sectors and to take account of sectors that were not currently covered. The groupings corresponded roughly to the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC); they had been created with a view to finding workable solutions and in light of the consensus that had emerged in prior consultations. Experience would determine whether changes in the composition of the groupings would be needed in future. The new approach also comprised a greater range of activities. It rejected the notion of "one size fits all" and encouraged programmes more closely tailored to sectoral characteristics. In that regard the global dialogue forums were proposed as a new type of activity for sectors which had reached a high level of social dialogue on an international level, and would not require extensive research and preparations.

¹ GB 298/STM/1 and the appendix to GB 298/STM/1/1.

- 12.** The steering committees would be of an advisory nature. They were intended to represent a deeper, better organized form of consultation without creating heavy, bureaucratic processes. They would facilitate the development of concrete proposals for the STM Committee within the groupings of sectors and intensify consultations, but not replace the STM Committee. Fuller involvement of the social partners in the consultation process would result in better proposals and decision-making. She acknowledged that the effective use of those committees would be easier for trade unions and employers' organizations than for governments, making them more bipartite than tripartite in nature, while providing for government participation, if governments so wished. The Office recognized that special efforts would be necessary to ensure that governments, as well as social partners, were consulted in a timely manner to enable their representatives to consult their experts at the national level. The development of DWCPs was another relevant change, implying a major shift of resources and activities to the national level. That approach required the integration of new activities and existing programmes into ongoing national work. It would foster sustainability and result in a better sectoral focus and better coordination between ILO field offices and headquarters.
- 13.** Mr Trogen recalled the importance of that item on the agenda and thanked the Director-General for his stimulating introduction. The Employers' group had always fully supported the Sectoral Activities Programme and considered it to be the ILO's window on the world of work. The Programme greatly contributed to the credibility of the ILO by directly involving company leaders in its activities. The Employers' group supported the new approach suggested and expected that it would increase the flexibility of the Programme and make it more topical. The proposed global dialogue forums would allow more focused meetings. Mr Trogen congratulated the Office on the paper, but pointed out that some of the Employers would have preferred a more business-oriented approach to be pursued in the introductory chapters. Although his group supported the suggestions made in the document, it was afraid that some proposals might create bureaucratic burdens. In addition, the range of activities seemed very broad and might need to be more focused.
- 14.** The Employers supported the proposal for grouping sectors, provided that that would not lead to an amalgamation and that each sector would remain independent. Cross-sectoral activities, in particular, required approval and should only be exceptional. Concerning the composition of the groupings, his group proposed to move "Basic metal production" and "Chemical industries" under the grouping "Energy and mining", due to sectoral similarities (for example, in relation to safety and health or shift work). The composition of the groupings should remain tentative and open to further modifications, if required. The speaker noted the importance of creating steering committees, but indicated that precise modalities concerning their functioning still needed to be clarified. In order to clarify their purpose, the term "advisory committees" should be used. The Employers would ensure that employers with practical sectoral expertise would take part on their side, but wanted to stress that final decisions could only be taken by the STM Committee.
- 15.** Mr Trogen added that global dialogue forums could meet on short notice to discuss topical issues, and therefore provide additional flexibility. Those meetings would not require sophisticated background papers and need not make resolutions or recommendations; notes on the proceedings would suffice. He stressed the need for a "critical mass" of employers' representatives taking part in the global dialogue forums in order to allow for a free and open discussion. While his group considered that global tripartite meetings remained a priority, regional meetings could also be promoted, if invited companies were faced with similar challenges.
- 16.** Mr Zellhoefer expressed his group's appreciation for the opening statement by the Director-General and thanked the Office, especially Ms Tinoco, for the consultations undertaken with the social partners. The Workers' group was very pleased with the

suggested future orientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme; the suggestions had the strong support of the Global Union federations. With the new course set, sectoral work would better contribute to the implementation of the ILO's strategic objectives and be more relevant to the needs of the social partners. His group fully endorsed the statement in paragraph 4 – it was crucial for the ILO to promote decent work at the sectoral level. The Workers endorsed the strategy outlined in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2008–09 and reflected on page 8 of the document. The Workers, for example, had also provided some financial support, such as the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) in the maritime sector accomplishments.

