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Institutional Section

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Outcome of the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (Singapore, 6–9 December 2022)

Purpose of the document

This document provides information on the outcome of the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting, which was held in Singapore from 6 to 9 December 2022 and brought together tripartite constituents from both the Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States regions. Appendix I contains the conclusions of the Meeting, in the form of the Singapore Statement, and Appendix II contains the report of the Credentials Committee.

The Governing Body is invited to request the Director-General to draw the attention of the ILO constituents to the Singapore Statement by making the text available to them, and to take the Singapore Statement into consideration when implementing current programmes and ensure its effective implementation in the context of future programme and budget proposals (see the draft decision in paragraph 13).

Relevant strategic objective: All.

Main relevant outcome: All.

Policy implications: By adopting the draft decision, the Governing Body would request the Director-General to take the Singapore Statement into consideration when implementing current programmes and ensure its effective implementation in the context of future programme and budget proposals.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None. Paragraph 23 of the Singapore Statement refers to follow-up action in the context of the programme and budget process.

Follow-up action required: In the context of the programme and budget process, development of an implementation plan on supporting the constituents to give effect to the Singapore Statement, to be reviewed and submitted to the Governing Body every two years as part of the programme implementation report.

Author unit: ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and ILO Regional Office for the Arab States.

Related documents: Report submitted by the Director-General to the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting: *Renewed social justice for a human-centred recovery; 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting: Report of the meeting.*

1. The 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting was held in Singapore from 6 to 9 December 2022. It was chaired by Mr See Leng Tan, Minister of Manpower of Singapore, and the Vice-Chairpersons were: Ms Arti Ahuja, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment of India; Mr Robert Yap, President, Singapore National Employers' Federation; and Ms Mary Liew, President, Singapore National Trades Union Congress.¹
2. In addition to plenary discussions on the report of the Director-General, tripartite panel discussions were held on four thematic areas. The first of these thematic discussions focused on the elements of an integrated policy agenda for a human-centred recovery that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient. Consideration was given to the economic and employment policies that are necessary at both the national and the regional levels to promote a human-centred recovery and foster inclusive economic growth and development that could help address long-standing structural inequalities and ensure progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. The second thematic discussion involved an exchange of views on the institutional frameworks that are needed to support transitions towards formality and decent work. Discussions centred around the legal frameworks and labour market institutions that are necessary to support transitions to formal employment, promote the mobility of workers – including migrant workers – across sectors and localities, increase the adaptability of workers and enterprises to climate change and crisis situations, and accelerate successful labour market transitions among vulnerable groups through all life stages.
4. The third thematic discussion focused on the need to strengthen the foundations for social and employment protection and resilience. Consideration was given to the main lessons learned and the necessary actions needed to invoke structural changes that could facilitate a human-centred recovery sustained by well-functioning labour market institutions, including labour laws and labour policies that could be enforced and implemented by adequately funded public service providers, at both the national and the regional levels.
5. In the final thematic discussion, on efforts to revitalize productivity growth and skills for more and better jobs, the participants highlighted challenges and opportunities, suggested innovative policy measures and shared lessons learned to build partnerships for improved communication and coordinated actions on supporting productivity growth and skills development within enterprises, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. They also looked at linking productivity growth and skills development to the broader aims of inclusive growth and the just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.
6. In addition to these thematic discussions, two special sessions were held, on strengthening multilateral cooperation to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, and on the promotion and application of the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy in Asia and the Pacific.
7. Drawing on the discussions on the report of the Director-General and the thematic discussions, the Meeting adopted the Singapore Statement, which builds on and recalls the Bali Declaration adopted at the 16th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting, held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2016. The Statement outlines how the COVID-19 pandemic “unleashed an unprecedented social and economic crisis, costing millions of lives, devastating businesses and jobs, and bringing severe

¹ A summary of the proceedings of the Meeting is provided in ILO, *17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting: Report of the Meeting*, APRM.17/D.5, 2023.

contractions in economic growth, employment, working hours and labour income across the regions". It notes that the recovery from the pandemic is under way, but remains uneven; that additional crises, such as climate-related natural disasters, are emerging; and that steep rises in food and energy prices are eroding real incomes and threatening the sustainability of enterprises.

8. In view of the challenges faced across Asia, the Pacific and the Arab States, as well as the emerging opportunities, the Statement highlights a series of priorities for action at the national level. High among these is the need to ratify the ILO fundamental Conventions and further strengthen the capacities of government, employer and worker representatives to carry out effective social dialogue.
9. The Singapore Statement further urges governments and the social partners to ensure labour protection for all through the promotion of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. It calls for action to close gender gaps in the world of work and encourages ILO Member States to consider the ratification and effective implementation of related international labour standards, accelerate the transition from the informal to the formal economy, and strengthen governance frameworks to protect the rights of migrant workers. It also calls for a just transition that helps build environmentally sustainable economies and societies in the face of climate change.
10. The Statement also emphasizes the importance of revitalizing productivity growth and skills development to provide more and better jobs with particular focus on digital transformation, digital divides and lifelong learning.
11. The Statement highlights the need to reinforce the foundations for social and employment protection and resilience. This includes expanding social protection to all workers, strengthening labour inspection systems, enhancing occupational safety and health, addressing the rising costs of living with policies for adequate, fair and non-discriminatory wages and eliminating all forms of forced and child labour.
12. The Statement furthermore confirms the commitment of governments and the social partners across the regions to engage in consultations towards the development of a Global Coalition for Social Justice.

