Resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting in Geneva at its 104th Session, 2015,

Having undertaken a general discussion on the basis of Report IV, Small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation,

1. Adopts the following conclusions; and
2. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to give due consideration to them in planning future work and to request the Director-General to take them into account when preparing future programme and budget proposals and to give effect to them, to the extent possible, when implementing the Programme and Budget for the 2016–17 biennium.

Conclusions concerning small and medium sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation

The contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises to decent and productive employment creation

1. Micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises are vital to achieving decent and productive work and prosperity. Globally, they account for two-thirds of all jobs and also create the majority of new jobs. They contribute to economic growth, along with other enterprises, spur innovation and economic diversification, and provide livelihoods.

2. Small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) promotion is a means to create more and productive employment and decent work for all. Sustainable SMEs grow productive jobs and income, reduce poverty and inequalities, and overcome decent work deficits. The Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189); the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202); the Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises adopted by the 96th Session (2007) of the International Labour Conference; the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up (1998); the Global Employment Agenda (2003); and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) continue to provide guidance to interventions for SME promotion.

3. SMEs vary by size, sector, rural versus urban economy, degree of formality, turnover, growth and age of the enterprise as well as countries. The diversity of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises poses a challenge for policy formulation. There are no one-size-fits-all SME policies.

4. Member States should define SMEs in consultation with the representative organizations of employers and workers, taking into account the national social and economic conditions. These definitions are usually based on the number of employees, the annual turnover or the value of assets of enterprises.

5. There is solid empirical evidence on the number of jobs created by SMEs, particularly for formal enterprises. There is insufficient and inadequate evidence on the quality of jobs in SMEs as well as on productivity and sustainability of SMEs.

1 Adopted on 12 June 2015.
IDENTIFYING AND OVERCOMING THE CONSTRAINTS FACED BY SMEs AND THEIR WORKERS

6. Constraints faced by SMEs vary significantly, and should be analysed within their specific national context and differentiated by enterprise characteristics. Recognizing that an enabling environment is vital for the SME to grow and reduce decent work deficits, member States should collect and periodically update information on SMEs, differentiated by enterprise characteristics, in order to lay the foundation for evidence-based policy making in this area.

7. Where data are available, they indicate that decent work deficits are generally more significant in SMEs than they are in large establishments. However, it is necessary to have more information on the scale and scope of these deficits. Substantial progress has been made on an operational definition of the quality of employment. While the Governing Body of the ILO has not yet agreed on the ILO Decent Work Indicators, these provide a useful reference framework for assessment, which member States may use to generate information specific to SMEs. Workers in SMEs in some contexts are fully or partially excluded from labour legislation, including the rights to freedom of association and to collective bargaining. Supporting legislation should ensure appropriate coverage and protection of all categories of workers and economic units.

8. An enabling environment is particularly important for overcoming constraints faced by SMEs and their workers and for the creation of decent and productive employment. An enabling environment is crucial for new enterprise formation and sustainability. The ILO’s methodology for creating an Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (EESE) is a promising tool that can be used to establish roadmaps for reforms, based on social dialogue, including measures to improve conditions for workers, as well as SMEs’ sustainability. An enabling environment for sustainable enterprises seeks at once to improve the economic prospects of SMEs, overcome decent work deficits for workers and ensure that economic activities are environmentally sustainable.

9. Specific measures to improve the enabling environment should be in line with, but not limited to, the 2007 Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises. They should include:

(a) Simplifying overly complex regulations, in consultation with the most representative organizations of employers and workers, while ensuring protection and working conditions for workers. New rules and regulations should be designed with regard to their possible effects on SMEs and the well-being of workers in SMEs before they are introduced.

(b) Improving SMEs’ access to finance through measures such as loan guarantees, start up grants, facilitation of crowd-funding or group funding, sector-specific financial institutions, improved financial literacy or improved financial inclusion as part of policies for the formalization of micro- and small enterprises.

(c) Clustering, networking, linking into technology platforms, and value chain and local economic development to address the lack of scale and scope of SMEs. Cooperatives and mutual associations can be effective ways of achieving scale and a better position in supplier and end markets, as well as mobilizing savings and enhancing social security coverage. Special attention should be given to creating an enabling environment for cooperatives, in particular in rural areas.

(d) Addressing decent work deficits in SMEs such as the constraints to the exercise of the fundamental rights of workers and achieving better working conditions. Clear measures to overcome these deficits are needed.