- 17.** The Sectoral Activities Programme offered a unique opportunity to promote good industrial relations and give effect to standards in the relevant sectors and services. It was welcome that the paper acknowledged public servants' rights to organize and bargain collectively. The full implementation of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), was a precondition, including in the private sector, for genuine social dialogue to happen.
- 18.** For the ILO to adequately address the challenges brought by globalization, it needed to be recognized as having the expertise to propose appropriate answers adapted to each specific sector. His group supported the strengthening of an Office-wide knowledge base on sectoral issues situated in the Sectoral Activities Branch, the renewed emphasis on sectoral research, efforts to gather sectoral statistics and the suggestions made in paragraph 35. The involvement of social dialogue specialists in sectoral work had long been advocated by the Workers. The rotation system was inadequate to deal efficiently with new emerging problems and priorities, and therefore he supported grouping sectors as suggested in the paper, as well as the suggestion to use the word "grouping" as proposed by the Employers. His group supported global dialogue forums as outlined in paragraph 13 of the Office paper, since they would allow social partners and governments, as appropriate, to deal with challenges through social dialogue. Thus, areas of common concern could be identified where work could then be followed up by the Office.
- 19.** The proposed new mechanisms of consultation were a crucial innovation. The advisory committees should avoid bureaucracy and ensure that social partners and governments were given a chance to participate in the preparation of proposals to be submitted to the STM Committee. Consultations should also cover emerging and emergency issues and thus improve the timeliness of the Programme. In order to start those committees, the Workers suggested that advisory committees would, at first, be bipartite. The Office would keep governments informed through the regional coordinators and it would be up to them to decide, as appropriate, whether and how they would like to participate. In the public service or education groupings, however, government participation needed to be ensured. Specific modalities on the involvement of governments in the advisory committees should be left open and solutions found in consultations following the Committee's session. However, it was now important to agree on the principle, since those modalities were an essential element of the reform. The Workers supported the suggestion to better link sectoral work with DWCPs, and stressed the need to build the capacity of the social partners, especially the trade unions, in the developing countries. Information on potential target countries, country projects and how the sectoral dimension could be integrated was most welcome. Mr Zellhoefer reaffirmed the satisfaction of his group with the innovative ideas presented in the paper; they would increase the Programme's visibility and efficiency. He believed that the STM in approving those innovations would be more than turning a corner, it would be setting a new dynamic course for sectoral work.

20. Mr Harris (Education International), speaking on behalf of the Global Union federations, expressed their support for the new approach and thanked the Office for a very productive, constructive and valuable process. He outlined three aspects of the suggestions that were of most importance.
21. Firstly, the new approach presented a rationale for the sectoral work of the ILO. Since sectoral activities made the ILO's work meaningful at the workplace level, sectoral activities needed to be closely linked with DWCPs. In the past, follow-up had always been a problem; it was now to be expected that not only the Sectoral Activities Branch, but the entire Office and its constituents, realized that they were also concerned.
22. Secondly, the approach developed provided new focus and dynamism. More flexibility allowed faster adaptation to the changing world of work. Specific approaches, in combination with a strengthened knowledge base, would allow the work to be better adapted. As could be observed from the paper, a lot of creative thinking had gone into it.
23. Thirdly, consultations were strengthened to foster ownership and engage constituents without creating a bureaucracy. It would allow more flexibility and reinforce the consultation processes in a constructive way. The consultations suggested would facilitate the identification of issues and priorities and ensure appropriate follow-up. The Global Union federations supported those proposals since they corresponded to the evolution of the world of work, one of them being the advent of strengthened global social dialogue between forward-looking labour organizations and responsible companies.
24. The representative of the Government of the United States, speaking on behalf of IMEC, thanked the Office for the report. He took note, as stated in the report, that sectors were the practical arena where important new developments affecting the workplace were played out. He indicated that his group would hope to see where sectoral activities would fit into the ILO's strategic framework more clearly set out, and how they could meet constituents' needs. Well-defined targets and performance measures would help in the impact assessment analysis of each programme. Follow-up was an essential part of the knowledge transfer resulting from sectoral activities. Therefore, IMEC welcomed the Office's proposal to regularly report on new developments, programme progress and results of research. The group also supported strengthening the collaboration and cooperation on sectoral issues inside and outside the Office, and the holding of shorter, smaller and more focused meetings. IMEC supported increasing the flexibility of the Programme by grouping sectors, but requested that the Office elaborate further on the proposed structure, purpose and function of those groupings. IMEC supported the idea of better integrating sectoral activities into the framework of DWCPs, as long as value added resulted. It had, however, serious doubts about the proposal to establish steering committees. It consequently proposed amending the point for decision in subparagraph 62(iii) to read: "taking account of available resources, encourage further exploration of the setting of priorities through the creation of clusters or groupings of sectors".
25. The representative of the Government of Mexico, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), welcomed the Office's paper and the commitment to fully develop the potential of the Sectoral Activities Programme. The analysis of the specificity of different sectors and contrast between public and private sectors were supported. The analysis of global trends and the sectoral dimension were eloquently illustrated in paragraphs 18 and 19. Mergers, acquisitions and migrations were variables that deserved consideration in many cases. The role of the ILO was clearly increasingly relevant at the sectoral level in respect of the aspects highlighted in paragraphs 26–31. GRULAC considered that the Sectoral Activities Branch had the high level of technical and professional competence needed to coordinate the ILO's work in that important field. GRULAC supported the grouping of sectors, and had previously expressed

its preference for flexibility in dealing with sectors, and its opposition to the rigidity of rotation and the consequent inability to reflect new realities. Regarding the proposed new mechanism to facilitate the participation of constituents in strengthening consultation and priority setting, GRULAC emphasized the need to contain costs while enabling the full participation of governments for practical results. With regard to the proposed steering committees, it was important to indicate what specific costs were envisaged, the number of people comprising each of the committees, when and for how long the committees would be meeting and whether their work had been budgeted for. Finally, GRULAC supported the recommendations in subparagraph 62(ii) to incorporate sectoral considerations into the DWCPs and relate that work to the action programmes, and urged the Office to coordinate its work in such a way as to be more coherent and efficient in the use of both its human and financial resources.