▶ Draft decision

13. **The Governing Body requested the Director-General to:**
 - (a) **draw the attention of the ILO constituents, in particular those of the Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States regions, to the Singapore Statement by making the text available to:**
 - (i) **the governments of all Member States, requesting them to communicate the text to national employers' and workers' organizations; and**
 - (ii) **the international organizations and non-governmental international organizations concerned;**
 - (b) **take the Singapore Statement into consideration when implementing current programmes and ensure its effective implementation in the context of future programme and budget proposals; and**

- (c) **incorporate, in the programme implementation report submitted to the Governing Body every two years, information on the implementation of the Singapore Statement.**

▶ Appendix I

The Singapore Statement

1. As agreed in Singapore on 9 December 2022, we reaffirm the tripartite commitment to, and the relevance of, the priorities agreed in the Bali Declaration to address the persistence of decent work deficits in the Asia and the Pacific and Arab States regions, on which insufficient progress was made. These commitments include realizing fundamental principles and rights at work, eliminating forced and child labour, fostering sustainable enterprises, developing policies for decent jobs, reversing inequalities through social dialogue, building resilience in crises through employment promotion, closing gender gaps in the world of work, enhancing labour migration policies, extending social protection, and strengthening labour market institutions.
2. We recognize the significance of the Bali Declaration and the continuing importance of pursuing these commitments, while tackling new and emerging challenges for achieving social justice and decent work for all.
3. We express strong support for, and are committed to, the full realization of the aim of democratization of the ILO governance by ensuring a fair representation of all regions and establishing the principle of equality among Member States, as set out in the 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the resolution on the principle of equality among ILO Member States and fair representation of all regions in the ILO's tripartite governance adopted at the 109th Session (June 2021) of the International Labour Conference.

Context

4. Since the 16th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting in Bali, Indonesia in December 2016, the regions have continued to experience transformations in the world of work and have been subject to unprecedented crises.
5. The COVID-19 pandemic unleashed an unprecedented social and economic crisis, costing millions of lives, devastating businesses and jobs, and bringing severe contractions in economic growth, employment, working hours and labour income across the regions. The pandemic exposed fragilities in many labour markets, and in health and safety and social protection systems; and drew attention to the important role of public services and additional government support measures in responding to crises. Many countries in the region did not have the capacity or ability to expand services or spending in response to COVID-19. Long-standing weaknesses in areas of labour market governance and social protection perpetuated the vulnerabilities of marginalized groups, pushed millions back into poverty, increased the prevalence of forced and child labour, and increased inequalities within and among countries.
6. The recovery from the pandemic is under way but remains uneven. Meanwhile additional crises are emerging, including an increasing number of climate-related natural disasters that destroy lives, jobs and livelihoods. Steep rises in food and energy prices are eroding real incomes and threatening the sustainability of enterprises, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Political instabilities and violations of democratic and human rights in parts of the regions leave too many in search of safe and secure livelihoods.
7. New opportunities are also emerging to support decent work such as those arising from digital transformation, the greening of economies, and economic recovery.

Guiding principles

8. Taking into account the confluence of crises, the rapidly evolving future of work, and long-standing decent work deficits, the ILO tripartite constituents across the regions adopt the following guiding principles for future actions:
 - (a) Tripartite constituents should work collectively towards the promotion of social justice and the fundamental principles and rights at work through effective social dialogue and tripartite cooperation to advance the achievement of full, productive and freely chosen employment, and decent work for all.
 - (b) The 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the 2021 Global Call to Action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient provide critical foundations for decent work, economic recovery and future growth to ensure a just transition to a future of work that contributes to sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.
 - (c) Gender equality and diversity should underpin policy development and implementation to ensure no one is left behind.
 - (d) Social partners have an important role to play in preparing for the future of work, including policy design, analysis and implementation in areas of job transformation and the upskilling and reskilling of workers. It is vital for governments to undertake and promote genuine engagement and effective social dialogue.
 - (e) Sustainable enterprises play an important role as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work.
 - (f) Promotion of workers' rights is a key element for the attainment of inclusive and sustainable growth, with a focus on freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining as enabling rights.

Priorities for national action

9. Governments, employers and workers in the regions agree that social dialogue is essential to addressing labour market challenges and finding solutions especially in crisis situations, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and economic uncertainty. Social dialogue is key to building trust, and resilient labour market institutions are essential to sustained recovery and inclusive and sustainable growth, and need to be strengthened in the regions. Recognizing that strong and representative organizations of workers and employers play an important role in building and sustaining inclusive societies and are fundamental to achieving social justice and decent work and that the social partners in some countries do not have the capacity, mechanisms or freedom to contribute effectively to policy development and discussion, the capacities and skills of employer and worker representatives, and of governments must be strengthened.
10. Governments and social partners across the regions agree to engage in consultations towards the development of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, both as a contribution to the United Nations (UN) Our Common Agenda for a new social contract and to promote decent work in line with international labour standards.
11. Ensure labour protection for all through the promotion of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining throughout the regions, including for workers in vulnerable situations and workers in the informal economy, as enabling rights for

decent work. Governments and social partners should urgently take effective measures to address allegations of serious violations of these rights.

