



THIRTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Report of the Committee on
Technical Cooperation**

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 20 March 2007, chaired by Mr Yimer Aboye (Government, Ethiopia). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr Jeetun and Ms Yacob, respectively.
2. The Committee had the following agenda items:
 - I. Women's entrepreneurship and the promotion of decent work: A thematic evaluation
 - II. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
 - III. Public-private partnerships for technical cooperation
 - IV. Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia
 - V. Other questions
3. The Chairperson informed the members that Ms Ducci, who had represented the Director-General in this Committee in the past, had had to travel outside Geneva to represent him at two high-level United Nations (UN) meetings. The ILO had prepared a *Decent Work Tool Kit*, which was intended to mainstream the Decent Work Agenda in the areas of work of sister organizations. Ms Ducci would present this instrument for endorsement. The tool kit would then be submitted for final approval by the Executive Heads of the UN system at their next meeting, which would be held at the ILO in April.

**I. Women's entrepreneurship and the
promotion of decent work: A thematic
evaluation**

4. After a short video presentation on women's entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan, a representative of the Director-General, Mr Henriques, Director of the Job Creation and Enterprise Development Department, introduced the Office paper.¹ He explained the importance of women's entrepreneurship to both decent work and broader development

¹ GB.298/TC/1.

outcomes, elaborating on the particular constraints faced by women entrepreneurs and the interventions which could be designed to address these constraints. He highlighted some of the success factors and lessons learned from the thematic evaluation, including the need for systemic interventions to address policy, regulatory and socio-cultural barriers to women's entrepreneurship; the importance of building the capacity of intermediaries; the need to customize approaches to specific contexts by involving constituents in project design and management; and the challenge of facilitating more systematic knowledge management, especially of projects and tools.

5. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jeetun, thanked the Office for the video presentation and the paper, but expressed disappointment that the paper had not focused more on a limited selection of projects of direct relevance to women's entrepreneurship rather than covering a number of projects with much broader mandates, but which merely included project components on women's entrepreneurship. He highlighted the importance of a number of social and economic constraints typically faced by women entrepreneurs, such as access to microfinance, and suggested that the paper could have addressed some of these issues in more detail. He noted that the ILO had developed a number of tools to support women's entrepreneurship and said that they should be more widely disseminated and adapted, with the involvement of employers' organizations. He also called for more information on the efficacy or impact of these tools. He pointed out that Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) was a valuable programme which should be expanded, preferably in collaboration with other development organizations. He suggested that the Office employ a senior specialist to work specifically in the field of women's entrepreneurship; that greater efforts be made to analyse project impact through the formulation of clear indicators of achievement; and that the Office step up its efforts to ensure the sustainability of its interventions. On the latter point, he pointed out that further collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin would help build the capacity of constituents and thus strengthen the potential for sustainability of project interventions. He proposed a number of amendments to the points for decision in paragraph 74, largely concerned with clarifying or simplifying the language used.

6. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Yacob, thanked the Office for the video presentation and the paper, but was keen that the discussion take a broader perspective, indicating that the Office's work on gender went beyond women's entrepreneurship to embrace factors which affect the full involvement of women in society and the economy. That positioned technical cooperation projects targeting entrepreneurship as tools for empowerment and poverty reduction, not just employment creation. In that sense, women's entrepreneurship was a means to an end, and the overall objective should be the promotion of decent work outcomes. She explained that the Workers' group had hoped for a paper providing greater clarity on how women's entrepreneurship could promote decent work outcomes, and pointed out that the paper did not make a convincing case on this matter. She recalled that the concept of decent work included freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, social security coverage, a fair wage and the promotion of social dialogue. She argued that the paper focused too much on supply-side factors and did not properly address important demand-side factors, including increasing wages through collective bargaining and other mechanisms and thus increasing the purchasing power of poor workers who bought from women entrepreneurs. She suggested the importance of considering the impact of other types of labour market interventions to put the evaluation of women's entrepreneurship in a broader context. She regretted that the paper neglected the important role that could be played by cooperatives, referring to the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193). She noted that the paper asserted without any statistical evidence that employment had been created and that nothing had been said on the quality of the jobs supposedly created. She underlined that it was always important to measure the impact on poor women. Disagreeing with the statement in paragraph 71, she stressed that

the ILO should clearly demarcate its comparative advantage in this field (compared to other development organizations) and pointed out that this must be grounded in its core mandate and its Decent Work Agenda and not simply replicate what other international organizations, including the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and regional financial institutions, already did. She stressed that any future ILO work on entrepreneurship should be dedicated to promoting the affective recognition of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and to expand work on cooperatives. She highlighted the role trade unions could play in reaching out to women entrepreneurs. She asked for further details on the areas of work reported in the paper that have involved trade unions. The Workers' group disagreed with paragraph 73 and wished to propose some changes to the points for decision.

7. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, called for more in-depth analysis of results and achievements and asked why so few of the projects reviewed appeared to have followed the evaluation guidelines endorsed by the 294th Session of the Governing Body in November 2005. She highlighted the need for appropriate indicators to measure impact and called for the Office to improve monitoring and evaluation of technical cooperation projects. She argued that the focus of women's entrepreneurship activities should be on job creation, but recognized that there were also likely to be other important dimensions, including empowerment and awareness raising. She encouraged the Office to enhance its cooperation with other development partners, especially in terms of exchanging lessons learned. She suggested some amendments to the points for decision in paragraph 74, including a reference to Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) guidance under (ii), and the addition of two further points, one on making reference to HIV/AIDS in technical cooperation projects that targeted women's entrepreneurship and another on the need to include robust indicators to improve project monitoring.
8. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, encouraged the Office to strengthen its work to support women entrepreneurs and to include in this work efforts to promote women's access to microfinance.
9. The representative of the Government of Ethiopia drew attention to the positive results attributed in the paper to the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) project in Asia and mentioned the potential benefits of replicating it in Africa and elsewhere. He suggested that this could be added to the points for decision.
10. The representative of the Government of China, speaking on behalf of the Asia-Pacific group (ASPAG), endorsed the paper, highlighting women's entrepreneurship as a means to achieve decent work outcomes and for poverty reduction. He suggested that the paper could have been strengthened with a better organization of the latter sections, especially as they related to lessons learned.
11. The representative of the Government of India emphasized the critical role played by external factors such as health and education in women's entrepreneurship. He called for the involvement of civil society organizations and national research bodies to support the analysis, monitoring and evaluation of women's entrepreneurship programmes. It was important to build sustainability into technical cooperation projects, and this would be strengthened if all key stakeholders were involved in project design and implementation.
12. The representative of the Government of Nigeria referred to the positive results achieved by the TREE project mentioned in the paper and emphasized the link between women's entrepreneurship and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

- 13.** The representative of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela drew attention to a number of initiatives in his country pertaining to the economic and social empowerment of women. Among other matters, he mentioned that in his country women participated in, and were included in, the top management levels of public institutions and companies in which the State was a major shareholder; a leading role for women was ensured and promoted in the manufacturing sector, in micro-enterprises, cooperatives and small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as in major industries; women workers had access to credit programmes, and to appropriate, permanent aid in respect of raw material supply, training, administration and technical advice in the fields of management, marketing and distribution; and he stressed that his Government had established an effective policy entitled “Misión Madres del Barrio” (Neighbourhood Mothers Mission) aimed specifically at women and their families suffering from exclusion. This policy covered health, education, diet, culture and recreation; it comprised an initial allotment to these mothers of an income equivalent to 80 per cent of the national minimum wage. With an allocation of more than US\$250 million, more than 240,000 Neighbourhood Mothers had benefited from this social policy, in the struggle to eliminate poverty and exclusion among women, with the aim of definitively incorporating them, in an organized manner, in social production activities; to this end, aid and credits were fundamental to thus allowing women to participate actively in national development.
- 14.** The representative of the Government of Kenya spoke of the need to address women’s entrepreneurship in a broader development context and the benefits of using time-bound targets in projects, and suggested that the paper would have been strengthened by highlighting particular “standout” or model projects.
- 15.** The representative of the Government of Mexico elaborated on the points raised in paragraphs 14 and 43 regarding projects in his country. He said that a training programme had been implemented in the Cohahuila export free zone covering human and labour rights for women, self-esteem, leadership, time management, work organization, and teamwork courses, and training had been provided to male workers in export free zones on themes with a gender focus.
- 16.** Mr Anand (Employer member), spoke of the “spirit of enterprise” and the need to strengthen education systems to nurture it, and suggested that the paper could have elaborated more on the link between education systems and entrepreneurship.
- 17.** The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom emphasized the need for all technical cooperation projects to address sustainability and to integrate robust indicators for measuring progress.
- 18.** Invited by the Chairperson to respond on behalf of the Office, Mr Henriques thanked the Committee for the rich discussion. He pointed out that the thematic evaluation covered a range of projects with components addressing women’s entrepreneurship, as well as specific women’s entrepreneurship projects, as this had been understood to be what the Governing Body had requested. Of the 29 projects covered, only 15 were subject to an external evaluation and only four were subsequent to the evaluation guidelines endorsed by the Governing Body in November 2005 – hence the evaluations of most projects did not correspond to those guidelines. He agreed that women’s entrepreneurship should be seen as a complement to broader decent work initiatives, but pointed out that by addressing disadvantages and discrimination experienced by women, such projects were likely to involve a broader agenda than just job creation. He acknowledged that most projects covered in the thematic evaluation did not adequately report quantitative outcomes and impacts, but indicated that quantitative aspects of impact assessment were being more systematically integrated into current WEDGE activities. His department was in the process of recruiting a specialist to work on women’s entrepreneurship, who would also be