(e) Public investment in infrastructure as well as education and training and technology, on which SMEs rely. Improvements can most effectively be achieved by embedding specific SME policies in national development
plans and generic policies. This includes special attention to the modernization of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems, lifelong learning and to quality apprenticeship schemes in cooperation with social partners to respond to the skills needs of SMEs and offer the opportunity to link vocational and entrepreneurship training. For small traders, simplified access to public trading areas and business zoning availability assist fair competition.

(f) Supporting the formalization of SMEs in line with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204).

10. SMEs are one of the main providers of employment but have significantly lower levels of productivity. Upgrading to higher value added activities and improved total factor productivity, with good workplace relations to enhance product quality and improve resource and energy efficiency, can help overcome this constraint.

11. Occupational safety and health (OSH) frameworks should be adapted to establish a preventative safety and health culture and to address the disproportionate incidence of occupational accidents and health problems in SMEs. This not only prevents human tragedy but is also highly cost-effective and improves productivity. This requires a proper legal framework, appropriate enforcement capacity, readily accessible assessment tools, customized guidance as well as effective outreach to SMEs and their workers to overcome information gaps.

WHAT WORKS? EFFECTIVE SME POLICIES TO CREATE PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK

12. Well-designed SME policies in line with national circumstances can help to create more and better jobs and contribute to sustainable economic growth. They should align with sound macroeconomic policies, strategies aimed at improving enforcement and compliance, education and skills policies and promotion of social dialogue, freedom of association, collective bargaining and social protection.

13. Policies and interventions should take into account specific enterprise characteristics, the characteristics of target groups and national circumstances. Future interventions should focus support in an integrated way, as this has proven to be more effective than stand-alone programmes, and should incorporate monitoring of job quality and enterprise sustainability. Social dialogue is essential to support effective SME policies.

14. SME policies need to be coherent and evidence-based. Attention needs to be given to evaluation of the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of SME interventions.

ROLES OF GOVERNMENTS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS IN PROMOTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK IN SMEs

15. The Committee reaffirms the roles of governments and the social partners in the promotion of SMEs to contribute to productive employment and decent work as stipulated in Recommendation No. 189 and the 2007 Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises.

16. The role of government is to:
   (a) create and improve an enabling environment for the promotion of sustainable SMEs and decent work as highlighted under points 8 and 9;
   (b) ensure the enforcement of labour and environmental standards and easily accessible, well-functioning public services and robust institutions;
   (c) design, fund or facilitate funding, implement, monitor and evaluate policies or programmes targeted at SMEs and strengthen generic policies that are of
specific importance for overcoming constraints faced by SMEs and their workers;

(d) collect and report data on qualitative and quantitative aspects of SME development and employment, paying particular attention to gender, when considering wages, working hours and work–life balance, OSH, social protection, social dialogue, trade union representation and collective bargaining;

(e) act as responsible procurers of goods and services from SMEs;

(f) promote, facilitate and participate in social dialogue; and

(g) endeavour to ensure that workers in SMEs can exercise their fundamental rights at work; enforce labour standards through efficient and effective labour inspection and administration systems; promote industrial relations systems that reduce decent work deficits in SMEs; establish legal frameworks for the governance of quality apprenticeship schemes, guided by the Joint Understanding of the B20 and the L20 on Key Elements of Quality Apprenticeships, that correspond to the needs of businesses and interests of apprentices, guarantee high quality and up-to-date TVET and include contractual arrangements for the apprentices.

17. Employers’ and workers’ organizations can play an important role in helping SMEs and their workers to overcome constraints. They should increase the representation of SMEs and their workers in both types of organizations and improve social dialogue and assist their members with collective bargaining. The social partners should strengthen services that are beneficial to their members in SMEs. These services include tools and information on labour rights, laws and regulations, social protection and legal assistance, as well as training including entrepreneurship, guidance on how to access public and private business support services, links to research and consultancy resources, business matchmaking and advice on responsible workplace practices. They can further provide services through institutions such as cooperatives and mutual associations and help with the creation of producers’ and workers’ cooperatives. Finally, they should engage with governments to assess and improve the enabling environment.