12. Close gender gaps in the world of work through measures that increase women's labour force participation, promote equal pay for work of equal value, balance work and care responsibilities, and promote women's leadership, including considering the ratification and effective implementation of related international labour standards such as the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).
13. Develop and implement inclusive labour market programmes and policies that support life transitions and demographic shifts, noting the ageing populations in many countries and youthful populations in others and the need to invest in skills, social protection and health and social services.
14. Pursue collective and determined efforts to promote and accelerate a smooth and sustained transition from the informal to formal economy, guided by the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204).
15. Strengthen governance frameworks and respect for freedom of association to protect the rights of migrant workers, including improved accommodation, protection of wages and extension of social protection and, where appropriate, through enhanced bilateral labour migration agreements between both sending and receiving countries. Tripartite mechanisms should help promote cooperation between constituents to mitigate negative impacts and harness opportunities that arise from labour migration.
16. Facilitate the transition to peace, security and decent work in situations of crisis, through the promotion of the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205), as central to national and UN-led crisis and recovery responses.
17. Recognize the impact of climate change and develop through tripartite committees national plans for a just transition that help build environmentally sustainable economies and societies, based on meaningful and effective social dialogue, taking into account policies regarding the labour market, regulated labour migration, coordinated labour mobility, and social protection.
18. Strengthen the foundations for social and employment protection and resilience, including:
 - (a) expanding social protection to all workers, guaranteeing universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection for all, with a particular focus on extending protection to workers in the informal economy and those unprotected and in vulnerable situations while also ensuring good governance of social protection schemes;
 - (b) extending labour protections through the strengthening of labour inspections systems and enhancing occupational safety and health (OSH) through the ratification and effective implementation of the OSH Conventions that are now part of the fundamental principles and rights at work;
 - (c) addressing the rising costs of living with policies for adequate, fair, non-discriminatory wages and wage adjustment mechanisms through the provision of adequate minimum wages, statutory or negotiated, and support for collective bargaining at all levels and tripartite cooperation;
 - (d) revitalizing productivity growth and skills development for more and better jobs with particular focus on digital transformation and digital divides and lifelong learning, that enhance employability and the sharing of productivity gains; and

- (e) eliminating all forms of forced and child labour, including through the ratification and implementation of the fundamental principles and rights at work Conventions.

ILO action

19. Support tripartite constituents in developing and implementing national and regional priorities, including through Decent Work Country Programmes, where relevant. These programmes should be designed and implemented through consultation with the tripartite constituents, in line with the Bali Declaration and this Statement, constituent needs, and progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
20. Promote the importance of tripartism throughout the UN system and strengthening cooperation between tripartite constituents and relevant multilateral organizations, including supporting them to engage with the United Nations Development System at all levels, as well as in the development of relevant UN frameworks, such as the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, at the country level, and in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals guided by the Bali Declaration and this Statement.
21. Promote policy coherence to advance social justice and decent work, including the promotion of systematic cooperation with regional bodies, regional development banks, and universities, and pursuing efforts and consultations to create the Global Coalition for Social Justice.
22. Foster new and innovative opportunities for sharing experiences and best practices and promoting learning within and across the regions, including through evidence-based research and statistics, and further strengthening capacity-building programmes for employers' and workers' organizations.
23. Propose to the Governing Body, within the ILO programme and budget framework, to increasingly allocate financial and human resources to the regions to effectively respond to the priorities of constituents, including through strong and effective social dialogue.
24. Social partners reiterate the continuing importance of regularly scheduled opportunities to convene on a regional and subregional basis, as regional dialogue and meetings remain an important and relevant mechanism for this diverse and geographically dispersed region. The Office is requested to reflect these views to the Governing Body for it to examine options for rejuvenation and reform of future regional meetings, including measures to ensure: (i) participation from all ILO Member States, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States; and (ii) gender balanced participation.
25. The Office is requested to ensure a follow-up to the conclusions of the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting, including in the development of an implementation plan on supporting constituents to give effect to the Singapore Statement to be reviewed and submitted to the constituents and to the Governing Body every two years based on existing processes and mechanisms.

► Appendix II

Report of the Credentials Committee

1. The Credentials Committee of the 17th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM), appointed at its first sitting, was composed as follows:

Chairperson:	Ms Alison Durbin (Government delegate, Australia)
Employer Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Paul Mackay (Employers' delegate, New Zealand)
Worker Vice-Chairperson:	Ms Clare Middlemas (Workers' delegate, Australia)

2. Pursuant to article 9(2) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, the Credentials Committee's mandate is to examine the credentials of the delegates and advisers attending the Meeting, as well as any objections regarding their nomination, complaints concerning the non-payment of travel and subsistence expenses of delegations, and other communications. To this end, the Committee met on 7 and 8 December 2022.

Composition of the Meeting

3. At the time of the adoption of this report, and as shown in Annex I, of the 46 Member States invited to the Meeting as full members of the region, 35 had accredited a delegation. Twenty-four Member States complied with the time limit set forth in article 1(7) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, according to which credentials must be deposited at least 21 days before the date fixed for the opening of the Meeting, that is, before 15 November 2022 for the 17th APRM.
4. The total number of accredited delegates and advisers was 388 of which 304 had registered (see Annexes I and II). The table below shows the breakdown of accredited delegates, substitute delegates and advisers per group. Persons appointed as both substitute delegates and advisers have been counted as advisers. Detailed information regarding participation by Member State is available in the Final List of Delegations.