26. The representative of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supported the GRULAC position. With a view to minimizing costs related to the work of the proposed steering committees, he suggested that meetings could be organized during other events previously arranged by the ILO, such as the Governing Body or the International Labour Conference, and thus avoid duplicating travel and living expenses of members who might then be able to give advice to, and support proposals made, to be present at the regular meetings, and make the best use of time by also attending the committees. Because such committees' terms of reference should be to give advice to, and support proposals made to the STM, he agreed that they should be called advisory committees.
27. The representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, expressed support for the statement in paragraph 2 of the Office paper that the principles of tripartism and social dialogue could be of immense benefit in addressing issues of change in the world of work arising from political and economic decisions and technological advances. Most African countries had deployed those principles in handling issues arising from such changes as privatization, mergers, deregulation and restructuring occurring within some of those countries over the previous four years. Although several of those issues were cross-cutting, the important fact was that the changes that had occurred were sector specific. Subject to the realities expressed in paragraph 41 of the Office document, the Africa group supported the compression of the 22 sectors into eight groupings for greater strategic focus and to take into account the changes that had occurred as a result of globalization. The Africa group supported the point for decision, especially in respect of the incorporation of the outcome of sectoral activities into DWCPs and action programmes. If the principle of the new sectoral groupings were accepted, the details could be worked out later.
28. The representative of the Government of Kenya joined the Africa group in welcoming the Office paper. The wide-ranging consultations preceding the paper's preparation and the involvement of social partners and government representatives were good examples of social dialogue. The numerous and continuing changes in the world of work required corresponding efforts from the Office to adjust its sectoral activities to match emerging challenges and opportunities. His delegation was fully aware of the sectoral characteristics of work and that social dialogue could be effective. Considering the ever-changing contexts in which work was undertaken, the proposed reorientation was timely. He trusted that the new approach would offer opportunities for governments and social partners to foster the Decent Work Agenda within the framework of DWCPs in line with national priorities. He hoped that the Office would ensure flexibility in the coverage of existing and emerging sectors and that the new flexible approach would overcome previous rigidities related to automatic rotation of activities among 22 sectors.
29. The representative of the Government of France welcomed the proposed reorientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme as that would help the ILO to adapt to important

changes and to respond to urgent needs in different sectors. She noted that the Office paper included initiatives to ensure synergies and cross-cutting activities, highlighting the consolidated Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as an excellent example of synergetic collaboration within the ILO. She noted the comments regarding the global steering group and welcomed the proposal to group sectors together. While she supported the proposal to reorganize the 22 existing sectors into eight groupings as a basis for long-term planning purposes and the new reorientation of the Sectoral Activities Programme, she regretted that insufficient explanation had been provided as to the basis for the grouping of sectors.

- 30.** The representative of the Government of China, speaking on behalf of the Asia-Pacific group, expressed appreciation for the Office's efforts in compiling the proposal on the future of the Sectoral Activities Programme. Several constructive ideas were contained in the document. The global dialogue forums could, for example, provide a rapid response to relevant issues and requirements of sectors as they appeared and also demonstrated flexibility and the optimal utilization of resources. An approach that balanced a mix of meetings and action programmes should continue. In the selection of themes for sectoral meetings, due consideration needed to be given to the importance and timeliness of the subjects and their relevance to the ILO's strategic objectives. As for action programmes, they should be devised to address the needs of the member States in priority areas identified with the full participation of the constituents concerned. To ensure their success, such programmes should be focused, small in scale and manageable. Sectoral action programmes should, in particular, be fully integrated into DWCPs and the Office should endeavour to disseminate widely the successes and lessons learned from sectoral activities so as to broaden their impact. Finally, while his group welcomed the principle of sectoral regrouping and was, in that connection, endorsing subparagraphs 62(i) and 62(ii), it envisaged difficulty in setting up the proposed steering committees. The Office was therefore encouraged to continue consultations on the committees' structure, purpose and functions to enable the STM to make an informed decision on subparagraph 62(iii) at its following session.
- 31.** The representative of the Government of Argentina, speaking on behalf of MERCOSUR members, and the representative of the Government of El Salvador fully supported the position expressed by the representative of the Government of Mexico on behalf of GRULAC and endorsed the wording "advisory committees".
- 32.** Mr Trogen noted that an agreement could be reached on the underlying principles. Since his group deemed paragraph 62 to be too convoluted, he proposed a rewording.
- 33.** Mr Zellhoefer said that he had taken note of the Employers' suggestions regarding the groupings. It was important that the fundamental decision be taken at that session. His group had preferred the wording suggested by the Office, but could agree to the Employers' proposal. If the Committee were to defer the decision, it would create a very difficult situation for the Office.
- 34.** The representative of the Government of the Philippines suggested that the wording suggested by the Employers should be amended to state clearly that the advisory committees were tripartite and to give governments the opportunity to be involved in the process.
- 35.** The representative of the Government of the United States suggested the use of advisory "bodies" instead of "committees". Since no decisions on those entities' formal structure had been made, the broader term "body" was advisable. In response to the suggestion of the representative of the Government of the Philippines, he considered that a more flexible wording would be better in view of the fact that governments might not have to be as heavily involved as workers and employers. Since the wording "and assist the STM

