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Governing Body

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Programme, Financial and Administrative Section **PFA**

Minutes of the Programme, Financial and Administrative Section

Contents

Programme, Financial and Administrative Segment

1. The ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29 (GB.352/PFA/1)

1. **The Worker spokesperson** expressed appreciation for the emphasis on a renewed social contract in the Strategic Plan for 2026–29. However, the document lacked ambition and focus. A more visionary document that reflected the ILO's mandate was needed to address the deterioration in the rule of law, the shrinking of democratic space and persistent poverty and precarity. Armed conflict and climate change meant that a vision was needed that addressed crises and long-term structural transformations and would increase the fiscal and policy space to tackle economic, social and environmental objectives to protect workers and the planet. The problems were correctly identified in the document, but the solutions should be focused on compliance with the ILO's mandate to protect workers. Workers and enterprises could not be placed on an equal footing in terms of protection; workers were rights-holders while companies were not. The ILO could not take a neutral stance due to the power imbalance in the labour market between workers and employers. The ILO should reinforce its mandate to protect jobseekers, workers, unemployed people and retirees.

2. It was disappointing that a number of comments made by the Workers' group during consultations had not been reflected in the document. Language mattered and the translation of the ILO's mandate into the Strategic Plan should be explicit. For example, the "people" referred to in the document should be called "workers". The Strategic Plan contained all the necessary ingredients to ensure a renewed social contract. However, repeated references to tools, concepts and priorities made it difficult to understand the vision and how it would be realized. Consistency was needed between the Strategic Plan and the key messages of the tripartite input to the United Nations on a renewed social contract. The references to the programme and budget outcomes under each of the four priority areas was superfluous, since they were already covered in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27. The aspirational targets set out in figure 3 of the document only covered some of the targets set under the four priority areas; he called on the Office to clarify how the targets had been selected and how the numbers had been calculated. It was unclear whether achieving zero deaths and reducing injuries at work, eliminating forced labour and extending universal social protection were aspirational targets, since they appeared to be more appropriate to the programme and budget.

3. In the section on the first priority area, inclusive and effective governance of work, a clear reference was needed to the role of Member States. The Workers' group agreed with most of the issues mentioned under that priority area. However, the text should clarify that the setting and upholding of international labour standards were not founded solely on the Standards Review Mechanism. The Strategic Plan should be aimed at reinforcing normative work and the ILO's supervisory system, as well as social dialogue and tripartism. An increase in ratifications of standards would require a strengthened supervisory system, which required sufficient budget for the International Labour Standards department.

4. The Workers' group wished to rename the second priority area "Full and productive employment for decent work and industrial policies for sustainable development". In keeping with paragraph 32 of the previous Strategic Plan, it would be timely to include a visionary statement that referred to the point in the Conference conclusions on inequalities that "employment creation is key to reducing inequality. It requires a pro-employment and gender-responsive macroeconomic framework, including fiscal, monetary, industrial, sectoral,

and labour policies, effective active labour market policies, and enabling regulatory environments". The Workers' group was not in favour of the promotion of sustainable enterprises as such, as the term had not been defined. Instead, it would be more appropriate to refer to a framework for sustainable enterprises as one of the drivers of employment creation, and an enabling environment for enterprises to create decent jobs and comply with labour regulations along global supply chains. Reference must also be made to the public sector as a creator of employment. The social and solidarity economy should be mentioned, as should collective bargaining, as the best tool for the fair redistribution of the wealth created through work. With reference to skills, he recalled that labour was not a commodity and human, societal and environmental needs should therefore be taken into account in discussions on training, education and the evolution of societies.

5. The third priority area, equality and protection at work, seemed to tackle equality of treatment between people rather than income and wage inequality. A visionary statement was needed on the guarantee that all workers had the right to adequate protection in accordance with the Decent Work Agenda, with reference to fundamental rights, including occupational safety and health, living wages and maximum working hours, rather than appropriate hours. A living wage was a key topic arising from the Declaration of Philadelphia, and the tripartite meeting of experts in January that year had given the ILO the mandate to support constituents in implementing it. Occupational safety and health should be placed more prominently in the Strategic Plan, since there was much still to be done to reduce accidents and reach zero deaths at work. Reference to decent work in global supply chains should be moved to that priority area and a more visionary statement should be included on respect for labour rights and possible standard-setting on supply chains. Universal social protection had not been included as a separate priority area as it had been in previous Strategic Plans, despite his group's request. The document should take into account the scale of work required to achieve universal coverage.

