



SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Standing Orders of the International
Labour Conference**

**(b) Practical arrangements for the examination
of the Global Report presented under the
Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on
Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**

1. The Global Report prepared under the responsibility of the Director-General is one of the two aspects of the promotional follow-up to the Declaration intended to provide a dynamic global picture relating to each category of fundamental principles and rights and to serve as a basis for determining priorities for the assistance provided by the Organization to its constituents and assessing the effectiveness thereof. The report is submitted to the International Labour Conference, which may examine it, pursuant to the provisions of Part III.B.2 of the Annex on the follow-up to the Declaration, “separately from reports under article 12” of its Standing Orders and “during a sitting devoted entirely to this report, or in any other appropriate way”.
2. The first two reports were examined under ad hoc arrangements, recommended by the ILO Governing Body and approved by the Conference, permitting plenary sittings devoted entirely to the discussion of the Global Report. These arrangements were adopted on a provisional basis,¹ subject to review in the light of experience.
3. The Governing Body should therefore take a decision concerning arrangements for the examination of the Global Report which can be submitted for approval to the 90th Session (June 2002) of the Conference.

¹ Docs. [GB.276/LILS/1](#) and [GB.276/10/1](#), paras. 20-55; [GB.279/LILS/1](#) and [GB.279/11/1](#), paras. 2-19.

Arrangements for the examination of the first two reports

4. The ad hoc arrangements adopted so far by the Conference provided for holding plenary sittings entirely devoted to the discussion of the report. While following the general format of a plenary sitting of the Conference, these arrangements permit this report to be dealt with separately from reports under article 12 of the Standing Orders (Reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General). Dealing with the report separately implies in particular that speakers are not subject to the limitations of article 12, paragraph 3, of the Standing Orders regarding the number of statements by each speaker in a plenary sitting or to those of article 14, paragraph 6, concerning time limits for speeches. These two provisions have been suspended, in line with the procedure laid down in article 76 of the Standing Orders, inasmuch as that was necessary for the discussion of the Global Report at the 88th and 89th Sessions of the Conference.
5. On a practical level, the Global Report was examined during the second week of the Conference² during two plenary sittings. The arrangements allowed the possibility of convening a third meeting on the same day or another day but this possibility was not used, the second meeting having been extended to enable all the registered speakers to take the floor. Finally, the Officers of the Conference agreed on special arrangements regarding the length of speeches (ten minutes for group spokespersons, five minutes for delegates) and the division of the available time into three phases (opening statements by spokespersons of the Employers and Workers and other delegates; statements by delegates; closing statements by spokespersons).
6. In addition, to facilitate an interactive discussion and allow conclusions to be reached, the Director-General included suggested points for discussion in the second Global Report. The Employers' and Workers' spokespersons and a number of delegates used these points in their statements, in particular with regard to suggestions concerning priorities and future plans of action.
7. Numerous suggestions have been put forward by the Employers' and Workers' spokespersons and by a number of governments to improve future discussions and give them an interactive character, which has been lacking in spite of the arrangements made.³ These suggestions are as follows:
 - (a) schedule sittings devoted to the Global Report at the beginning of the second week in order to increase participation (in particular that of ministers);
 - (b) use the services of persons familiar with the purpose and scope of the Declaration and able to facilitate and direct an interactive discussion on matters of general policy or technical cooperation;
 - (c) in addition to the day devoted to the Global Report (for prepared speeches), plan a more practical meeting to enable discussion of the situation of particular countries for preparing country programmes;

² The first Global Report ("Your voice at work") was examined on the Tuesday of the second week and the second Global Report ("Stopping forced labour") was discussed on the Friday of the second week in accordance with the wishes of the Governing Body.

³ ILC, 89th Session, Geneva, 2001, *Provisional Record No. 12*.

- (d) draw up the list of speakers in advance;
 - (e) organize sittings in a smaller room to allow better interaction.
8. Implementing some or all of these suggestions, if they were adopted, would not be compatible with renewing the previous arrangements. In addition, some suggestions are of a practical nature and do not necessitate changes to the Standing Orders of the Conference. Others, however, would involve changes even to the amended format of plenary sittings of the Conference.