FUTURE WORK OF THE ILO ON PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK IN SMEs

18. The ILO should assist member States in formulating and implementing SME policies that create productive employment and decent work. The ILO should give due consideration to the specific needs of SMEs and their workers in developing its policies and guidance. The ILO should systematically integrate measures to promote an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises and rights at work, including OSH, into SME policies and promote effective labour inspection, work quality and social protection mechanisms in consultation and collaboration with employers’ and workers’ organizations.

19. The ILO should develop policy guidance that takes into account the specific situation of regions and sectors.

20. The ILO should maintain its current portfolio of interventions and build on the results achieved at the global and country levels with the full involvement of the social partners. The ILO’s actions need to be strategic and measurable and generate rigorous data and analysis to orientate governments and social partners on SME policies. It should put particular emphasis on the following:

(a) It should expand and improve measures combining entrepreneurship development, rights at work and financial services. Interventions should be customized for specific target groups, such as women entrepreneurs, young people and high-growth enterprises, and should enhance management capacities and provision of financial services.
(b) The EESE programme should be reviewed with the full involvement of social partners with a view to expanding the programme. Such an expansion might involve:

(i) Creating stronger links to work on ILO employment and quality of work policies as well as Decent Work Country Programmes;

(ii) Going beyond the level of assessments to include support and capacity development of constituents to identify, implement and monitor reforms to improve the business environment for SMEs and conditions of work for workers; and

(iii) Expanding the EESE approach to support enterprise formalization.

c) The ILO should expand its work on proven programmes that aim to facilitate the transition to formalization of informal SMEs. The ILO should build more robust knowledge on approaches that promote SME formalization and compliance with labour and social legislation.

d) Regarding the improvement of productivity and working conditions in SMEs, the ILO should develop models aiming at scaling up interventions, such as SCORE, that can be integrated into national policies and programmes, based on social dialogue and informed by solid impact assessments. The ILO should strengthen the capacity of the social partners to monitor, assess and contribute to such interventions.

e) The work of the ILO on value chain and sectoral development has high potential for impact and should be scaled up, improving the access to markets for SMEs, analysing and contributing to improve working conditions in identified sectors in cooperation with business associations, trade unions and cooperatives, as appropriate. The ILO should conduct research on good practices for the procurement of goods and services by large enterprises in supply chains and SME strategies that better enable and support SMEs to capture added value, so as to inform the discussion concerning decent work in global supply chains at the International Labour Conference in 2016.

(f) The work of the ILO on cooperative enterprises should be expanded to develop intervention models to provide support to enterprises and trade unions in the provision of finance and business services that are scalable and replicable. The ILO should continue and expand upon its technical assistance on policy and legislative reform of cooperatives as outlined in the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).

21. In order to establish what works in SME development, more emphasis should be placed on data collection, evidence-based policy design, monitoring, and rigorous evaluation and impact measurement, in particular regarding the sustainability of enterprises, the improvement of working conditions as well as entrepreneurship for women, young people and vulnerable groups. The ILO work on statistics on cooperatives should be accelerated. The ILO should also continue to develop its work on environmental sustainability of SMEs and a just transition to a low carbon economy for SMEs and their workers. Further, the ILO should provide evidence-based research on the impact of social dialogue and collective bargaining systems on working conditions in SMEs and information and consultation of workers in SMEs.

22. The ILO should further strengthen its work on training in technology and facilitating technology transfer, where it is in line with its mandate, in collaboration with other partners and expand its work on TVET for the development of SMEs and their workers.

23. The ILO should expand its collaboration and partnerships in the area of SME development with international and regional organizations and institutions, within and beyond the UN system. In particular, the ILO should strengthen its cooperation with other organizations, including but not limited to closing the significant knowledge gap related to the quality of jobs in SMEs as well as the productivity and sustainability of SMEs.
24. An action plan including objectives, timelines and resource requirements, integrated into the agreed programme and budget and its outcomes, should be submitted to the Governing Body in November 2015.
Resoluution concerning efforts to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting at its 104th Session, 2015,

Having adopted the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015,

Recognizing the crucial role of transition to the formal economy for inclusive, social, economic and environmental development and for realizing decent work for all,

Mindful that the success of the Recommendation will depend upon its effective promotion and implementation,

Acknowledging the specific national contexts and priorities for the transition to the formal economy;

1. Invites governments, employers and workers jointly to give full effect to the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation.

2. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to request the Director-General to develop a strategy and action plan for promoting and supporting the implementation of the Recommendation, including through:
   (a) allocation of resources within the existing and forthcoming programmes and budgets and mobilization of extra-budgetary resources to carry out the work with the tripartite constituents to give effect to the Recommendation;
   (b) awareness-raising initiatives, promotional materials and appropriate technical assistance to constituents in giving effect to the policies and measures of the Recommendation including through Decent Work Country Programmes;
   (c) the introduction of a new regular discussion point, as appropriate, in the agenda of the next cycles of ILO Regional Meetings and other ILO forums on action taken by the Office and ILO constituents to implement the Recommendation with a view to updating and facilitating the sharing of knowledge, information and good practices on the transition from the informal to the formal economy;
   (d) building the capacity of governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations to enable them to design, implement and evaluate national policies and programmes to facilitate the transition to the formal economy;
   (e) supporting national dialogue processes on the design, implementation and monitoring of national integrated policy frameworks to facilitate the transition to the formal economy; and
   (f) promoting cooperation and partnerships with relevant international organizations to support the development of policies and initiatives to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy.

3. Invites the Governing Body to request regular reports from member States under article 19 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation as part of the existing reporting mechanisms, in particular General Surveys, and to review the progress made in the implementation of this Recommendation.

1 Adopted on 12 June 2015.
Resolution concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection) ¹

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization, meeting at its 104th Session, 2015,

Having undertaken a recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection) in accordance with the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, to consider how the Organization may respond more effectively to the realities and needs of its Members through coordinated use of all its means of action,

1. Adopts the following conclusions;

2. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to give due consideration to the conclusions and to guide the International Labour Office in giving effect to them; and

3. Requests the Director-General to:

(a) communicate the conclusions to relevant global and regional international organizations for their attention;

(b) prepare a plan of action to give effect to the conclusions, for consideration of the Governing Body;

(c) take into account the conclusions when preparing future programme and budget proposals and facilitating extra-budgetary activities; and

(d) keep the Governing Body informed of implementation.

Conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (labour protection)

I. LABOUR PROTECTION IN A TRANSFORMING WORLD OF WORK

1. Labour protection is at the heart of the mandate of the ILO. It is instrumental for achieving decent work and for contributing to social justice and social peace. It is as fundamental today as it was when the ILO was founded, nearly a century ago. Labour protection and social security are complementary, and together provide the social protection that workers and their families need. The regulation of working conditions in the areas of wages, working time, occupational safety and health (OSH), and maternity protection is central to effective and inclusive labour protection. Effective systems of social dialogue and collective bargaining contribute to these protections.

2. Important progress has been made in advancing labour protection among ILO member States. Minimum wage systems have been established or strengthened in many countries to address working poverty and inequality. Measures have been adopted to guarantee the regular and full payment of wages due, and collective bargaining has contributed to improvements in real wages. With respect to working time, there has been progress in setting limits on weekly hours, contributing to the reduction in average annual working hours in many countries. There have also been advances in OSH, with countries recognizing the need for comprehensive legislation and OSH management systems, including prevention, compliance and awareness raising. Regarding maternity protection, many countries have aligned the duration of paid maternity leave to ILO

¹ Adopted on 12 June 2015.
standards and introduced paternity leave. However, there have also been negative trends. Too many workers do not benefit from the progress made, as they are either excluded from the scope of the law, the law is not applied in practice, or the level of protection is inadequate.

3. Ongoing transformations including those driven by technology; globalization; changes in policies, business models and practices, such as outsourcing; and labour migration flows, have profoundly changed patterns of employment and the world of work. They have generated, in some instances, new opportunities for employment and economic growth, but have also tested existing regulation on labour protection. The growth in non-standard forms of employment (NSFE) and in subcontracting, together with the decline in the coverage of collective bargaining, has created challenges with respect to affording effective labour protection for workers, particularly the most vulnerable groups.

4. For effective implementation, regulation needs to take the diversity of the labour market into account. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face particular challenges for the effective implementation of labour protection. Some firms may fall below thresholds of existing labour legislation, or operate in the informal economy where compliance is weak. Facilitating transitions from informality to formality is beneficial to all. For enterprises, it permits access to credit and affords legal protections; it also levels the playing field among enterprises, mitigating unfair competition. For governments and society at large, formalization helps to increase the tax base, permitting the funding of social protection programmes, public employment services, labour inspection, and other public goods and services. For workers, formality allows more people to benefit from labour protection and other social protection benefits.