6. Under the fourth priority area, policy coherence for fair transitions, the initial sentence addressed only the upsides of demographic, technological and environmental shifts, which was unbalanced and unacceptable. Artificial intelligence (AI) should be considered through the lens of labour, social and economic rights; it had been created by humans and should be regulated by humans. Precarity at work, in both the formal and informal economies, should be addressed as part of that priority area due to its impact on all areas of work, economies and societies. He asked how the ILO's mandate to protect all workers would be reflected in the next biennium in order to respond to the needs of those who were not visible in labour statistics. The prevention of informalization should be mentioned in paragraph 26(a) on the transition from informal to formal work, and the language of that paragraph strengthened by aligning it with the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204). As the Conference would be discussing informal work and platform work in 2025, the Strategic Plan should take both important issues into account.

7. The Strategic Plan should include a reference to the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) due to its relevance to the strategy on supply chains. Disability inclusion should also be reflected in the document. In relation to the consolidation of partnerships, more clarity was needed on how partnerships, particularly with the private sector, would include compliance with labour rights and support the achievement of decent work; the Office should consider a reinforced due diligence mechanism.

8. Overall, the Strategic Plan needed to be clearer on its aims. Social justice could not be viewed as an unattainable goal. Compliance with international labour standards was social justice in action. That required strong labour relations based on freedom of association and collective bargaining, the placement of workers' well-being at the centre of the ILO's work, a fair redistribution of the wealth produced by workers and a visionary economy that was aimed at investment in societal needs and the needs of working people and their families.

9. **The Employer spokesperson** welcomed the fact that many comments made by the Employers' group during the consultations had been reflected in the Strategic Plan for 2026–29 and that the background section was more positive. The group nevertheless sought clarification on how the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda and the four priority areas outlined in the Strategic Plan for 2026–29 were related to one another, and also how the three levers for change would interact with, and help to deliver on, the four priority areas. The Employers' group supported the four strategic objectives and the four priority areas, in particular the reference to full and productive employment and sustainable enterprises for decent work, as productive enterprises were key to ensuring decent work. It was extremely important that the priority action programmes did not divert resources away from those objectives and priority areas, but rather contributed to their achievement and delivery. She asked the Office to clarify its plans to ensure that that would be the case. The Employers' group welcomed the intention to use the Global Coalition for Social Justice as a key vehicle for catalysing support for a renewed social contract. It was important to ensure that the focus of the Global Coalition was on enhancing the actions, profile and standing of the ILO without it becoming a separate entity.

10. With reference to the priority area on inclusive and effective governance of work, a focus on workers' protections and rights must be part of a broader enabling environment for job creation and economic growth to allow tripartite constituents to better shape decent work outcomes. Not only workers but also employers had rights, which were necessary for the creation of wealth and employment. The strengthening of institutional capacity-building of the social partners deserved greater emphasis and the Office should ensure, in particular, that it was comprehensive and not focused solely on social dialogue.

11. The Employers' group very much supported the priority area on full and productive employment and sustainable enterprises for decent work. The Office should consider a more comprehensive enabling business environment and should promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy, including through productive employment policies.

12. As to the priority area on equality and protection at work, improved recognition of work and productive activity was necessary, including how they could contribute to economic and social progress to the benefit of all. She suggested that the word "guaranteeing" in paragraph 24(b) should be changed to "promoting" or "furthering" the same services, rights and protections for workers in all forms of employment would be more appropriate. The reference in that same sentence to workers in supply chains should be deleted, as singling out those workers was inappropriate. The priority area should include a reference to the sustainability of social protection systems, along with details on the potential adverse impacts of financing social protection systems if contributions became too high for employers.

13. On the fourth priority area, policy coherence for fair transitions, social dialogue on the development of transition policies was crucial and emphasis should be placed on local capacity-building for the effective management of transitions. In addition, the approach to AI and technological advances, which was currently based on support for fair and inclusive progress in the world of work, should also incorporate an economic dimension and recognize the need to promote and preserve opportunities for decent jobs and the creation of profitable enterprises on an equal footing. Access to digital technology was an important issue.

14. In closing, she asked why no aspirational target reflecting the goals of enterprises or an enabling environment had been included among the other aspirational targets in figure 3. The Employers' group supported the draft decision.

15. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Malawi, noting the assertion that the Strategic Plan had been "developed through a highly participatory approach", expressed concern that it had been developed in a manner that had allowed limited time for consultations. Future consultations should be more inclusive, as had been proposed by the Africa group during the one consultative meeting convened by the Office.