expected to promote knowledge management activities in this field, and was actively seeking to disseminate more widely the tools available to support women's entrepreneurship, including through a compendium of tools. He underscored the importance of addressing demand-side issues in promoting women's entrepreneurship and, giving examples, highlighted the need for further strengthening trade union involvement in activities to promote women's entrepreneurship. He pointed out that WEDGE worked in collaboration with local research institutions and placed great emphasis on achieving sustainable impacts. If, owing to time constraints, he were unable to answer any issues raised by Committee members, he would be pleased to follow up on a bilateral basis.

19. *The Committee on Technical Cooperation invites the Governing Body to call upon the Office to:*

- (i) ensure that all technical cooperation projects on women's entrepreneurship place their primary focus on decent and productive work, sustainability and the facilitation of systemic change, including removing the constraints for women entrepreneurs;*
- (ii) strengthen and make more explicit the linkages between women's entrepreneurship and the Decent Work Agenda, including DWCP guidance, at all stages of the project cycle;*
- (iii) facilitate efforts to support, identify and share lessons learned from its technical cooperation on women's entrepreneurship in all regions;*
- (iv) involve constituents in the promotion of decent and productive employment through women's entrepreneurship development;*
- (v) include technical cooperation projects on women's entrepreneurship that incorporate a strong HIV/AIDs-in-the-working-place dimension, and that specifically target young women; and*
- (vi) ensure that all projects have robust indicators, which will form the basis for all project reporting.*

II. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

20. The Employer Vice-Chairperson thanked IPEC for the comprehensive implementation report.² He noted the financial breakdown of the allocations given to implementing agencies, and the disproportionate allocations to non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He emphasized that the role of employers should be greater in the fight against child labour.

21. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the decline in child labour, but concern remained regarding the lack of progress, notably in sub-Saharan Africa. IPEC should do more to expand understanding of the root causes of child labour, as this would allow more focused action. Further, IPEC should focus not only on the worst forms of child labour, but on all forms. While the worst forms frequently provided a logical entry point for IPEC, this often

² In ILO: *IPEC action against child labour: Highlights 2006* (Geneva, 2007).

led to the erroneous view that child labour by young children was permissible as long as it was not hazardous. The Workers called for more focused action in order to encourage the remaining countries, including prominent countries such as Australia, Canada, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Zealand and the United States, to ratify the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). They were also concerned about the low level of core funding for IPEC, resulting in high staff turnover, and short-term staffing. She also called on the Office to provide training on tripartism for existing and new staff. Regarding the World Day against Child Labour 2007 (WDACL 2007), they expected full coordination with the relevant workers' organizations and the secretariat of the Workers' group. WDACL should also link combating child labour to the promotion of decent jobs for adults. The Workers' group was also willing to engage in discussions with the Office in order to examine the possibility of moving the International Steering Committee's (ISC) November session to March to avoid duplication of reporting efforts, while the thematic debates could be retained in November. Child domestic work was suggested for the next thematic discussion. The Workers noted that universal respect for freedom of association was key in the fight against child labour in the informal economy. Workers' organizations should be more involved in IPEC's work, and a more balanced distribution of funds should reflect this. The comparative advantage of workers' organizations was that they were membership-based, with first-hand knowledge of the workplace and of labour markets.