Committee and the Governing Body to carry out their work” could have unintended, negative implications on the formal structure of the decision process, he suggested deletion.

36. Mr Zellhoefer supported the term “advisory bodies” and did not oppose the deletion suggested by the United States, despite the fact that the text had been drafted by the Office. In relation to the suggestion of the representative of the Government of the Philippines, he pointed out that in some sectors, such as public services, governments needed to be fully involved. Particularly for those cases, the word “tripartite” was not flexible enough. Governments would be involved through their regional coordinators, which would be informed by the Office.
37. Mr Trogen suggested that the text in subparagraph 62(iii) be replaced by “and make proposals to the STM Committee”.
38. The representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, as well as the representative of the Government of Kenya, supported the amendments.
39. In response to the interventions, Ms Walgrave explained that, as noted by the Legal Adviser, such an advisory body could not directly make proposals to the STM or the Governing Body. Thereafter, the Employers and Workers, as well as the Government members, agreed to the wording “in order to assist the STM Committee”.
40. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues invites the Governing Body to:*
 - (a) *recommend that the ILO’s sectoral approach be improved in order to make its activities more meaningful to its constituents and better serve the ILO’s four strategic objectives;*
 - (b) *encourage the incorporation of sectoral considerations into the general activities of the Organization and into the DWCPs and relate that work to the action programmes; and*
 - (c) *approve the setting of priorities through the creation of groupings of sectors and advisory bodies, taking into account available resources. Advisory bodies, composed of constituents and supported by the Office, would review the content and types of sectoral activities in order to assist the Office in its work with the STM Committee and the Governing Body.*

(b) Proposals for activities in 2008–09

41. Ms Walgrave introduced the paper.² She reiterated a comment made by Ms Tinoco and explained that the new approach would need some time for transition. Therefore, it was necessary for the STM Committee to select at least three or four activities in order to give the Office sufficient time to ensure that those activities could commence in 2008.
42. Mr Zellhoefer stated that his group supported the following proposals:

² GB.298/STM/1/1.

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- meeting of experts to adopt a revised code of practice on safety and health in agriculture;
 - tripartite meeting on promoting social dialogue and good industrial relations from oil and gas exploration and production to oil and gas distribution;
 - meetings of experts to adopt guidelines on port State responsibilities for the inspection of labour conditions on board ships; and
 - meetings of experts to adopt guidelines on flag State responsibilities under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006.
- 43.** His group also supported holding global dialogue forums, which should deal with vocational education and skills development for commerce workers. The revised code of practice on safety and health in agriculture should be in line with the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184); also, it should not only cover the enterprise level, but the whole sector. Regarding the follow-up to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, it was the understanding of his group that only one of the two maritime meetings proposed would need to be financed out of the Sectoral Activities Branch's budget. Finally, the Workers endorsed all follow-up proposals. Further, the remaining activities should be decided at the November 2007 STM meeting.
- 44.** Mr Trogen said that his group supported all the follow-up activities suggested as well as the following proposals:
- meeting of experts to adopt a revised code of practice on safety and health in agriculture;
 - tripartite meeting on promoting social dialogue and good industrial relations from oil and gas exploration and production to oil and gas distribution;
 - meeting of experts to develop a handbook on safety and health in gemstone cutting and polishing; and
 - meeting on vocational education and skills development for commerce workers.
- 45.** In response to a clarification by Ms Walgrave, who stated that the maritime meetings were crucial to the success of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, and that only one of the two maritime meetings proposed would need to be financed out of the Sectoral Activities Branch's budget, the Employers agreed to those meetings, with the condition that they should only count as one of the ten main activities to be conducted in 2008–09.
- 46.** The representative of the Government of the United States pointed out that, despite the decision to change the approach to advance proposals, the Committee had returned to the old way of doing things; the lack of discussion and prior consultations was confusing.
- 47.** The representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, recognized the relevance of the activities proposed. To her group, follow-up on the important issue of the migration of health workers should be given priority and additional countries targeted. Since agriculture was of great importance for Africa, the group supported both suggestions made for the sector. Although the proposal to hold a tripartite meeting on promoting social dialogue and good industrial relations from oil and gas exploration and production to oil and gas distribution was not relevant to all member States, it might foster better understanding of the issues. In view of the new challenges in relation to public procurement, suggested work in the construction sector was supported. Finally, the action programme on strengthening utilities was important for the region.