16. Regarding the substantive proposals in the Strategic Plan, she expressed doubt as to whether the goal of setting and upholding robust international labour standards would sufficiently address gaps in coverage arising from the transitions taking place in the world of work. She asked the Office to clarify how Member States in the Africa region would be involved, considering the digital divide between the global North and the global South. She welcomed the roll-out of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions in the pathfinder countries and asked how non-pathfinder countries would be included in the initiative. A clear focus on addressing youth unemployment was important for the Africa region in view of its growing youth population. The group welcomed the prioritization of creating and providing access to decent jobs, particularly in the green, digital, solidarity and rural economies, but reiterated its request that the blue economy should also be a priority. She asked how Africa would benefit from the proposal to expand access to skills development, apprenticeships, lifelong learning and quality education, particularly in relation to skills gaps and youth unemployment. Regarding policy coherence for fair transitions, she asked what mechanisms were envisaged to assist Member States in effectively addressing poverty, inequality, widespread decent work deficits and transitions to the digital economy, as informality rates differed from region to region. The Africa region was already grappling with the adverse effects of climate change, including increased migration, and the group therefore supported the proposal to facilitate a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies. She asked the Office to assist Member States and the social partners in putting in place climate-change-resilient plans for enterprises and economies. The Africa group supported the concept of equal pay for work of equal value and the goal of extending social protection to all workers, and asked the Office to provide constituents with the necessary technical assistance to that end.

17. She asked the Office to take into consideration the Abidjan Declaration, entitled Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the Future of Work in Africa, and the Durban Call to Action on the Elimination of Child Labour when developing programmes for the region. The region's training institutions for social dialogue and labour administration should be given special attention and support. The group welcomed the ILO's vision to expand and strengthen its global footprint and field capacity and looked forward to specific proposals in the next programme and budget on how that would be achieved. She concluded by asking the Office to provide a summary of the lessons learned from the Strategic Plan for 2022–25 and how they had been taken into consideration in the development of the Strategic Plan for 2026–29. The Africa group supported the draft decision.

18. **Speaking on behalf of a significant majority of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC)**, [1] a Government representative of Peru supported the four

[1] Barbados, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and the Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

priority areas in the Strategic Plan for 2026–29. The promotion of decent work should continue to be at the core of ILO policies. He strongly supported the Organization's goal to extend social protection to all workers, including those in the informal economy, and also the continued efforts to facilitate the transition to the formal economy, as the informal economy remained a significant challenge in the region. As women in Latin America and the Caribbean continued to face serious obstacles to accessing decent work, the group strongly supported the commitments to mainstreaming gender equality and non-discrimination into all ILO interventions, ending violence at work, and addressing the needs and rights of the groups and communities most vulnerable to exclusion, discrimination and human rights abuses. It was hoped that those commitments would be reflected in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27.

19. He welcomed the fact that the Strategic Plan focused on strengthening labour market institutions on the basis of international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue. It was essential to promote effective dialogue forums to build fairer and more productive labour relations and thus contribute to economic and social development. ILO technical assistance to all governments and employers' and workers' institutions that requested it would be key to strengthening mechanisms for preventing and settling labour disputes.

20. The effects of climate change were becoming ever more serious in Latin America and the Caribbean. The transition to green economies was therefore vital. To ensure that the transition was indeed just, support must be given to workers and industries as they adapted to new environmental and technological realities.

21. He reaffirmed his group's commitment to working with the ILO to promote the values enshrined in the Strategic Plan for 2026–29.

22. **Speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG)**, a Government representative of Australia welcomed the vision and key priorities set out in the Strategic Plan. She acknowledged the aspiration to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to position the ILO as a key contributor to the Second World Summit for Social Development 2025 and emphasized the importance of strengthening partnerships to that end.

23. The implementation of the Strategic Plan must continue to focus on the ILO's mandate, core functions and long-standing priorities such as job creation and skills development. Capacity-building and technical assistance provided valuable support to Member States – in particular least developed countries and small island developing States – for the application and promotion of international labour standards and pro-employment policy frameworks. In order to implement the Strategic Plan at the national level, it was important to ensure connection between the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 and Decent Work Country Programmes. She requested further information on how the ILO planned to strengthen its field presence and tailor services to constituents' needs.