The proposed regulatory arrangements

9. It is agreed that the Global Report of the Director General must be discussed in line with the promotional objective stated in paragraph 1 above and, in particular, which enables plans of action to be outlined in the area of technical cooperation, the consequences of which must be drawn by the Governing Body. The Conference does not have an explicit mandate to take decisions on this subject during the discussion but it must at least identify the trends that will enable the Office to prepare the decision-making by the Governing Body. Hence, the solution that would involve holding the discussion of the Global Report in a Conference committee, which was previously discarded, is not technically necessary. On the other hand, certain additional adjustments permitting a plenary discussion of the Global Report might facilitate the progress of the discussion in accordance with the wish expressed on several occasions by the constituents. Thus, the discussion of the Global Report might take place, wholly or partially, in the context of a Committee of the Whole that the Conference might decide to set up at its first session.
10. The Conference Committee of the Whole might be made subject to certain provisions of the Standing Orders, subject to specific exclusions or particular provisions:
- (a) *Participation in the work of the Committee of the Whole*: Each government represented at the Conference, the members designated by the Employers' and Workers' groups as well as any person designated in article 2, paragraph 3, subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (f), (h), (j) and (k) of the Conference Standing Orders ⁴

⁴ This paragraph reads as follows:

3. Apart from delegates and advisers the only persons permitted to enter the body of the hall shall be:

- (a) ministers whose departments deal with the questions discussed by the Conference and who are not delegates or advisers;
- (b) representatives of official international organisations which have been invited by the Conference or the Governing Body to be represented at the Conference;
- (c) members of the Governing Body who are not delegates or advisers;
- [...]
- (f) the Director-General of the International Labour Office and the officials of the Secretariat of the Conference;
- [...]
- (h) the secretaries of the Employers' and Workers' groups;

would have the right to attend committee meetings. The chairperson of the committee may allow representatives of non-governmental international organizations to make statements under the conditions laid down in the Standing Orders.⁵

- (b) *Chair of the Committee of the Whole*: The Committee of the Whole might be chaired either by the President or a Vice-President of the Conference on an alternating basis. The chairperson opens and closes the sitting, directs the debate, ensures that order is maintained and gives or removes the floor in line with the provisions of the Standing Orders. The Director-General or one of his representatives might intervene to facilitate the debate within the Committee. The chairperson might report on the debate to the Conference.
- (c) *Right to speak*: If the amendment to article 14, paragraph 6 of the Standing Orders, proposed in document [GB.282/LILS/2/1](#), was adopted by the Conference, it would ensure the necessary flexibility for the Committee of the Whole to decide, if necessary, on the time limits for the various speakers.
- (d) *Stenographic record*: A record of the meetings of the Committee of the Whole would be published in the Record of Proceedings of the Conference.

Practical arrangements for the examination of the Global Report

11. The regulatory adjustments proposed above will not in themselves make for interactive discussion or enable a high level of participation to be maintained, even though they might contribute to it. Practical arrangements for facilitating an interactive discussion must be made.
12. The examination of the Global Report might take place in three phases:
 - (a) an initial “general” discussion would have the aim of allowing the groups, the ministers present at the Conference and the delegates to convey their general comments on the report. This discussion, which ought to take place in the second week of the Conference, might be held either in a plenary sitting of the Conference or in the Committee of the Whole;

[...]

- (j) representatives of non-governmental international organisations with which it has been decided to establish consultative relationships and with which standing arrangements for such representation have been made and representatives of other non-governmental international organisations which have been invited by the Governing Body to be represented at the Conference;
- (k) representatives of liberation movements recognised by the organisation of African Unity or the League of Arab States which have been invited by the Conference or the Governing Body to be represented at the Conference.

⁵ The Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole might permit representatives of non-governmental international organizations with which the International Labour Organization has established consultative relationships and with which standing arrangements for representation at the Conference have been made, and representatives of other non-governmental international organizations which have been invited to be represented, to make or circulate statements on the questions being considered by the Committee of the Whole (see article 14, para. 10, and article 56, para. 9, of the Standing Orders).

- (b) a second phase might take place in the context of the Committee of the Whole or soon after this “general” discussion, or, at the latest, on the first day of the third week. This sitting should focus on the points for discussion suggested by the Director-General in his Report and, if appropriate, on any proposals made during the general discussion;
 - (c) finally, at a plenary sitting, the chairperson might report on the discussions of the Committee of the Whole (the debates of which would be reproduced in a *Provisional Record*), the outline conclusions being drawn by the Director-General during his reply to the Conference concerning the discussion of his Report(s).
- 13.** Even if the adjustments to the Standing Orders were adopted at the 90th Session of the Conference, they would probably be unable to enter into force before the discussion of the Global Report, scheduled for the middle of the second week. In addition, the Conference should adopt a stance on the practical arrangements described above. It is therefore necessary for the Governing Body to invite the Conference to adopt, at its 90th Session, ad hoc arrangements that would cover the above points, taking account of the views expressed by the Committee.
- 14.** *The Committee may wish to invite the Governing Body to request the Office to prepare a document for its 283rd Session (March 2002) stating, in the light of the views expressed by the Committee, the ad hoc arrangements for the examination of the Global Report that the Conference will be invited to adopt at its 90th Session.*
- 15.** The Governing Body will be able to review the matter of the arrangements for the examination of the Global Report at its 285th Session (November 2002) in the light of the discussions which will have taken place at the 90th Session of the Conference and decide on the regulatory follow-up that ought to be implemented.

Geneva, 11 October 2001.

Point for decision: Paragraph 14.