► Accredited delegates, substitute delegates and advisers

	Governments	Employers	Workers	Total
Delegates	68	33	33	134
Substitute delegates	55	24	23	102
Advisers	79	23	50	152
Total	202	80	106	388

5. In addition, 22 Ministers and Vice-Ministers from the accredited Member States attended the Meeting in person while 2 Ministers participated virtually.

Incomplete delegations

6. In accordance with article 1(2) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, the minimum composition of a tripartite national delegation is two Government delegates, one Employers' delegate and one Workers' delegate. One Member (Syrian Arab Republic) accredited a delegation that was composed exclusively of Government representatives, one Member (Lebanon) accredited a delegation without an Employers' delegate after the publication of the provisional list of delegations on 5 December 2022 and one Member (Yemen) accredited a delegation without a Workers' delegate.
7. The Committee notes that, by accrediting a delegation that is exclusively governmental or incomplete, the employers and workers of the country cannot exercise their right to be represented in the Meeting and to participate in its work. Furthermore, in accordance with article 12(2) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, failure by a government to nominate one of the non-government delegates deprives the other non-government delegate from their right to vote.

Non-accredited Member States

8. The following 11 Member States out of a total of 46 Member States which were invited to participate in the APRM as full Members did not accredit a delegation:
 - Afghanistan
 - Jordan
 - Lao People's Democratic Republic
 - Maldives *
 - Marshall Islands *
 - Palau *
 - Solomon Islands *
 - Timor-Leste
 - Tonga
 - Tuvalu *
 - Vanuatu *

* Member States that also failed to accredit a delegation to the 16th APRM (Bali, 2016).

9. The Committee wishes to recall that in accordance with article 1(2) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, Members States invited as full members are expected to send a tripartite delegation to the Meeting. It also recalls that under the resolution concerning the strengthening of tripartism in the overall activities of the International Labour Organization, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 56th Session (1971), sending tripartite delegations to the Conference and Regional Meetings was not only a right of Member States but also an obligation laid upon them.
10. It was on the basis of that resolution that the Governing Body decided at its 183rd Session (May–June 1971) to request the Director-General to carry out inquiries concerning the extent of, and the reasons for, the failure of governments to send tripartite delegations to sessions of the International Labour Conference and Regional Meetings and to report to it on this subject. At its 205th Session (February–March 1978), the Governing Body further requested the Director-General to extend the scope of the inquiries to cases of failure by Member States to send any delegations at all. The Governing Body has systematically continued requesting reports on this matter. The latest report² includes statistical data from the 16th APRM

² GB.331/LILS/1.

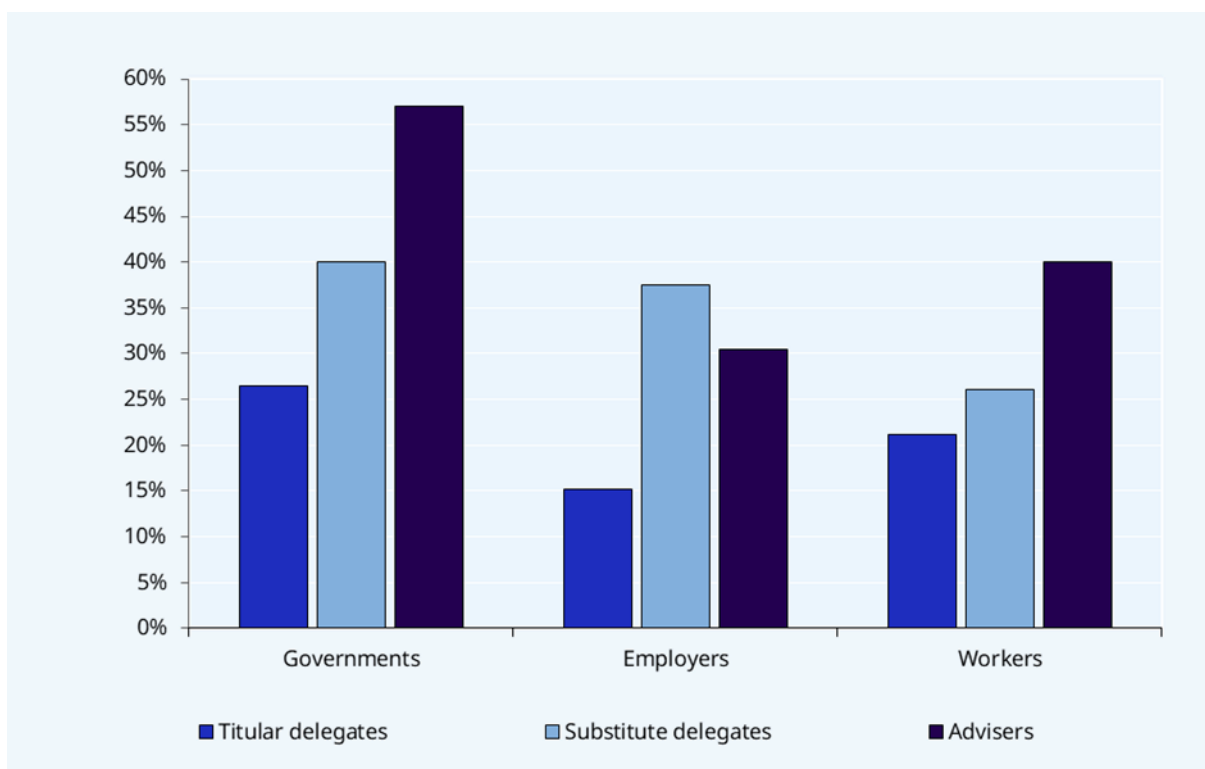
(Bali, 2016) while the next report will be submitted to the Governing Body at its 347th Session (March 2023) and will include information on the composition of this Meeting.