48. Mr Zellhoefer acknowledged the frustration of the representative of the Government of the United States, but reiterated that the Office needed decisions, so that it could start preparatory work for 2008.
49. In response to a question from the Employers' group, Ms Walgrave clarified that the proposals not adopted at the session would remain on the agenda for the following session in November.
50. Mr Trogen reaffirmed the support of the Employers' group for global dialogue forums in the private services sector and, while accepting that one could be on vocational education and skills development for commerce workers (instead of a meeting as originally proposed), he agreed that that would be the first in a series of forums in the private services sector which would be discussed later by the advisory body to be established.
51. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends to the Governing Body that:*
- (a) *it endorse the following main activities for 2008:*
- *meeting of experts to adopt a revised code of practice on safety and health in agriculture;*
 - *tripartite meeting on promoting social dialogue and good industrial relations from oil and gas exploration and production to oil and gas distribution;*
 - *meetings of experts to adopt guidelines on port State responsibilities for the inspection of labour conditions on board ships;*
 - *meetings of experts to adopt guidelines on flag State responsibilities under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006; and*
 - *a global dialogue forum on vocational education and skills development for commerce workers;*
- (b) *it endorse all the follow-up activities proposed in GB.298/STM/1/1; and*
- (c) *it instruct the Office that the governments of all member States should continue to be invited to participate in sectoral meetings held in 2008–09, for which the Standing Orders for Sectoral Meetings apply.*

II. Report of the Global Steering Group on ongoing Action Programmes

52. Ms Walgrave introduced the report of the Global Steering Group on ongoing Action Programmes,³ noting that the discussion during that meeting had focused on lessons learned from earlier action programmes, the replicability of results, sustainability and the purpose, frequency and effectiveness of Steering Group meetings. The statement by the

³ GB.298/STM/2.

Government of Romania had been inadvertently omitted from the report, but was available as an addendum.⁴

- 53.** Mr Zellhoefer observed that the three action programmes were proceeding well. The criteria for terminating action programmes would still need to be discussed. Referring to paragraph 10 of the report, the speaker noted that for many governments, public service concerns were not being made a priority. He added that unless remuneration and pensions were set at a level which would attract capable, dedicated people to the civil service and retain them, corruption could result.
- 54.** Mr Trogen found the report to be a good summary of the discussion. The Employers particularly welcomed the action programme on telecommunications, which had got off to a good start. He congratulated the Office on its fruitful cooperation with the WHO and the IOM on the action programme on health worker migration. In general, the Employers had found it difficult to get feedback from the field with regard to the action programmes, and therefore found it hard to garner support for them. It was important that action programmes be limited to clearly defined objectives and that adequate representation of the social partners be ensured so that they were constituent driven. The proper balance needed to be found between “steering” by the ILO and the availability of regional resources.
- 55.** The representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, noted paragraph 11 of the report and requested that the Office make available to all constituents the results of the action programmes on the public services and the health services. Most governments in Africa were in the process of establishing appropriate remuneration and pension packages for public service workers comparable to private sector benefits. Migration was a global issue of particular concern in the developing world. African governments had developed action plans focused on data collection and strategy development. Under a joint ECOWAS and ECCAS programme supported by UNICEF, West African and Central African countries had produced a draft subregional plan of action with provisions for migration management, as a strategy for combating the trafficking of persons in the subregion.
- 56.** Mr Zellhoefer agreed that the results of the work on health worker migration should be published, since it was an issue affecting many countries. Electronic provision of information might be one means of disseminating the results.
- 57.** The Committee took note of the report.

III. Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral meetings

Tripartite Meeting on Labour and Social Issues Arising from Problems of Cross-border Mobility of International Drivers in the Road Transport Sector (Geneva, 23–26 October 2006)

- 58.** Ms Walgrave introduced the two papers⁵ before the Committee. Priority would be given to implementing three of the Meeting’s conclusions: the development of an HIV/AIDS

⁴ GB.298/STM/2(Add.).

⁵ GB.298/STM/3 and TMRTS/2006/11.

training course for the road transport sector; the establishment of tripartite border-crossing monitoring and facilitation bodies; and the facilitation of visa processes and controls in the road transport sector.

