

Governing Body – 340th Session, October-November 2020
Institutional Section

Workers' Group Comments

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Report of the 14th African Regional Meeting
(Abidjan, 3–6 December 2019)

First of all, we would like to thank the Office for the updated draft of the implementation plan, and for taking into consideration most of our comments sent to the Office after the first draft of the plan.

We would like to reiterate that in the proposed implementation plan, there are several references to AU processes and it reads as if the ILO would be implementing AU programs. We would like to recall that the ILO is an unique tripartite UN agency, with its own mandate. Is in line with its mandate that the Abidjan Declaration was approved. The implementation plan should inspire the AU to reinstall social dialogue, to promote ILS and decent work. There should be a collaboration with the AU, but not a fusion with the AU agenda.

Although many of our comments were taken on board in the section **Implementation strategy by area of work**, unfortunately not all of them are reflected in the **Appendix**, where the actions taken are related to the ILO program and budget. Therefore, we would like to reiterate our priorities, so that they are sufficiently funded in the implementation of the Abidjan Declaration:

Structural transformation: It is worth recalling that when shaping the decent work agenda, the Abidjan Declaration states that *“the main priorities for the African region will be built around the Centenary Declaration”*. The Centenary Declaration, calls the ILO to promote policy coherence with other institutions of the multilateral system. In this crisis situation, the ILO has a key role to play in the multilateral system, in working with International Financial Institutions to promote debt alleviation and to remove conditionalities for the loans, in order to facilitate the economic recovery of the continent.

Social protection: The ILO should provide its expertise and facilitate the dialogue on social protection to find emergency and sustainable solutions among social partners, among African governments and with financial institutions.

Employment creation: The **quality dimension** of employment should be considered. The decent jobs agenda should guide the employment creation strategy. Access to universal, free and public education is a key pre-requisite for young people to have decent jobs. **Cooperatives and the social and solidarity economy** are a main source of income and should require further attention

Quality public services: A key priority in the structural transformation is the sufficient funding, staffing and improvement of public services: *“(v) supporting the role of the public sector as a significant employer and provider of quality public services”*. A rights based approach in relation to public services should guide the implementation plan.

International Labour Standards: Promoting social dialogue, with Freedom of Association and Collective bargaining at its heart. Ratification and technical support for the implementation in law and practice of C.87 and 98 should be a clear priority of the implementation plan and should be sufficiently funded. Fundamental principles and rights at work are indivisible and a holistic strategy to eliminate force labour and to eradicate child labour should be based on the enabling rights.

MNE Declaration: Holding MNE accountable is part of the so needed African structural transformation and the MNE Declaration is a very useful tool to promote the respect of rights and compliance with obligations. There should be a correlation with the program and budget on this topic.

With these comments we can agree with the decision point.