11. The Committee notes that, while the 17th APRM was essentially a face-to-face meeting, and delegates were expected to attend the Meeting physically for its entire duration, remote participation via a videoconferencing platform was nevertheless made available for those unable to be physically present in Singapore. This was clearly indicated in the second invitation letter sent on 7 October 2022 as well as in the [Guide to the Regional Meeting](#). The Committee, therefore, notes that despite the possibility of remote participation, 11 Member States from the region failed to accredit a delegation. Only 17 accredited delegates from 8 Member States participated remotely.
12. The Committee notes, in particular, that half of the Members from the Pacific Island States are not participating in the Meeting, either in person or remotely. Moreover, no reasons have been provided by any of the non-accredited Members for their lack of participation. The Committee calls attention, therefore, to the need to inquire into the underlying reasons for this lack of participation.
13. The Committee wishes to emphasize the importance of physical participation and that, by not participating in the Meeting, governments deprive themselves and the social partners of the opportunity to discuss the programming and implementation of the ILO's activities in the region, and do not benefit from knowledge-sharing or an exchange of best practices. The Committee encourages governments to comply with their obligations and participate with complete tripartite delegations in future ILO meetings.

Proportion of women accredited in delegations

14. In accordance with article 1(6) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, Members are expected to make every effort to promote the equal representation of women and men in their delegations. Considering the low female participation (27.9 per cent) in the 16th APRM in 2016, invitation letters to the 17th APRM specifically asked Member States to pay particular attention to achieving gender parity in the composition of their national tripartite delegations.
15. The overall proportion of women delegates and advisers accredited to the 17th APRM stands at just 35.8 per cent. Although this represents an increase of 7.9 per cent compared to the 16th APRM six years ago the Committee is of the view that further progress is clearly required. Concretely, there are 42.1 per cent women in Government delegations, 26.3 per cent women in the Employers' delegations and 31.1 per cent women in the Workers' delegations.

► Proportion of women by function and group



16. The Committee notes with regret that the minimum target of 30 per cent of women’s participation has not been reached in the titular delegate category of any of the three groups, thus representing a resistant “glass ceiling” in women’s participation. There are indeed 26.5 per cent of women in the Government titular delegate category, 15.15 per cent in the Employers’ titular delegate category and 21.2 per cent in the Workers’ titular delegate category. The Committee once again stresses the importance of reaching at least the 30 per cent minimum target in all groups and, in particular, as regards women in leadership positions with the goal of gender parity.
17. The Committee draws attention to Annex III which shows the female participation by national delegation. It observes that five delegations to the present Meeting are exclusively composed of men, that is two less than at the 16th APRM. Two of the five exclusively male delegations to the present Meeting are the same as at the previous APRM. The Committee calls upon the Member States concerned to take appropriate steps with a view to redressing the situation.

Other participants

18. One Member State (France), invited by the Governing Body as observer in accordance with article 1(3) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, accredited a tripartite delegation to the Meeting. In addition, the Meeting was attended by 1 liberation movement (Palestine), representatives of 4 official international organizations and of 15 international non-governmental organizations. Detailed information regarding all participants is available in the Final List of Delegations.

Representation of Myanmar

19. By a note verbale dated 27 October 2022, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

presented credentials of a delegation to attend the 17th APRM. In its reply to the Permanent Mission, the Office recalled that the Credentials Committee of the 110th International Labour Conference had decided that no delegates from Myanmar could be accredited ([ILC.110/Record No. 2A](#), paragraphs 15–29) for as long as guidance on this matter had not been received from the United Nations General Assembly and the question of representation of Myanmar remained unresolved. The Office further recalled that until the Credentials Committee of the Conference made a new determination on the representation of Myanmar in ILO meetings, it remained bound by the decision of the Credentials Committee of the Conference and was therefore not in a position to process the credentials submitted from any entity claiming to represent the legitimate government of Myanmar.

Objections

20. The Committee received three objections.

Objection concerning the nomination of the Workers' delegate of Brunei Darussalam

21. The Committee received an objection from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) alleging that the Government of Brunei Darussalam had not complied with article 1(2) and (5) of the *Rules for regional meetings* in terms of the tripartite constitution of its delegation in that the Workers' delegate seemed to be representing a business and employer.
22. In a written communication in response to the Committee's request for clarifications, the Minister of Home Affairs stated that although the formation of trade unions was allowed pursuant to the Trade Unions Act (Chapter 128), the country did not have any active trade unions. He further explained that the Workers' delegate held the post of Strategic HR Business Partner at the Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam, oversaw the welfare of workers in her organization and was responsible in assisting, supporting and providing employment-related guidance to employees. He added that she was an HR Business Partner with more than ten years of experience in human resource strategy, training and manpower planning. Her participation at the present Regional Meeting would enhance human resource policies within the sector from the exchange of knowledge and innovation in improving relevant employment conditions, benefits and well-being.
23. *The Committee notes the explanations provided by the Government, which seem to confirm the ITUC's assertion that the Workers' delegate represented a business rather than a workers' organization. At the same time, the Committee notes that pursuant to article 1(5) of the Rules for regional meetings, representative organizations have to be consulted before the nomination of Employers' and Workers' delegates only if such organizations exist. To the extent that the Government concedes that no active trade unions exist in the country, then article 1(5) of the Rules does not apply in the case at hand and the objection cannot be examined by reference to this provision.*
24. *The Committee feels nonetheless obliged to recall that with the exception of two incomplete delegations that were challenged, the Government has been accrediting tripartite delegations for the past 14 years at the International Labour Conference and Regional Meetings without the nomination of Workers' delegates having been challenged on grounds related to their representativeness and affiliation to genuine workers' organizations.*
25. *While – as explained above – there may be no basis for taking or recommending any further action with respect to this objection, the Committee considers the situation is at odds with the situation presented at the International Labour Conference where the credentials of the Workers' delegates of*