5. All workers should enjoy adequate protection in accordance with the Decent Work Agenda, guided by international labour standards, and taking into account different national circumstances. Regulations and institutions that govern labour protection need to keep pace with the transformations in the world of work. In particular, priority should be given to initiatives in the following areas:

(a) **Extending coverage to all workers.** Governments and social partners should identify and close gaps in the coverage of legal protection, paying special attention to occupations and sectors that are excluded, to non-standard forms of employment, and to social groups that are most at risk. Collective bargaining can be an important complement to legislation and it can also be used to provide protection to excluded groups.

(b) **Determining the appropriate level of protection.** Inadequate and inappropriate levels of protection can shift costs from enterprises to workers, society and government, can put workers’ well-being at risk, and can undermine effective implementation and risk encouraging informality. Social dialogue and collective bargaining can help strike the balance between the legitimate needs of both workers and enterprises.

(c) **Ensuring compliance.** Non-compliance with laws, regulations and collective agreements undermines effective labour protection, hurting workers, law-abiding enterprises, and communities and economies at large. The primary responsibility for law enforcement lies with governments, but employers, workers and their organizations all have a role to play in promoting and ensuring compliance.

6. In the interests of workers, sustainable enterprises, and societies as a whole, decent working conditions and appropriate protection must be afforded to all workers, without distinction. Discrimination, as defined by Article 1 of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), of

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particular groups, such as migrant workers, youth and women workers, risks creating downward pressure on labour conditions for all workers, and may lead to unfair competition between enterprises, undermining economic progress and social justice.

II. TOWARDS INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE LABOUR PROTECTION

7. ILO constituents can draw on the good practices of ILO Members, the Conclusions of the Meeting of Experts on Non-Standard Forms of Employment \(^1\) and the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Working-time Arrangements, \(^2\) as well as the General Survey on minimum wage systems, \(^3\) and the outcome of its discussion by the Conference at its 103rd Session, \(^4\) to improve labour protection policies. Wage policies, working time, OSH and maternity protection constitute complementary and interlinked elements of a strategy for decent work and sustainable development, as based on the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. Strengthening labour protection in one area has positive implications in the other dimensions, with mutually reinforcing outcomes. In all four areas of labour protection, the gender dimension should be reinforced.

**Wage policies**

8. Effective wage-setting institutions help ensure a just and equitable share of the fruits of progress to all. Minimum wages are used by governments and social partners to provide protection for wage earners against unduly low wages and as one element in a policy designed to overcome poverty. For this protection to be meaningful, minimum wages have to be set at a level that covers the needs of workers and their families, while taking into account economic factors, in accordance with the Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131), Article 3(a) and (b). They should afford adequate protection to all workers in an employment relationship, including women, youth and migrant workers, regardless of their contractual arrangements. Sound wage-setting institutions should also address rising inequalities, including those between men and women, by promoting the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value.

9. The direct participation of representatives of organizations of employers and workers in the operation of minimum wage-fixing bodies is essential to set the level of minimum wages in line with the situation in each country, taking into consideration both social and economic factors. Minimum wage rates should be adjusted at regular intervals to take account of changes in the cost of living and other economic conditions. This mechanism has been used in many countries to progressively adjust wage levels.

10. Collective bargaining offers a mechanism for coordinated wage setting. Collective agreements on wages can be used to establish minimum standards and to set wages above an existing floor. Extension of collective agreements to all enterprises, in accordance with national law and practice, can

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\(^1\) Conclusions of the Meeting of Experts on Non-Standard Forms of Employment (16–19 February 2015) (GB.323/POL/3).

\(^2\) Conclusions of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Working-time Arrangements (17–21 October 2011) (GB.313/POL/1).


be used to ensure fair competition by providing a level playing field and extend coverage to all workers. Collective bargaining and social dialogue also offer an important vehicle to enable workers to participate in the success of enterprises and to gain a fair share in the benefits of economic activities and increased productivity.

11. Effective labour protection also requires that all workers are paid their wages regularly, in full and without any unlawful deductions. Measures to achieve this include the documentation of wage payments by employers and effective remedies for workers to recover unpaid wages. Labour inspectors and workers’ organizations play an important role in promoting and monitoring compliance with minimum wage regulations, collective agreements and employment contracts. Enforcement measures are essential to preclude anti-competitive practices, which have detrimental effects for responsible businesses, workers and society at large.