- 22.** Mr Simon Steyne, in his capacity as Worker spokesperson on the ISC, noted that the redrafted section of the implementation report (February 2007) on the involvement of the social partners had been much improved. The section on conditional cash transfers was a thoughtful analysis, while that on agriculture was instructive and debunked the myth that child labour in agriculture was benign. However, it should have mentioned the importance of social dialogue and mature industrial relations as a key condition for decent work. He reiterated the advantage of workers' organizations as vehicles for organizing workers in the informal economy and thus as catalysts for fighting child labour where it was most prevalent. He also re-emphasized the need to focus on all forms of child labour, and requested a breakdown of the funds allocated to Conventions Nos 138 and 182, noting that, although some of the key members of IMEC had not yet ratified Convention No. 138, and should do so, it had been ratified by 148 other ILO member States and was therefore integral to national policies. He concurred with the Worker spokesperson regarding WDACL 2007 and the funding of IPEC. He asked if the Office could provide a paper explaining the discrepancy between the reduction in hazardous work and child labour overall.
- 23.** The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, welcomed IPEC's implementation report and reaffirmed the group's recognition of the fact that child labour was an evil that required concerted action. He was distressed at the lack of progress in sub-Saharan Africa, and called for more projects, in particular in agriculture and the informal economy. The group was happy with the Time-Bound Programme (TBP) approach, but cautioned that governments should be more deeply involved in their implementation. This would require a reformulation of the programmes to make them part of government-driven policies. He also thanked all the donors that were supporting action against child labour in the region.
- 24.** The representative of the Government of Mexico, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), thanked the Office for the implementation report, which reaffirmed the progress made in the Latin American region. GRULAC valued the strong presence of IPEC in the region, and welcomed the increase in the budgetary allocations for project execution. The speaker also valued the decentralization of human resources, with most IPEC officials in the field (only 11 per cent were in Geneva). He considered fundamental the reorientation that IPEC was giving to its strategy in terms

of enhancing its work at the policy formulation level. It was important to achieve better involvement of employers' and workers' organizations in tripartite discussions to draw up lists of hazardous occupations and to determine more effectively the roles each could play in action against child labour, taking into account the comparative advantages of each of the constituents. He supported the publication of studies, guidelines, good practices and teaching materials. For GRULAC, it was also important to determine indicators to measure the impact of the child labour media campaigns over the last two years. Lastly, he congratulated IPEC for launching its interactive community portal that would facilitate the work of different organizations in the fight against child labour.

25. The representative of the Government of India, noting that India had been an IPEC partner since 1992, expressed her Government's appreciation for IPEC's work. India followed a holistic and multi-pronged approach to eliminating child labour. Her country was considering the possibility of ratifying Convention No. 182, in consultation with the relevant government and state agencies and the social partners. Recent developments in India included the revision of the list of hazardous work to be prohibited for children, and the prohibition of child domestic work and work by children in roadside eateries, hotels, etc.
26. The representative of the Government of El Salvador thanked IPEC for the presentation of the implementation report and supported the GRULAC statement. She highlighted the progress made in Central America in the elimination of child labour through the creation of institutional frameworks and the formulation of concrete and effective action plans. One of the most important advances was the development of lists of hazardous occupations, as a result of a fruitful tripartite discussion process. There were still important challenges to overcome, and the countries in the subregion still needed to rely on IPEC financial and technical support.
27. The representative of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supported the GRULAC statement and thanked the Office for the presentation of the implementation report. His Government supported IPEC initiatives to combat child labour and included education for all, in order to eliminate child labour, and increased resources for education, in its policy. These were national, structural responses, which aimed at the eradication of the worst forms of child labour before 2016, through the provision of free, compulsory and good quality education. He also considered that it was critical to establish a set of indicators to measure the impact of child labour media campaigns in the region, especially if they were designed to overcome the most difficult problems faced by IPEC in the field. He congratulated IPEC on launching its interactive community portal on the Internet.
28. The representative of the Government of Kenya informed the Committee of his country's renewal of its Memorandum of Understanding with IPEC in March 2007. He also called for more government involvement in the implementation of TBPs, and noted that there was too much emphasis on involving NGOs in the execution of programme elements. He was distressed at the lack of progress against child labour in Africa, which did not bode well for the countries in the region. He called for more focus on Africa in action against child labour. He expressed support for WDAFL and its focus on agriculture. He requested more details regarding the implementation of the recently concluded agreement with the European Commission to support the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.
29. The representative of the Government of the United States noted that her Government was a strong supporter of IPEC and thanked the Office for a very informative report. The Government fully supported developments in the field of impact assessments and tracer studies. She hoped to receive more information on the results of these studies in due course. Regarding the timing of the ISC meetings, she was concerned that more than one meeting a year would merely be repetitive and duplicate efforts.