Brunei Darussalam have not given rise to objection despite the apparent non-existence of workers' organizations that those delegates supposedly represent.

26. *In addition, according to the case law of the Credentials Committee of the International Labour Conference, where no most representative organizations exist in a country, the Government still has an obligation to nominate delegates who truly represent respectively the employers and the workers of the Member. While the Conference Credentials Committee grounds this obligation specifically on article 3, paragraph 1, of the ILO Constitution, which has no exact corresponding provision in the Rules for regional meetings, this obligation is in fact implied in the very notion of Employers' and Workers' delegate. The Committee therefore urges the Government to take steps to ensure that the Workers' delegate to future sessions of the International Labour Conference and Regional Meetings will be truly representative of the workers of the country. Given that the formation of trade unions is allowed pursuant to the Trade Unions Act (Chapter 128), the Committee is of the view that this can best be achieved by promoting and supporting the creation of independent and representative organizations of workers in all sectors of economic activity of the country.*

Objection concerning the nomination of the Workers' delegation of India

27. The Committee received an objection from ten Indian trade unions (AICCTU, AITUC, AIUTUC, CITU, HMS, INTUC, LPF, SEWA, TUCC and UTUC), alleging that the Government had not invited them to the Meeting and had not facilitated their participation therein. The ten trade unions further indicated that despite their repeated solicitations, the Government facilitated the participation of only one union – Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) – that was close to it.
28. In a written communication addressed to the Committee at its request, the Government explained that the BMS was the largest trade union in the country, with the highest verified representation of all recognized trade unions. Therefore, in accordance with article 1(5) of the *Rules for regional meetings*, and in the spirit of giving voice to more workers, it nominated the Workers' delegate and adviser from the BMS. The Government further stated that the invitation to the Meeting had only specified one Employers' delegate and one Worker's delegate. Had there been scope for more participants to be nominated, it would have been in a position to consider others as well.
29. *The Committee observes that the Government has unilaterally nominated the Workers' delegate and adviser from within the ranks of the BMS, which it considers to be the most representative workers' organization in the country based on membership figures. The Committee notes that while considering the BMS as the most representative, the Government has not questioned the representativeness of the objecting organizations. In this regard, the Committee notes that article 1(5) of the Rules for regional meetings specifically foresees that several most representative organizations may exist in a given country. The Committee further recalls that according to the Advisory Opinion No. 1 of 1922 of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) and subsequent case law of the Credentials Committee of the International Labour Conference, where several most representative organizations exist in one country, the Government must, pursuant to the terms of article 3(5) of the ILO Constitution, which contains a similar obligation as regards nomination of non-Governmental delegates to the Conference, aim to effect an agreement among them. The Committee recalls that Employers' and Workers' delegates represent, respectively, all the employers and all the workers in a country, and not just their respective organizations. Consequently, where several representative organizations exist, Governments must take them all into consideration and, ideally, proceed to the nomination of the non-Governmental delegates and advisers by common agreement.*

30. *Moreover, the Committee notes that governments were specifically requested to share the invitation letter to the Meeting with the employers' and workers' organizations with a view to constituting a tripartite delegation to the 17th APRM and that no limitation was imposed on the number of representatives that could be nominated.*
31. *The Committee encourages the Government to review the system of nomination of Employers' and Workers' delegates and advisers in accordance with the letter and spirit of article 1(5) of the Rules and expects that the Government will make every effort to give full effect to the requirement of inclusive consultations when nominating non-Government delegates and advisers to future ILO meetings.*

Objection concerning the nomination of the Workers' delegate of Qatar

32. The Committee received an objection from the ITUC alleging that the Government of Qatar had not complied with article 1(2) and (5) of the *Rules for regional meetings* in terms of the tripartite constitution of its delegation in that the Workers' delegate seemed to be representing a business and employer.
33. In a written communication addressed to the Committee at its request, the Government explained that the Workers' delegate was a representative of workers in the Energy Company and not a business owner, and that he had been chosen in agreement with the most representative workers' organizations according to article 1(5) of the *Rules for regional meetings*.
34. *The Committee is satisfied with the Government's response and notes that according to the [Final list of participants](#) to the 16th APRM (Bali, 2016) published on 9 December 2016, the same individual was accredited as the Workers' delegate without any objection having been lodged in this regard. The Committee stresses, nonetheless, the importance for Governments to provide clear and precise information on the affiliation of non-Government delegates and advisers in order to avoid misunderstandings and unnecessary objections.*

Complaints

35. The Committee received a complaint.

Complaint concerning the non-payment of travel and subsistence expenses of the Workers' delegation of Fiji