59. She noted that there were similarities between the problems faced by international road transport drivers and by seafarers. A project steering committee had been set up to implement the above activities.
60. Mr Trogen considered the Meeting to be one of the more successful sectoral meetings; he confirmed the Employers' agreement with the conclusions and expressed his satisfaction with the early start on follow-up activities. Special thanks were due to the International Road Transport Union (IRU) Academy for its financial support for follow-up activities on HIV/AIDS.
61. An Employer member, Mr Tomek, who had chaired the Meeting, expressed his satisfaction with a very fruitful Meeting. The very quick reaction in following up the conclusions of the Meeting and the innovative approach pursued by the Office in that respect, through the establishment of a project steering committee and tripartite task forces, were commendable. The success of the follow-up activities depended on the availability of an appropriate budget to sustain the implementation process. He also referred to the sponsorship by the IRU Academy of the development of the HIV/AIDS training course.
62. Mr Zellhoefer endorsed the points for decision in the Governing Body paper and pointed out that the Workers' group also considered the Meeting to have been excellent. In that respect, special thanks were due to its Chairperson and ILO staff. Appropriate resources should be made available for the implementation of the follow-up activities; the ITF had also made a contribution towards the implementation of the follow-up activities on HIV/AIDS. He agreed with the follow-up activities and stressed the need to address the particular issues outlined in paragraph 2 of the conclusions.
63. A representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, indicated that Nigeria had participated in the Meeting, and thanked the Office for a very good report. She endorsed the points for decision. The Meeting had addressed major problems that were of special concern in Africa, and had highlighted the need for the capacity building of international drivers in the road transport sector in Africa on matters pertinent to HIV/AIDS prevention and protection.
64. A representative of the Government of the United Kingdom expressed the satisfaction of his Government with the Meeting.
65. Ms Walgrave thanked the speakers for their comments and assured them that the Office would take note of all remarks that had been made.
66. ***The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:***
 - (a) ***authorize the Director-General to communicate the Note on the proceedings:***
 - (i) ***to governments, requesting them to communicate this text to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned;***
 - (ii) ***to the international employers' and workers' organizations concerned;***
and

(iii) to the other international organizations concerned;

(b) request the Director-General to bear in mind, when drawing up proposals for the future work of the Office, the wishes expressed by the Meeting in paragraph 20 of the conclusions regarding follow-up activities by the ILO.

IV. Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), (Ninth Session) (Geneva, 30 October–3 November 2006)

67. The Committee had before it a paper⁶ prepared by the Office providing a summary, as well as the full report,⁷ of the Joint Committee's 2006 session. Ms Walgrave introduced the paper, recalling the origins of the CEART, its composition and its mandate, and informing the Committee that the part of the report dealing with allegations would be considered by the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards (LILS).
68. Mr Zellhoefer welcomed the report as an indication of excellent cooperation between the ILO and UNESCO. The comprehensive findings and recommendations covered the range of issues affecting teachers, and governments were invited to implement them. Among the highlights of the report were the treatment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its impact on teaching, teacher shortages, the recruitment of unqualified teachers, the need to recognize social dialogue in education as a basis for educational policy and academic freedom, protection of teachers from arbitrary actions and tenure for higher education teaching personnel. Unfortunately, teachers continued to be the victims of arbitrary and repressive actions, as numerous cases before the Committee on Freedom of Association attested. The report's spotlight on the continued growth in unqualified (contractual) teachers merited attention, as did the emphasis on deficits in teacher education programmes, which responded to some concerns expressed by employers. The information sitting organized with the participation of teachers', employers' and international governmental organizations was particularly useful and should be continued at future sessions. The Workers' group fully supported the CEART's recommendations and proposals for future action, and endorsed the point for decision.
69. Mr Harris (Education International) stated that the comprehensive report had surpassed the reputation of CEART for producing excellent reports. The executive summary captured the essential challenges to the teaching profession, government decision-makers and social partners. The report also showed the way forward for international organizations, especially the ILO and UNESCO, which should carefully consider the means of following up the recommendations through continued cooperation. The realization of the Millennium Development Goals would require education stakeholders to address the challenges facing the teaching profession, hence the need for stronger efforts to implement the 1966 and 1997 recommendations. The CEART report also contained an examination of long-standing allegations from teachers' organizations concerning non-observance of the 1966 recommendation's provisions in Ethiopia and Japan, and it was reassuring to note the latter Government's acceptance of a fact-finding mission to examine the contentious points. He

⁶ GB.298/STM/4.

⁷ CEART/9/2006/10.

commended the close relationship between the work of the CEART and the ILO's sectoral activities in education.