30. The representative of the Government of Chile thanked the Office for the presentation of the report and supported the GRULAC statement. He stressed the importance of alliances for the elimination of child labour, both between the ILO and its constituents and with relevant programmes of other UN agencies. Chile was tackling the problem through a wide national effort that included governmental institutions, employers' and workers' organizations and NGOs and other civil society members. The Ministry of Labour was implementing wide-ranging efforts for the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2010. A number of public services were currently being developed to prevent children from dropping out of education because of work, and to reintegrate children that had left school into special educational programmes or directly into the formal educational system.
31. The representative of the Director-General, Mr Tapiola, thanked all participants in the discussion. On the participation of employers' and workers' organizations in IPEC's work, the Office would continue to increase this and to work on ways to support employers and workers in better implementing child labour projects. With regard to sub-Saharan Africa, attention to that region was a special element in the Global Action Plan, and more information on the special focus on Africa would be forthcoming during the African Regional Meeting in Addis Ababa in April. Regarding the relationship between Conventions Nos 138 and 182, he stressed that these two standards together formed the basis for ILO's work against child labour. He welcomed the announcement of India's intention to ratify Convention No. 182. He was happy to inform the Committee of Estonia's ratification of Convention No. 138 the previous week. Concerning WDACL 2007, he assured the Committee that it would be organized in full consultation with the relevant employers' and workers' organizations. In reply to the Workers' request for an explanation on the discrepancies in the reduction of hazardous child labour and other forms, he said that a paper was being prepared. With respect to the timing of the ISC meetings, the Office would continue to discuss the possibilities.

III. Public-private partnerships for technical cooperation

32. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Hembrechts, in introducing the agenda item, recalled the relevant conclusions of the discussion on the role of the ILO in technical cooperation at the 2006 session of the International Labour Conference. Referring to the need to diversify funding sources, he reiterated that public-private partnerships (PPPs) had potential, and that the ILO could benefit from the expertise and contribution of private enterprises and trade unions in pursuing the Decent Work Agenda. The current discussion on PPPs was taking place at a time when the extra-budgetary resources approved were at their highest level, reaching US\$243 million in 2006, for which Mr Hembrechts expressed his appreciation of donors' trust and confidence in the ILO.
33. Although PPPs were already being actively promoted by other UN organizations, the ILO's experience over the previous ten years had been limited to only five projects ranging from \$700,000 to \$8 million. Furthermore, over the same period, there were 13 projects (\$1,650,000) funded by the private sector initiative, 27 projects (\$8.6 million) by social partners, 22 projects (\$1.5 million) by public institutions, and 39 projects (\$7.5 million) by foundations. PPP arrangements had been made on an ad hoc basis.
34. Hoping that the discussions at the meeting would open the door for new partnership arrangements, and highlighting the need for establishing clear, comprehensive, transparent and foresighted guidelines, he drew attention to the ILO's mandate, unique tripartite structure and standard-setting activities, which had led to the identification of the eight guiding principles. In preparing the guidelines, three issues needed to be addressed: criteria

for identifying opportunities; procedures for assessing and approving the opportunities; and steps for developing and concluding partnership proposals and agreements.

35. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr Jeetun, informed the Committee that the UN had developed a policy framework on engagement with the private sector, on the basis of which a number of UN agencies had developed technical cooperation activities with the private sector. While appreciating the speed at which the Office had progressed on the issue since the 2006 session of the International Labour Conference, he felt that the International Labour Organization had been lagging behind, particularly in the context of UN reforms. The ILO should develop specific guidelines on PPPs that would appeal to potential donors. Apart from the new sources of funding this initiative might bring, the ILO should also see it as a win-win situation where, while the business sector could benefit from a stable and favourable environment resulting from ILO's initiatives, the ILO could draw on the expertise and capacities of the business sector to achieve its goals.
36. The speaker felt that the Office paper³ presented to the Committee provided a broad framework for PPPs; the group was of the opinion that the framework needed to be flexible to encourage greater participation of the private sector in ILO projects and, for that reason, the Employers' group wished to see in the guidelines a flexible and pragmatic approach to make this initiative work. Procedures should not be cumbersome, as that would discourage private sector involvement and defeat the purpose of the partnership recommended in the conclusions of the Conference. Being of the opinion that there were too many conditionalities in the Office paper, and feeling that the ILO guidelines should be in line with those of other UN agencies, he suggested that the ILO look more closely at such guidelines.
37. The ILO should also take into account the UN reform process, and in particular how "Delivering as one" UN would affect the implementation of PPPs.
38. The speaker stressed the importance of mutual trust and reaffirmed the need for the further involvement of the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP). Finally, pointing out the different working methods of the private sector, he stressed that the ILO would need to develop its internal capacities to work with the private sector in a transparent and non-bureaucratic manner.
39. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Yacob, highlighted how public-private partnerships should be viewed in the appropriate institutional context, and set up and implemented in full conformity with the ILO's principles and values. Responding to the proposal that the ILO should align its guidelines for public-private partnerships with other UN agencies, she further insisted that the unique tripartite structure and social dialogue must not be lost. The Workers' group fully subscribed to the principles outlined in the paper, and invited the Office to make an explicit reference to these principles in any future guidelines.
40. Referring to the seven phases outlined in the section on the public-private partnership life cycle, the speaker suggested the addition of an eighth phase related to impact assessment of PPP. In that connection, the ILO, in consultation with its tripartite constituents and partners, should develop, promote and use impact assessment tools in order to enable effective management, ensure accountability, and build upon the lessons learned from successes and failures. She also noted that the criteria for identifying partnership opportunities mentioned in the paper were drawn from the principles of the Global Compact, and was of the opinion that they should also include relevant international labour standards and other instruments adopted by the governing structures of the ILO.

