

**FOR DECISION**

THIRD ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**The date and agenda of the
International Labour Conference****The agenda of the 99th Session (2010)
of the Conference****Introduction**

1. At its 301st Session (March 2008), the Governing Body decided to defer the selection of a third technical item, which would complete the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference (the Conference), to the 303rd Session (November 2008) of the Governing Body, pending the outcome of the discussion by the Conference on strengthening the ILO's capacity.¹
2. On 10 June 2008, the 97th Session of the Conference adopted the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (the 2008 Declaration), which contains in the annex its follow-up. Section II, B of this follow-up provides inter alia that the Organization will introduce a scheme of recurrent discussions by the Conference, based on modalities agreed by the Governing Body, without duplicating the ILO's supervisory mechanisms.
3. Tripartite consultations on the follow-up to the 2008 Declaration in September 2008 included a discussion on the concept of the recurrent item reports to be submitted to the Conference, the sequence and frequency of these items recurring on the agenda of the Conference, and the implications for the General Surveys.² An apparent consensus emerged during the consultations to start the cycle of recurrent discussions in 2010 with the strategic objective of employment. It is therefore proposed to complete the 2010 Conference agenda with a recurrent discussion on employment. An outline of the elements for this discussion is provided below, it being understood that consultations will continue concerning the preparation of the report that would form the basis for the discussion.

¹ GB.301/2. The other items for the 2010 Conference agenda are Decent work for domestic workers (standard setting – first discussion) and Strengthening national responses to HIV/AIDS in the world of work (second discussion – with a view to the adoption of an autonomous Recommendation).

² This question is dealt with in GB.303/LILS/6.

Proposal for a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment

Purpose

4. In the 2008 Declaration, Members reiterated their commitment and that of the Organization “to implement the ILO’s constitutional mandate, including through international labour standards, and to place full and productive employment and decent work at the centre of economic and social policies ...” and agreed that this “should be based on the four equally important strategic objectives of the ILO, through which the Decent Work Agenda is expressed ...”.³
5. As part of the “means by which the Organization will assist the efforts of its Members to give effect to their commitments to pursue the four strategic objectives ...”,⁴ the follow-up to the 2008 Declaration provides that “the Organization will introduce a scheme of recurrent discussions by the International Labour Conference based on modalities agreed by the Governing Body ...”. The objective is to: “understand better the diverse realities and needs of its Members with respect to each of the strategic objectives (and) respond more effectively to them using all the means of action at its disposal ... and adjust its priorities and programmes of action accordingly”.⁵
6. It is proposed that the first recurrent item for the Conference agenda in 2010 considers the strategic objective of employment. This recurrent item would bring to the Conference discussion a focused understanding of the varying employment challenges faced by governments and the social partners, and an assessment of how the four “inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive”⁶ strategic objectives of the ILO, pursued in a coherent manner, can enable progress towards the goal of full and productive employment.
7. A central purpose of the recurrent discussion will also be for the Conference to “assess the results of the ILO’s activities with a view to informing programme, budget and other governance decisions”.⁷

The report

8. The report for the recurrent discussion will be designed and prepared, in the light of the consultations, following the general guidance contained in the 2008 Declaration, and based on a process of full Office-wide collaboration. It will cover key themes and areas of ILO work on employment. For each area covered, it will focus on the diverse realities in terms of trends and policies in that area as well as on Members’ needs. It will include an assessment of the effectiveness of the different means of action used by the Office (research and knowledge sharing, advocacy and policy advice, technical cooperation and

³ The 2008 Declaration, section I, A.

⁴ Follow-up to the 2008 Declaration, section I, 1.

⁵ *idem*, section II, B.

⁶ The 2008 Declaration, section I, B.

⁷ Follow-up, II, B(ii).

capacity building, standard-setting and promotion of standards, social dialogue) to respond to Members' needs.

9. The substantive content of the report will be guided by the following key considerations:

- empirical diagnosis of critical employment trends and challenges faced by groups of countries at various levels of development, in both their quantitative and qualitative aspects, including focus on gender-disaggregated analysis. Within the constraints of available evidence, particular attention will be devoted to the employment content of different growth paths, and the linkages among growth, productivity, employment, poverty reduction and inequality;
- review of the ILO's mandate, priorities and instruments on employment as they have evolved through tripartite conclusions and decisions by the Conference and the Governing Body (including the Global Employment Agenda), Regional Meetings, and through employment-related standards;
- comparative review and analysis of policies and strategies adopted by Members to promote full and productive employment, examining the results and relevance of different policy mixes, and lessons learnt;
- use of a thematic approach, with regional and country-level case experiences to highlight critical issues and lessons; under each theme, special emphasis will be placed on highlighting the synergies and linkages across all strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda;
- examination of the institutional arrangements and the role of social dialogue and tripartism in fostering economic and social policy coordination and coherence, and in better facilitating the design and implementation of policy reforms. This will include an analysis of how the commitment to full and productive employment and necessary policy coordination have worked in the context of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs);
- review of the adequacy of Office responses in the key employment themes and areas of demand by constituents, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and gaps, as well as means by which the ILO could bridge them, such as through a renewed and coordinated pursuit of its four strategic objectives, and through better collaboration among different units in the Office and through partnerships with UN system agencies and others.

- 10.** Sources of information will include the information generated by the body of knowledge and statistics collected through ILO research, the General Survey;⁸ technical cooperation and policy advisory work (especially in the DWCP framework), consultations with the constituents, research and publications from other UN, multilateral and regional organizations as well as other external sources.

Expected outcomes

- 11.** The expected outcomes of the discussion by the Conference on the recurrent item on employment are:

⁸ See GB.303/LILS/6.

- identification of priorities for future attention by Members and the ILO;
- identification of areas and issues where Members and the Office could adjust their priorities, programmes, and capacity-building activities;
- identification of ways to better coordinate future work under the strategic objective on employment with other strategic objectives, as well as improved collaboration in the context of DWCPs to deliver the Decent Work Agenda;
- suggestion of possible themes and topics to be placed on the agenda of future sessions of the Conference.

12. *The Governing Body is invited to include in the agenda of the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference the following item: a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment.*

Geneva, 13 October 2008.

Point for decision: Paragraph 12.