**Working time**

12. The regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week, for all workers regardless of the type of employment relationship, is a principle enshrined in the ILO’s Constitution and remains an important objective. The reduction of long working hours can improve workers’ health, workplace safety, work–life balance, and, ultimately, sustainable enterprise productivity. Regulatory measures are essential in this regard. Working-time arrangements and reductions in long hours can also be advanced through collective bargaining at all levels and through workplace initiatives.

13. Flexible working-time arrangements can be mutually beneficial when they meet the legitimate needs of enterprises and workers. One example is part-time work that is productive and freely chosen, consistent with the Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175). Policies should be designed to ensure that the principle of equal treatment for part-time workers with comparable full-time workers is given full effect with respect to labour protection in line with this Convention. Policies, collective bargaining, social dialogue and workplace initiatives can be used to enable part-time workers to have sufficient hours of work to meet their needs.

14. Beside the number of hours worked, how working hours are arranged can affect workers’ well-being and enterprise performance. For example, highly variable and unpredictable work schedules can impact on work–life balance, income security and health, in particular mental health. Measures such as advance shift notification and guaranteed minimum paid hours can help accommodate the needs of individual workers, while meeting enterprises’ requirements for flexibility. Collective bargaining can be an important tool for the adoption of these measures.

**Occupational safety and health**

15. Work-related fatalities, injuries and diseases, the vast majority of which are preventable, have a devastating impact on workers, their families and society. They also affect productivity and competitiveness of enterprises, impose costs on households and governments, and impede economic growth. The need to tackle new emerging risks associated with new ways of working and the changing world of work, such as chemical and other substances, psychosocial risks and violence at work, has been recognized as an urgent concern requiring concrete measures and tripartite commitment. Strategies aimed at ensuring decent work for all workers, including a more targeted emphasis on eliminating stigma and discrimination directed at persons living with and affected by HIV and AIDS and other pandemics, have gained momentum.

16. The principal OSH Conventions apply to all workers in all sectors and put strong emphasis on a culture of preventive safety and health. Yet in practice, many national laws and regulations provide only partial coverage. Even where coverage is comprehensive, compliance often remains a challenge. All too often, prevention strategies designed to anticipate, identify, evaluate and control both
existing and emerging hazards are, in practice, neither explored, implemented nor consistently sustained. This is particularly true for gender-related risks and for SMEs.

17. Strategies and tripartite commitments in relation to prevention, occupational safety and health are essential. Governments are responsible for enactment and enforcement of OSH laws, including through labour administration and inspection systems. Governments should also establish, in consultation with the social partners, national OSH policies, systems and programmes, and provide technical guidance to the parties concerned. Employers are ultimately responsible for the occupational safety and health of their workforce. To meet this responsibility, employers should develop OSH policies and management systems in consultation with workers and their representatives. Workers and their representatives also have a responsibility to contribute to workplace safety and health; cooperation between workers and employers helps to improve observance of OSH regulations, to lower accident rates and to reduce work-related health problems. Collection and analysis of statistics on work-related fatalities, injuries and diseases, and the monitoring of their trends are necessary for designing and agreeing on effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Maternity protection

18. Maternity protection is essential for protecting the health and safety of mother and child, for gender equality and women’s enhanced participation in the labour force, helping to expand the pool of talent available to the economy. All women of childbearing age, including those in NSFE, should enjoy protection without discrimination, as provided for in the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). Financing maternity benefits through general taxation or social security, rather than placing the liability on the employer, can mitigate disincentives to recruit women. Closing the coverage gap requires the design and implementation of viable strategies, including adapting workplaces and processes, for the gradual extension of maternity protection to all women.

19. Maternity leave, together with paternity or parental leave, are part of a broader set of work–family reconciliation measures for both men and women workers. These range from public policies and collective bargaining to workplace initiatives. The Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), provides relevant guidance to this effect.

III. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES FOR ILO ACTION TOWARDS MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE LABOUR PROTECTION

20. More inclusive and effective labour protection requires the use of all means at the disposal of the Office and the ILO’s tripartite constituents. Priorities for action include:

(a) Ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards on labour protection. Promote the ratification and application of the fundamental Conventions as well as the relevant international labour standards regarding wages, working time, OSH, maternity protection and other areas of labour protection. Analyse whether there are gaps in international labour standards or instruments that do not sufficiently respond to the reality of the contemporary world of work, including, but not limited to, using the Standards Review Mechanism. Provide assistance to ILO constituents to give practical effect to international labour standards, bearing in mind specific national circumstances.