³ GB.298/TC/3.

41. The consultation of the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and ACT/EMP should not only be limited to screening potential or proposed partners, but should also embrace all phases of public-private partnerships. It was not only a question of "good practice", as mentioned in the paper prepared by the Office, but should also be a necessity. With regard to the authority to approve public-private partnerships residing with the Director-General, who may consult the Officers of the Governing Body, as appropriate, the Workers' group further suggested that the Director-General should regularly submit the proposed final decisions to the Officers of the Governing Body for approval.
42. The Workers' group endorsed the point for decision presented to the Committee and requested the Office to take its comments into account in the development of PPPs in technical cooperation.
43. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, expressed its willingness to support the development of public-private partnerships for the ILO and endorsed the strategy, guiding principles and criteria for engagement in PPPs as reflected in the document.
44. The ILO needed to gain experience in building and managing partnerships, and in this respect IMEC believed that strong partnership management – rooted in clear objectives, systematic evaluations and impact assessments – and an emphasis on local ownership would significantly contribute to their success and sustainability.
45. She further stated that PPPs were part of the general resource mobilization strategy of the ILO, and emphasized that this and the PPP initiative had to fully take into account the ILO's fundamental value systems. An appropriate policy had to be determined, and guidelines and control mechanisms developed, in order to provide operational and legal guidance for the engagement in PPPs. When preparing such guidelines, the Office should consult those already existing in other organizations.
46. The speaker concluded that IMEC looked forward to receiving draft guidelines for consideration and adoption, but that it would be premature to advocate the development and dissemination of promotional materials for PPPs. IMEC supported the point for decision but wished to amend subparagraph 10(b) as follows: "request the Office to develop and submit for adoption, and subsequent monitoring by the Governing Body, operational guidelines for the development and implementation of public-private partnerships".
47. The representative of the Government of China, speaking on behalf of ASPAG, stated that given the resource restrictions for the ILO to realize the objective of decent work for all, ASPAG believed that public-private partnerships had proved to be a viable means for resource mobilization and service delivery. ASPAG wished to see guidelines developed and implemented with the oversight of the Governing Body, so that the latter could reflect on the approach to address and mitigate any potential risk to the credit of the Organization. The speaker concluded by stating that ASPAG would be willing to adopt paragraph 10 if subparagraph (b) could be amended to address its concerns.
48. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, agreed that public-private partnerships had the potential to expand and enhance the effectiveness of the ILO's technical cooperation activities, and endorsed the point for decision as outlined in paragraph 10.
49. The representative of the Government of India acknowledged the importance of the PPP, not only as a source of funding but also for enlarging the knowledge base in the field of technical cooperation as a means of pursuing the ILO Decent Work Agenda. She outlined

the need to further develop partnership models on priority issues such as reduction of poverty and promotion of employment. The ILO's role in all stages of partnership development should be defined in clear guidelines, including appropriate benchmarks. In this respect, the issue of sustainability should be addressed, in particular, when moving towards technical cooperation projects.