70. Mr Trogen agreed with the spokesperson of the Workers' group on almost all points, and confirmed his group's endorsement of the point for decision. An Employer member, Mr Anand, noted the importance of the report's recommendations for ILO decent work objectives and the eradication of poverty. However, the attitudes of teachers in many parts of Asia and Africa, and an outdated education curriculum, caused concern. Many aspects of entrepreneurship, skills development, employability and wealth creation were not part of curricula. The majority of teacher training programmes were outdated, not reflecting current reality and the needs of the twenty-first century, hence the need for improved initial training and professional development to modernize teaching approaches. The report and its recommendations did not sufficiently highlight those problems. More work needed to be done by the ILO and UNESCO to promote reform.
71. The representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, stated that the very useful report should be made available to all governments and education stakeholders in African countries. There were some contradictions between the report's findings and the reality of African countries, many of which fully complied with the report's recommendations. African countries had established mechanisms for social dialogue with teachers' organizations. Teachers' salaries were comparable to those of other public servants in the African region, and gender parity had largely been achieved. Policies for continued professional development of teachers were very important, as were efforts to deal with HIV/AIDS, a critical issue for many African countries. The rights of teachers, including in higher education, were fully respected in Nigeria, where teachers were very active. The Africa group supported the point for decision.
72. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom noted that one or two of the report's recommendations were not compatible with his Government's policy, but supported the point for decision.
73. The representative of the Government of India welcomed the report and supported Mr Anand's comments. The Government of India accorded a high status to teachers, whose salaries were on a par with similar occupations. Teachers were fully involved in education decisions. His Government supported continued ILO efforts to promote a high status for teachers, a matter of great importance for future generations.
74. The representative of the Government of Argentina emphasized his Government's traditional and continued commitment to a high status for teachers. He supported the report and its recommendations, as well as the point for decision.
75. On behalf of the Office, Ms Walgrave thanked the Committee for its comments, which highlighted the need for greater professional development of teachers, and efforts to improve their status.
76. ***The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body request that the Director-General:***
 - (a) ***transmit the report of the Ninth Session of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel to the governments of member States and, through them, to the relevant employers' and workers' organizations, as well as to relevant intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations concerned with education and teachers; and***

- (b) *take into consideration, where appropriate in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO, the Joint Committee's proposals for future action by the ILO and UNESCO, which are contained in its report, in planning and implementing future ILO activities, due account being taken of the programme and budget approved for 2008–09 and decisions regarding the future orientation of the sectoral activities programme.*

V. Report on the 92nd Session of the IMO Legal Committee:

(a) Progress report on the work of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding Claims for Death, Personal Injury and Abandonment of Seafarers

77. Ms Walgrave introduced the document,⁸ which was for information only.
78. Mr Trogen noted that the following session of the Joint Working Group should not take place before the entry into force of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006. A representative of the International Shipping Federation (ISF), Ms Shaw, indicated that she had concerns about that issue, based on discussions that had taken place during the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference. She added, however, that she was prepared to continue to discuss the issue.
79. Mr Zellhoefer noted that progress made by the Joint Working Group was very slow, taking into account the fact that a resolution concerning the abandonment of seafarers had been adopted by the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference. As a consequence, the Workers agreed with the IMO Legal Committee's decisions, and suggested that the resolution provided a possible way forward.
80. Ms Shaw clarified that her group had supported the resolution on the understanding that progress would only be made after the entry into force of the Convention.
81. The document being only for information, Ms Walgrave indicated that the Office had taken note of the debate.
82. The Committee took note of the report.

(b) Second meeting of the Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident

83. Ms Walgrave briefly introduced the document.⁹

⁸ GB.298/STM/5/1.

⁹ GB.298/STM/5/2(Rev.).

84. Mr Zellhoefer informed the Committee that his group was pleased with the document and agreed with the points for decision. He considered that the adoption of the Terms of Reference by the present session of the Governing Body was important, and should include the Chinese proposal. The IMO Legal Committee should be requested to approve the Terms of Reference, in a similar manner, at its following session.
85. Mr Trogen agreed with the Workers.
86. A representative of the Government of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, indicated that she approved the Terms of Reference, with the possible addition of a time frame, and that the recommendation made by China might not be necessary.
87. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*
- (a) *take note of the information provided;*
 - (b) *approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Joint Working Group, as contained in the appendix to the document before the Committee; and*
 - (c) *further approve, subject to the IMO incorporating the proposal noted in paragraph 7 of the document before the Committee, the amendment of the revised Terms of Reference accordingly.*

VI. Strengthening information sharing and research capacity

88. Due to time considerations, Ms Walgrave indicated that there would be only a short presentation of one of the aspects of the paper,¹⁰ the *SECTORSource* database, which was then shown on the overhead projector.
89. Mr Zellhoefer thanked the Office for the paper and presentation on that item, which coincided with the new orientations for the Sectoral Activities Programme.
90. The Workers' group supported that initiative as a basis for improving statistical work in SECTOR and the ILO. It was hoped that the database could be soon converted, with sufficient resources, to an Oracle format to make it more widely accessible, with translations into Arabic, Russian and Chinese.
91. The database on export processing zones (EPZs) was also important as a knowledge base for the InFocus Initiative on EPZs. Although the information was presented as provided by EPZ authorities, without any possibility of verifying it, it did give orders of magnitude and was indicative of incentives provided by authorities to attract investors. It also had easy-to-use cross-references to Committee on Freedom of Association cases related to EPZs.
92. Finally, his group wondered if the information would be made available through the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).
93. The Employers welcomed the database presentation, thought it was a good idea, hoped it would be updated and wished the Office success with its continuation.

¹⁰ GB.298/STM/6.

94. The Committee took note of the report.

VII. Other questions

(a) Further developments in relation to the drafting of an international instrument on shipbreaking/ ship recycling

95. Ms Walgrave briefly introduced the paper for discussion¹¹ which, because of difficulties in having the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) Correspondence Group accept the wording of ILO provisions on occupational safety and health, was proposing to send a tripartite delegation to the following session of the Intersessional Working Group on Ship Recycling and to the MPE.