24. Given the inclusion of safety and health as a fundamental principle and right at work in 2022 and in light of the ILO's Global Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health, she expressed concern that the proposed Strategic Plan did not focus on ensuring a safe and healthy working environment, which must remain a priority. Furthermore, decent work in supply chains was not clearly prioritized in the Strategic Plan despite the focus on that issue in Output 9.3 of the Programme and Budget proposals. It would be preferable for the Governing Body to agree on the Strategic Plan prior to considering the Programme and Budget proposals, in order to ensure that the agreed high-level vision was reflected in ILO outputs and to reduce repetition. Her group looked forward to receiving further information from the Office on what successful implementation of the Strategic Plan would look like, in particular with respect to the four priority areas and how they were reflected in targets set.

25. Lastly, in view of the emphasis on harnessing new technologies and AI to enhance the ILO's work, she asked how the ILO planned to manage potential risks and implement safeguards. ASPAG supported the draft decision.

26. **Speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC)**, a Government representative of Spain concurred with the Office's assessment that the ILO should continue to focus on its strategic mandate to advance social justice through decent work with a human-centred approach anchored in the Decent Work Agenda. With a strong Strategic Plan for 2026–29, the ILO would continue to play a leading role in the future of work and increase its influence within the United Nations (UN) system and through partnerships, thereby contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

27. He welcomed the four mutually supporting priority areas and the three levers for change. However, IMEC was of the view that the Strategic Plan should focus more on the ILO's standard-setting work. Moreover, the group would appreciate further information on the expected impact of the Global Coalition on the advancement of the Decent Work Agenda. While IMEC appreciated the Strategic Plan's overarching objectives to implement the commitments of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and guide key areas of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27, a visionary document would have been more effective in attracting stakeholders, donors, members of the Global Coalition for Social Justice and UN agencies. Nonetheless, his group welcomed the inclusion of aspirational targets for 2029, including the reversal of the global child labour trend.

28. It was essential that the ILO's contributions to achieving the SDGs and shaping the post-2030 global development agenda could be measured effectively. In that context, IMEC urged the Office to pay particular attention to freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

29. Inclusive and meaningful social dialogue and tripartism should aim to ensure the fair sharing of the fruits of progress through strengthening labour institutions and social protection, with particular focus on informality and the atypical forms of work common in the social and solidarity-based economy, the platform economy and the care economy. The ILO played a key role in promoting decent work in global supply chains, including by ensuring the inclusion of labour clauses in trade agreements and promoting access to adequate social protection and improved working conditions.

30. IMEC encouraged the ILO to continue its work to promote equal opportunities for all, including by narrowing the gender pay gap and combating violence and harassment at work, and supported the ongoing work on non-discrimination.

31. Through its normative framework and as an authoritative source of global knowledge, the ILO must consolidate its reputation in the cross-cutting policy areas of technological transformation and environmental sustainability, thereby paving the way for socially and environmentally responsible enterprises.

32. The evaluation process should include a review of the Strategic Plan, and the necessary adjustments should be made to assess progress over time. The resulting data should be used to inform future iterations of the Strategic Plan. Lastly, IMEC hoped that an innovative, effective and proactive risk management strategy, as well as more robust evaluation methods, would be adopted in the near future to improve governance and accountability at the ILO. IMEC supported the draft decision.

33. **A Government representative of China** welcomed the Strategic Plan's priority focus on full and productive employment and sustainable enterprises for decent work. China requested that the Office provide sufficient resources for work under those areas, in particular to strengthen the frontline workforce and provide targeted technical assistance to Member States in building an "employment-first" policy system, solving structural employment issues, improving protection of workers' rights and interests and realizing the potential of digital employment in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

34. The implementation of the Strategic Plan should focus on the ILO's mission to achieve social justice through decent work, strengthening the Governing Body's supervision of the process and taking into account the views of tripartite members. Moreover, coordination between ILO departments and with international bodies should be strengthened and developing countries should be better represented. At the national level, implementation of the Strategic Plan should fully consider the economic and social development level of Member States, in particular developing countries, and specific objectives should be linked to national development priorities.

35. **A Government representative of Mexico** said that while the Strategic Plan's ambitious goals were laudable, its success would depend on its approval and full implementation. He underscored the importance of eradicating forced child labour, making progress in the transition from informality to formality, and eliminating all forms of discrimination. The focus on gender equality in the labour market was welcome and aligned with his country's long-standing commitment to creating a just and equitable society. Strengthened technical assistance, together with an efficient monitoring system sensitive to national contexts, would support the tripartite commitment to ensuring productive and decent jobs.

36. He emphasized that a fair transition must leave no one behind and must take account of climate change and new forms of work as opportunities for development. AI must not be detrimental to human dignity; instead, it must serve as a tool for enhancing the development of communities.