- 50.** The representative of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela said the ILO public-private associations, in the field of technical cooperation, should be established with public and private sector entities that shared the ILO's values, respected its mandate, its tripartite character, and supported the principles and rights contained in the Organization's core Conventions, as well as the principles of human rights and the combat against corruption. He placed particular emphasis on the special tripartite structure of the ILO, and on social dialogue, pointing out that paragraph 9.2 of the Governing Body document the express participation by governments in determining and evaluating possible public-private associations had been omitted or not clearly stated. Accordingly, his Government, characterized by wide social dialogue, could not support the exclusion of governments from all matters related to the approval of public-private associations in the field of technical cooperation. He respectfully recommended that the Office take account of the proposals of the ILO and develop fully the conclusions of the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference, when preparing the guidelines on technical cooperation, which would be submitted for consideration by the Governing Body.
- 51.** The representative of the Government of Nigeria supported the position of the Africa group. She noted that, in general, private businesses were not always respectful of the fundamental principles and rights at work, or of the environment; she felt that the ILO should nevertheless explore the possibility. She indicated that in the area of HIV/AIDS in the workplace in Nigeria, it was possible to develop policy guidelines which were an example of a successful PPP.
- 52.** The Legal Adviser, Ms Trebilcock, pointed out that the proposal concerning "operational guidelines" (to be established by the Office) differed from the relevant text adopted by the Committee on Technical Cooperation during the 2006 session of the International Labour Conference, which spoke of more general "guidelines" to be established by the Governing Body. In so far as the guidelines would be governing the acceptance of funds from private sources, it had to be taken into account that the Governing Body had delegated its authority, under article 12 of the Financial Regulations, to accept such funds to the Director-General under certain conditions and subject to reporting back to it. The link with the Financial Regulations and Rules meant that the question might need to be considered by the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee.
- 53.** Responding to the deliberations of the Committee, a representative of the Director-General, Mr Hembrechts, noted not only the overall interest and support for the proposal made by the Office to work on specific guidelines on PPPs, but also the differences in concerns expressed amongst the Employers' and Workers' groups. The Workers emphasized the need to respect the ILO's values and principles, proposing the insertion of an additional step in the process involving impact assessments, and for broad consultation with the social partners. The Employers' group favoured more flexibility and following the overall UN guidelines and best practices. It was a question of defining the right balance and of developing appropriate operational guidelines reflecting the main concerns raised in the debate. With regard to the involvement of the Officers of the Governing Body in approving PPPs, he pointed out that the Director-General could, by delegation of authority, decide, while consultations with the Officers of the Governing Body would take place in sensitive cases. The Governing Body would in any case be regularly informed of PPP approvals. The Office wished to initiate the process immediately in elaborating the guidelines involving broad consultations with employers' and workers' organizations and

regional groups; the proposal to submit a new paper to the Governing Body in November for approval risked causing further delays.

54. There was an extensive discussion on the different components of the proposed point for decision. However, in the absence of a consensus the proposed point for decision was not carried.

IV. Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia

55. A representative of the Director-General, Mr Maninat, introduced the paper,⁴ and informed the Committee that the representation of the ILO had been in full operation in Colombia since the end of 2006. Discussions were under way with respect to the different components of the DWCP and, pending a consensus, implementation would begin, as resources from the Government of Colombia and from the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in the United Kingdom had already been made available. He mentioned that the TUC had made a contribution to the programme.

56. Mr Echevarria, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, welcomed the report and the resources allocated by the Government and the United Kingdom TUC to the project. He also commended the official in charge of the ILO representation for the contacts made with the Government, the Attorney-General's Office and other institutions with a view to furthering the fight against the impunity of crimes against trade unionists. Lastly, he appealed to trade unions to reach agreement on the DWCP and expressed the group's commitment to its success.

57. Ms Yacob, speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, welcomed the opening of the permanent representation, and encouraged the official in charge to take a firm approach in supporting the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy. She called on the Office to strengthen the ILO representation in Bogotá by providing it with adequate human and financial resources in order to allow it to fulfil its mandate. Protection of trade unionists was central to the agreement, and technical cooperation was useless unless it contributed to reducing anti-trade union violence. She deplored the fact that at least 84 trade unionists had been killed in 2006, adding their names to those of the 2,245 workers assassinated between 1991 and 2006, 22 per cent of whom were trade union leaders, including the most recent murder of Ms Carmen Cecilia Santana Romano who was shot to death in front of her children. Other concerns were the privatization and restructuring of public enterprises, anti-trade union practices, outsourcing and systematic violation of collective bargaining, and the right to strike. All these were areas covered by the Tripartite Agreement and needed to be addressed by the official in charge of the representation. Further support in various disciplines and an appropriate budget for the ILO Office in Bogotá was required, as was the political will and commitment from the Government. Lastly, the spokesperson referred to the investigations initiated by the Attorney-General's Office into the assassinations of trade unionists and the need to rapidly put an end to impunity. She called on governments which provided the Colombian Government with military support to invest instead in human rights and social dialogue in this country.