36. The Committee received a complaint concerning the non-payment of travel and subsistence expenses of the Workers' delegation by the Government of Fiji, presented by the Workers' adviser. According to the complainant, the Government had delayed the accreditation of the employers and workers, keeping information until the last minute regarding accreditation and participation. The Workers' delegation paid their own costs to attend the Regional Meeting.
37. In a written communication addressed to the Committee at its request, the Government of Fiji explained that it had conducted its due process of accrediting the tripartite delegation for the 17th APRM and deposited credentials on 5 December 2022. The Government highlighted that, unlike the Government and the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, the Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC) did not support the paper that was presented to the National Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Board (NOSHAB) on 15 November 2022 for funding the tripartite delegation through the National Occupation Health and Safety Education and Accident Prevention Trust Fund. In view of the foregoing, the Government in line with the second invitation communicated by the ILO's Director-General on 7 October 2022 – allowing remote connectivity – decided to attend the meeting virtually and the tripartite delegation was advised

accordingly. The Government confirmed that only the Workers' delegation travelled to Singapore, whereas the Government and the Employers' delegation attended the APRM virtually.

38. *The Committee understands that the objection relates to the use of OSH funds to pay for travel rather than simply a refusal to accept funded travel. The Committee notes that this Regional Meeting has been organized as a physical, face-to-face meeting, and that participants were expected to attend the meeting in person. Arrangements for remote participation via a videoconferencing platform were made available only as an exceptional measure in view of COVID-19-related developments and travel restrictions and not as an alternative option to be selected by governments at their will. Besides, articles 1(4) and 9(2) of the Rules for regional meetings had not been suspended and therefore Members remained responsible for covering the travel and subsistence expenses of their tripartite delegations.*
39. *The Committee considers it particularly relevant to recall that the Credentials Committee of the 110th Session (June 2022) of the International Labour Conference took the view that where nominations occur, delegates and advisers are obliged to travel to the location of the Conference and attend in person and governments have the corresponding obligation to cover the travel and subsistence expenses of the tripartite delegations, even if the Conference takes place in a hybrid format.*
40. *In view of the foregoing, the Committee considers that the possibility for remote participation in the Regional Meeting for limited and exceptional reasons did not absolve the Government from its obligation to finance the travel and subsistence expenses of its tripartite delegation. The Committee, therefore, finds that the decision of the Government of Fiji not to cover the expenses of at least the Workers' delegate, is not consistent with the Government's obligation under article 1(4) of the Rules for regional meetings and urges the Government to comply with its obligations in the future.*

Communications

41. The Committee also received three communications.

Communication concerning the incomplete delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic

42. The Committee received a communication from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) concerning the failure of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to accredit an Employers' and Workers' delegate.
43. *The Committee regrets that the Government did not respond to its invitation to provide information on the matter and also regrets that the employers and workers of the country have been deprived of their right to participate in the Regional Meeting.*

Communication concerning the incomplete delegation of Yemen

44. The Committee received a communication from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) concerning the failure of the Government of Yemen to accredit a Workers' delegate.
45. *The Committee regrets that the Government did not respond to its invitation to provide information on the matter and also regrets that, once again, the workers of the country have been deprived of their right to participate in the Regional Meeting.*

Communication concerning the composition of the delegation of the International Trade Union Confederation

46. The Committee had before it a communication dated 5 December 2022 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva objecting to the participation of a representative of the International Trade Union Confederation–Asia Pacific (ITUC–AP).
47. *Considering that neither the ILO Constitution nor the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference or the rules for the conduct of regional meetings, provided for a procedure to challenge the nomination of representatives of invited non-governmental international organizations, this communication calls for no further action (including publication of details) on the part of the Committee. The Committee notes that the Credentials Committee of the Conference had made the same observation in response to similar communications received in 2001, 2002 and 2021.*

* * *

48. The Committee adopts this report unanimously. It recommends that the Meeting request the Office to bring the present report to the attention of the Governing Body, in conformity with article 9(4) of the *Rules for regional meetings*.

Singapore, 8 December 2022

(signed) Ms Alison Durbin (Chairperson)

(signed) Mr Paul Mackay (Vice-Chairperson)

(signed) Ms Clare Middlemas (Vice-Chairperson)

Annex I. List of accredited delegates and advisers

	1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)		1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)
Afghanistan.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sri Lanka.....	2	1	1	-	-	-
Australia.....	2	1	1	4	1	2	Syrian Arab Republic.....	2	-	-	-	-	-
Bahrain.....	2	1	1	1	4	2	Thailand.....	2	1	1	11	-	1
Bangladesh.....	2	1	1	3	3	2	Timor-Leste.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brunei Darussalam.....	2	1	1	2	-	-	Tonga.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cambodia.....	2	1	1	1	1	4	Tuvalu.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
China.....	2	1	1	7	3	5	United Arab Emirates.....	2	1	1	4	2	2
Cook Islands.....	2	1	1	-	-	-	Vanuatu.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiji.....	2	1	1	1	-	2	Viet Nam.....	1	1	1	-	-	2
India.....	2	1	1	1	1	1	Yemen.....	2	1	-	-	-	-
Indonesia.....	2	1	1	24	-	4							
Iran (Islamic Republic of).....	2	1	1	8	6	5							
Iraq.....	1	1	1	-	1	1							
Japan.....	2	1	1	8	3	5							
Jordan.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Kiribati.....	2	1	1	-	-	-							
Kuwait.....	2	1	1	-	1	-							
Lao People's Democratic Repub...	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Lebanon.....	2	-	1	-	-	1							
Malaysia.....	2	1	1	6	-	-							
Maldives.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Marshall Islands.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Mongolia.....	2	1	1	1	1	3							
Nepal.....	2	1	1	1	1	10							
New Zealand.....	2	1	1	-	-	-							
Oman.....	2	1	1	5	2	2							
Pakistan.....	2	1	1	1	1	-							
Palau.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Papua New Guinea.....	2	1	1	3	-	-							
Philippines.....	2	1	1	3	1	3							
Qatar.....	2	1	1	7	3	-							
Republic of Korea.....	2	1	1	6	3	7							
Samoa.....	2	1	1	-	1	1							
Saudi Arabia.....	2	1	1	3	1	1							
Singapore.....	2	1	1	23	7	7							
Solomon Islands.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							