(b) Knowledge building. Continue efforts to improve data collection, including by revising the International Classification by Status in Employment (ICSE-93) to better capture the evolving nature of employment relationships. Enhance analysis and research on the four key policy areas and their interdependence. Explore the relationship of the four key policy areas with, and their impact on, job quality and enterprise
performance. Expand publications relevant to labour protection and maintain the flagship Global Wage Report as an authoritative source of information on wage trends and policy responses at national and global levels. Conduct research on innovative and inclusive approaches to collective bargaining.

(c) **Technical cooperation.** Advise on national policy frameworks that address labour protection in an inclusive manner. Reinforce the focus on the gender dimension in future interventions. Provide technical assistance on the design of effective labour protection institutions, and on measures to extend protection to currently excluded groups. Strengthen labour inspectorates through training for inspectors, the development of guidelines and clear inspection methodologies, and the strategic use of information and communication technologies to increase the effectiveness of labour inspection. Develop methods to assist employers and workers in responding to changes in work organization and working conditions that are causing psychosocial risks, stress and mental health problems related to work. Provide guidance to improve the access of workers and their families to effective redress mechanisms, including through courts and alternative dispute settlement mechanisms, especially in cases of work-related fatalities, injuries and illnesses.

(d) **Capacity building.** Increase efforts to build the capacity of constituents, including workers’ and employers’ organizations, on issues pertaining to labour protection. Raise awareness on labour protection, including rights and obligations under international labour standards. Enhance national capacities to acquire and use OSH knowledge and information to develop effective prevention policies, strategies, systems and programmes.

(e) **Monitoring and impact evaluation.** Monitor and assess progress in the four key policy areas, including on compliance, and suggest appropriate measures based on the findings of these assessments. Conduct rigorous impact assessment of labour protection policies and evaluate their effects on workers’ well-being, on labour force participation, particularly of women, on enterprise performance and growth, and on economic performance. Consider the development of indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, to monitor trends in the implementation of national OSH policies and interventions at the workplace.

(f) **Exchange of good practices.** In the above areas, facilitate the exchange of good practices among member States and between social partners.

21. In view of the transformations in the world of work, particular attention needs to be given to the following:

(a) **Working time and work–life balance.** Taking into account current challenges and looking to the future of work, provide guidance for integrated and innovative approaches to address the needs of both men and women workers in terms of the balance between work, family and private life, making full use of the relevant ILO Conventions. With a view to coming up with recommendations for further work by the ILO and its constituents in this area, the Governing Body may wish to consider organizing, within existing resources, a tripartite meeting of experts on the various developments and challenges and their impact on the organization and scheduling of working time, taking into account the needs of employers and workers.

(b) **Extension of labour protection in SMEs.** Foster collaboration with constituents to support the effective coverage of labour protection and compliance by SMEs, both in the formal and informal economies, ensuring that laws and regulations on labour protection adequately cover all enterprises and workers.

(c) **Effective protection of workers in NSFE.** Analyse whether there are gaps in international labour standards, or instruments that do not sufficiently reflect the reality of today’s world of work, and identify barriers to ratification of standards. Address potential decent work deficits in the
private and the public sectors as called for in the Conclusions of the Meeting of Experts on Non-Standard Forms of Employment. Evaluate the need for additional international labour standards possibly through meetings of experts, as the Governing Body may wish to decide and within existing resources, and including, but not limited to, using the Standards Review Mechanism, to address temporary contracts, including fixed-term contracts, and discrimination based on employment status.

(d) *Enabling environment for labour protection.* Examine and address possible barriers to freedom of association and collective bargaining in law and practice in order to enhance the ability of workers in NSFE to exercise their rights, including the possibility to negotiate with the relevant employer(s). Identify good practices, regulatory and other initiatives that are helping to close representational gaps, and use the knowledge to build the capacity of workers’ and employers’ organizations. Facilitate sharing of good practices and innovative approaches and offer governments and social partners guidance, training and technical support to address these barriers.

(e) *Public procurement policies.* Promote labour protection through responsible public procurement practices and through the promotion of the ratification and effective implementation of the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94).