58. Mr Gómez Esguerra (Worker member), thanking the Office and the Colombian Government for the steps taken so far, noted his disappointment in the lack of progress made with regard to respect for unions' rights in Colombia since the signing of the

⁴ GB.298/TC/4.

Tripartite Agreement. He also urged those donor countries that supported the Agreement to make financial contributions to the projects. Concrete results needed to be shown at the forthcoming session of the International Labour Conference.

59. Mr de Arbeloa (Employer member) pointed to the Tripartite Agreement as a good example of how the ILO could promote the fundamental rights of workers and the Declaration of Philadelphia through technical cooperation. He called upon donors to continue contributing to important programmes such as this.
60. The Ambassador of Colombia, Ms Forero, stated that in signing the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy, her Government had committed to guaranteeing the renewed presence of the ILO in Colombia. The Government had assigned a significant contribution to the implementation of technical cooperation projects. Calling upon all parties involved to conclude the discussion process on the content, the Ambassador reaffirmed the will of her Government to finalize this process. She highlighted the important role of social dialogue in all projects in reaching the objectives of the Tripartite Agreement. She informed the Committee of an agreement which had been signed between the Government and the Attorney-General's Office to expedite cases of violations of trade unionists' human rights. Thirteen attorneys had been appointed exclusively to investigate cases involving trade unionists, in consultation with the three trade unions. This initiative was part of the progress achieved in the development of the "Public Policy against Impunity in Cases of Human Rights Violations and Breaches of International Humanitarian Law". In summing up, the Ambassador thanked the ILO for its continued support.
61. The representative of the Government of Mexico, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, stressed the importance of the technical cooperation programme for Colombia. Concerning the Tripartite Agreement on Freedom of Association and Democracy, the group appreciated the fact that the Colombian Government had incorporated decent work in its national development plan and assigned resources to its implementation. The speaker highlighted the role of the ILO representative and the DWCP in promoting tripartism in Colombia, and expressed his confidence that this would lead to improved social dialogue and labour relations in the country.
62. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, noted the developments taking place in Colombia, and said that the high-level meetings attended by the ILO representative in Colombia were a step in the right direction.
63. The representative of the Government of Germany, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), referred to the progress being made in further implementing the Tripartite Agreement. Social dialogue forums had proven to be adequate platforms for collaboration of national authorities with the social partners in defining, implementing and evaluating labour policies so as to guarantee fundamental workers' rights. The EU welcomed the establishment of an ILO permanent representation in Bogotá at the end of 2006 and the preparation and implementation of the DWCP for Colombia. The EU expected to see further progress in the near future, and encouraged the ILO to closely monitor the functioning of the Tripartite Agreement and to ensure the active participation of the social partners and collective bargaining. The EU also encouraged the Colombian Government to intensify action to guard against violations of trade union members' human rights and place special importance on investigative activities to fight impunity effectively.
64. The representative of the Government of Canada welcomed the Tripartite Agreement that had led to the establishment of an ILO presence in Colombia, and was encouraged by the work already undertaken by the ILO. She urged the Government of Colombia and the social partners to fully cooperate with the ILO to address the persisting serious labour issues and, as a priority, to give immediate attention to the recognition of fundamental rights and the protection of workers and employers who exercise them.

65. The Worker Vice-Chairperson commented that the 23 investigative cases referred to by the Ambassador of Colombia represented only 1 per cent of the 2,245 workers assassinated in Colombia in the last 15 years. She added that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had reported that the Colombian army was involved in killing civilians, and urged donor governments to contribute to the ILO and to social development rather than providing military assistance to Colombia.
66. The representative of the Director-General, Mr Maninat, reiterated that the Office would continue to monitor the situation in Colombia closely. He noted that, while the representation of the ILO had been in the country for only three months, it was addressing deep-rooted issues that unfortunately had been there for many years. He stressed the need for further extra-budgetary resources to sustain and support the future work of the ILO in Colombia.

V. Other questions

67. There being no issue under this agenda item, the Chairperson closed the meeting, informing the Committee that, in accordance with the standard procedures, the report of the meeting would be approved on its behalf by the Officers of the Committee. They would also agree on the agenda for the meeting of the Committee at the November session.

Geneva, 23 March 2007.

Point for decision: Paragraph 19.