96. Mr Zellhofer noted that the draft IMO Convention on Ship Recycling, as it now stood, remained inconsistent with various ILO occupational safety and health standards. However, the Workers were satisfied that their group could participate in IMO meetings through the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), as also was the case for the Employers through the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS). Therefore, he did not see that there was real value added by a tripartite delegation and suggested the deletion of subparagraphs 6(b) and 6(c). However, if a high-level Office delegation were sent, the IMO might steer more towards ILO standards. The Workers supported holding a third session of the Joint Working Group on Ship Scrapping.

97. The Employers also agreed with the Workers and saw no need for a tripartite delegation.

98. The representative of the Government of Nigeria was concerned that shipbreaking was carried out mainly in developing countries. Workers were exposed to unacceptable hazards, such as exposure to asbestos dust, without protection or follow-up health surveillance. Whether it was shipwreck removal or shipbreaking, any work should be carried out in accordance with ILO standards. Nigeria favoured the points for decision but emphasized that anyone appointed to a tripartite delegation should be knowledgeable.

99. The representative of the Government of Japan supported the Workers' proposal to delete subparagraphs 6(b) and 6(c). His Government appreciated the contribution of the Office to the work of the IMO.

100. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues recommends that the Governing Body:*

(a) *take note of the above developments;*

(b) *request the Office to report to the Committee on relevant developments; and*

(c) *subject to the decision to be taken by the Marine Environment Protection Committee at its 56th Session, authorize the Office to host the Third Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Ship Scrapping, with terms of reference to be agreed.*

¹¹ GB.298/STM/7/1.

(b) Update on the ILO's participation in the development by IMO of safety recommendations for small fishing vessels

101. Mr Wagner, a representative of the Office, recalled that, at its 297th Session, the Governing Body, inter alia, had invited Governments and the Employers' and Workers' groups each to nominate a representative to participate, at no cost to the ILO, in the work of the related MEPC Correspondence Group and in the ILO delegation to the 50th Session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels' Safety (30 April–4 May 2007). The Governing Body would consider the nominations under agenda item 17, "Composition and agenda of standing bodies and meetings".

102. The Committee took note of the oral report.

(c) Information on the revision of the *International Medical Guide for Ships*

103. Ms Walgrave updated the Committee on the ongoing revision by the WHO of the *International Medical Guide for Ships* (IMGS). The first draft of the third edition of that critically important publication had already been circulated to the Shipowners' and Seafarers' secretariats of the Joint Maritime Commission and their comments had been taken into consideration. After a meeting with the WHO, the Office suggested, in order to expedite the publication of the Guide, that the revised Guide could be endorsed by the Governing Body at its June 2007 session after consideration by an informal meeting involving representatives of the Shipowners' and Seafarers' groups of the Joint Maritime Commission as well as the WHO, the IMO and the Office. It was proposed that that meeting should be held during the month of April at no cost to the Office.

104. A representative of the ISF, Ms Shaw, said that the Shipowners welcomed the revision of the Guide but were very concerned about the late stage at which the social partners were brought into the process. She also expressed concern that there was no paper on the issue and that the information was only being provided orally.

105. Mr Zellhoefer said that the Workers recognized the need to revise the Guide but shared the concern of the Shipowners over the timing of the involvement of the social partners.

106. Ms Tinoco explained that the Office had stressed to the WHO secretariat that the endorsement process should involve formal consultations with the social partners through the ILO; the Office would circulate the WHO's complete text to the Shipowners and Seafarers as soon as it was received. If general agreement on its form and content were reached at the informal meeting to be convened, it would be submitted to the Governing Body at its June 2007 session; otherwise the Office would submit it to the Governing Body at a later date.

107. The Committee took note of the oral report.

(d) Update on the promotion of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

108. Ms Tinoco drew attention to the work of the Office to promote the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, which would be discussed under agenda item 15, "Report of the Director-General". For 2007, the Sectoral Activities Programme would focus on key priorities: (1) preparation of flag and port State control enforcement guidelines;

(2) involvement of field offices in the promotion of the Convention, including the preparation by SECTOR of promotional materials; and (3) follow-up of resolutions adopted by the 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference in February 2006.

- 109.** A representative of the ISF, Ms Shaw, commended the Office on its efforts to promote the Convention and called for more involvement by SECTOR in that work. She noted, however, that the Shipowners did not attach high priority to the resolution concerning social security.
- 110.** Mr Zellhoefer expressed concern about having received that information only in oral and not in written form. He acknowledged the oral report and reminded the Committee that it was not the forum for assigning priorities to Conference resolutions.
- 111.** The Committee took note of the oral report.

Geneva, 21 March 2007.

Points for decision: Paragraph 40;
Paragraph 51;
Paragraph 66;
Paragraph 76;
Paragraph 87;
Paragraph 100.