(f) *Global supply chains.* In the upcoming discussion of the 105th International Labour Conference of 2016 on global supply chains, due regard should be paid to labour protection.
Resolution concerning the application by the Cook Islands for admission to membership of the International Labour Organization

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Having received an application from the Government of the Cook Islands for admission to membership of the International Labour Organization,
Decides to admit the Cook Islands to membership of the International Labour Organization with the same rights and obligations as the other Members of the Organization;
Authorizes the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to make the necessary arrangements with the Government of the Cook Islands with regard to its financial contributions;
Takes note of the fact that the Government of the Cook Islands has already communicated to the Director-General of the International Labour Office its formal acceptance of the obligations of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation and that, accordingly, the admission of the Cook Islands to membership of the International Labour Organization will take effect on the adoption by the Conference of the present resolution.

1 Adopted on 12 June 2015.
V

Resolution concerning the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2016–17 and the allocation of the budget of income among member States

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

In virtue of the Financial Regulations, adopts for the 75th financial period, ending 31 December 2017, the budget of expenditure for the International Labour Organization amounting to US$797,390,000 and the budget of income amounting to US$797,390,000, which, at the budget rate of exchange of 0.95 Swiss francs to the US dollar, amounts to 757,520,500 Swiss francs, and resolves that the budget of income, denominated in Swiss francs, shall be allocated among member States in accordance with the scale of contributions recommended by the Finance Committee of Government Representatives.

1 Adopted on 10 June 2015.
Resolution concerning the financial report and audited consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Decides, in accordance with article 29 of the Financial Regulations, to adopt the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2014 and the External Auditor’s report thereon.

1 Adopted on 10 June 2015.
VII

Resolution concerning the scale of assessments
of contributions to the budget for 2016

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Decides that, in accordance with the established practice of harmonizing
the rates of assessment of ILO member States with their rates of assessment in
the United Nations, to adopt the draft scale of assessments for 2016 as set out in
the Appendix II to this document.

1 Adopted on 10 June 2015.
VIII

Resolution concerning financing of the renovation of the ILO headquarters building ¹

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Decides that the Director-General be authorized to contract a loan with the Foundation for Buildings for International Organisations (FIPOI) amounting to not more than 130 million Swiss francs for the partial financing of the renovation of the ILO headquarters building.

¹ Adopted on 10 June 2015.
IX

Resolution concerning the composition of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Decides, in accordance with article III of the Statute of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization,

(a) to convey its deep appreciation to Mr Seydou Ba (Senegal) for the valuable services he has rendered to the work of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization over the past 18 years as judge, Vice-President and President of the Tribunal;

(b) to renew the appointments of Mr Giuseppe Barbagallo (Italy), Ms Dolores Hansen (Canada), Mr Michael Moore (Australia) and Sir Hugh Rawlins (Saint Kitts and Nevis) for a term of three years; and

(c) to appoint Ms Fatoumata Diakité (Côte d’Ivoire) for a term of three years.

1 Adopted on 10 June 2015.
Resolution concerning appointments to the ILO Staff Pension Committee (United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) ¹

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Appoints Mr B. Thibault (Workers) to the ILO Staff Pension Committee (United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board), with immediate effect, for the period ending 8 October 2016.

¹ Adopted on 10 June 2015.
XI

Resolution concerning the arrears of contributions of Uzbekistan ¹

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,
Having regard to paragraph 6 of article 10 of the Financial Regulations,
Accepts the arrangement proposed by the Government of Uzbekistan for the settlement of its arrears of contributions corresponding to the periods 1997–2014 plus its 2015 contribution to the effect that:

(a) in 2015, the Government of Uzbekistan will pay in full its assessed contribution of 57,090 Swiss francs for the year 2015;
(b) in subsequent years, the Government of Uzbekistan will continue to pay its current contribution in full in the year for which it is due;
(c) the Government of Uzbekistan will settle its arrears that have accumulated up to and including 31 December 2014, amounting to 1,498,800 Swiss francs, by payment, beginning in 2015, of ten annual instalments in accordance with the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Amount (in Swiss francs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>74,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>74,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>112,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>149,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>149,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>188,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>188,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>224,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>224,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,498,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decides that Uzbekistan shall be permitted to vote, in accordance with paragraph 4 of article 13 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation, after the conclusion of the present business.

¹ Adopted on 12 June 2015.