	1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)
Total	68	33	33	134	47	73

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Government delegates | 4) Government advisers |
| 2) Employers' delegates | 5) Employers' advisers |
| 3) Workers' delegates | 6) Workers' advisers |

Annex II. List of registered delegates and advisers

	1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)		1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)
Afghanistan.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	Sri Lanka.....	2	1	1	-	-	-
Australia.....	2	1	1	2	1	2	Syrian Arab Republic.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bahrain.....	2	1	1	1	4	2	Thailand.....	2	1	1	11	-	1
Bangladesh.....	2	1	-	2	3	1	Timor-Leste.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brunei Darussalam.....	2	1	1	1	-	-	Tonga.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cambodia.....	2	1	1	1	1	4	Tuvalu.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
China.....	2	-	1	7	3	4	United Arab Emirates.....	2	1	1	3	2	2
Cook Islands.....	-	1	-	-	-	-	Vanuatu.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiji.....	2	1	1	-	-	1	Viet Nam.....	1	1	1	-	-	2
India.....	2	1	1	1	1	1	Yemen.....	2	1	-	-	-	-
Indonesia.....	2	-	1	13	-	2							
Iran (Islamic Republic of).....	2	-	1	4	1	1							
Iraq.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Japan.....	1	1	1	5	3	4							
Jordan.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Kiribati.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Kuwait.....	2	1	1	-	1	-							
Lao People's Democratic Repub...	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Lebanon.....	2	-	-	-	-	1							
Malaysia.....	1	1	1	4	-	-							
Maldives.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Marshall Islands.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Mongolia.....	2	1	1	1	-	-							
Nepal.....	2	1	1	1	1	5							
New Zealand.....	1	1	1	-	-	-							
Oman.....	2	1	1	5	2	2							
Pakistan.....	2	1	1	1	1	-							
Palau.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Papua New Guinea.....	2	1	-	3	-	-							
Philippines.....	1	1	1	3	1	3							
Qatar.....	2	1	1	7	3	-							
Republic of Korea.....	1	1	1	3	3	7							
Samoa.....	2	1	-	-	1	-							
Saudi Arabia.....	2	1	1	2	-	1							
Singapore.....	2	1	1	23	6	6							
Solomon Islands.....	-	-	-	-	-	-							

	1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	6)
Total	56	28	26	104	38	52

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Government delegates | 4) Government advisers |
| 2) Employers' delegates | 5) Employers' advisers |
| 3) Workers' delegates | 6) Workers' advisers |

Annex III. Proportion of women accredited in Regional Meeting delegations

	%					%			
	G	E	T	Tot		G	E	T	Tot
Australia.....	83.3	50.0	100.0	81.8	Sri Lanka.....	50.0	0.0	0.0	25.0
Bahrain.....	33.3	20.0	0.0	18.2	Syrian Arab Republic....	0.0	-	-	0.0
Bangladesh.....	0.0	25.0	0.0	8.3	Thailand.....	61.5	0.0	0.0	50.0
Brunei Darussalam.....	50.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	United Arab Emirates....	50.0	33.3	66.7	50.0
Cambodia.....	66.7	0.0	0.0	20.0	Viet Nam.....	0.0	100.0	66.7	60.0
China.....	44.4	25.0	50.0	42.1	Yemen.....	50.0	0.0	-	33.3
Cook Islands.....	100.0	100.0	0.0	75.0					
Fiji.....	0.0	0.0	33.3	14.3		G	E	T	Tot
India.....	33.3	0.0	50.0	28.6		42.1%	26.3%	31.1%	35.8%
Indonesia.....	50.0	0.0	40.0	46.9					
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	50.0	28.6	0.0	30.4					
Iraq.....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					
Japan.....	30.0	25.0	50.0	35.0					
Kiribati.....	100.0	0.0	100.0	75.0					
Kuwait.....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					
Lebanon.....	100.0	-	50.0	75.0					
Malaysia.....	62.5	100.0	0.0	60.0					
Mongolia.....	33.3	0.0	0.0	11.1					
Nepal.....	0.0	0.0	9.1	6.3					
New Zealand.....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					
Oman.....	14.3	0.0	0.0	7.7					
Pakistan.....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					
Papua New Guinea.....	60.0	100.0	0.0	57.1					
Philippines.....	60.0	0.0	50.0	45.5					
Qatar.....	22.2	25.0	0.0	21.4					
Republic of Korea.....	50.0	75.0	50.0	55.0					
Samoa.....	0.0	50.0	100.0	50.0					
Saudi Arabia.....	20.0	0.0	0.0	11.1					
Singapore.....	40.0	50.0	50.0	43.9					