37. The Strategic Plan for 2026–29 provided a solid foundation for the ILO's work and would be strengthened by the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27.

38. **A Government representative of Japan** welcomed the fact that the four priority areas and three levers for change reflected the views expressed by constituents during informal consultations. The redesignation of the third priority area as "equality and protection at work" and the fourth priority area as "policy coherence for fair transitions" would ensure that the ILO could address a broader range of issues.

39. It was critically important to achieve decent work and social justice in the workplace. In that connection and with reference to paragraph 37 of the document, he requested further information as to how the Office intended to expand and strengthen its global footprint and field capacity.

40. Lastly, he expressed concern that paragraph 24(c) referred to "regulating minimum and maximum working hours". His country's understanding was that the ILO sought to protect workers from excessively long working hours, but not from low-income or unstable jobs. He therefore requested that the Office clarify the rationale and mandate for regulating minimum working hours. He supported the draft decision.

41. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** said that the strategic priorities set out in the Strategic Plan were aligned with both the ILO's role as the key multilateral institution for the promotion of social justice and with the Decent Work Agenda. The world was grappling with structural inequalities, the wane of multilateralism and an increase in the number of conflicts. Furthermore, the rise of AI and climate risks had transformed the global employment landscape. In that context, the Strategic Plan could help to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, if aligned with global human-centred initiatives within and beyond the UN system.

42. He encouraged the Office to place equal emphasis on normative development and employment creation in sustainable enterprises. Much remained to be done, however, to fulfil the normative mandate of the ILO to protect migrant workers, care workers, the global supply chain and the rural and informal economy. In implementing the Strategic Plan, it was important to focus on the equal treatment of migrant workers in relation to working conditions, social protection, skills recognition, the right to organize and to collective bargaining, and access to legal recourse.

43. He urged the Office to find innovative ways of strengthening capacity-building and fully introducing the Strategic Plan to ILO staff, in particular those working in country offices. Lastly, he highlighted the need to align programme and budget proposals for the next two biennia with the Strategic Plan. He supported the draft decision.

44. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that support for workers and enterprises in transitioning towards green and digital economies could feature more prominently in the ILO's work under the Strategic Plan. More specific approaches and targets were needed to address the persistent challenge of informality effectively, particularly in developing countries. Greater emphasis could be placed on youth employment, including targeted strategies to support young people in accessing decent work. The Strategic Plan could be further strengthened by underscoring the importance of strengthening global economic governance and reforming international financial institutions to ensure policy coherence and mobilize adequate financing for social justice and decent work, as well as by highlighting the need to address growing inequality between and within countries and labour rights erosion in some regions through more effective global coordination and solidarity. In addition, reference could be made to the critical role of South–South and triangular cooperation in sharing best practices and mobilizing resources to realize the Decent Work Agenda. He supported the draft decision.

45. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Strategic Programming and Management Department) said that the aspirational targets in figure 3 of the Strategic Plan had been selected in the light of the request made during the informal consultations with Governing Body members, based on the availability of data and in line with the relevant SDG indicators. The targets chosen related to impact rather than results. In the future, every effort would be made to include as many targets as possible in such figures. The approach to the setting and upholding of international standards was clearly reflected in the Programme and Budget proposals. Concerning the priority area on full and productive employment and sustainable enterprises for decent work, the differing views of workers and employers had been taken into account. Supply chains were embedded in all areas of the Strategic Plan and would be taken into consideration in its implementation.

46. The four strategic objectives were above the four priority areas in terms of hierarchy. The four priority areas were anchored in and contributed to the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda. The three levers for change had been established to ensure the means to achieve objectives under the priority areas, with an emphasis on partnerships, development cooperation, knowledge management, data and communication, and better use of resources for results. There was no intention to divert resources from the ILO's core business to the priority action programmes.

47. It was unfortunate that time had been limited for consultations on the development of the Strategic Plan. Further efforts would be made to ensure greater consultation in the future. Matters such as the blue economy and youth employment were fully reflected in the Programme and Budget proposals. The main lessons learned from the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2022–25 were summarized the document, and a full section dedicated to lessons learned and the way forward was contained in the programme implementation report for 2022–23. The Office took note of comments on the sequencing of consideration of the Strategic Plan for 2026–29 and the Programme and Budget proposals. Job generation and child labour and gender issues would be fully taken into consideration in the preparation of the Programme and Budget proposals and in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The reference to the regulation of minimum working hours had been made on the basis of previous discussions and ILO guidelines on working hours. All other outstanding issues would be addressed at the 353rd Session of the Governing Body.

48. **The Worker spokesperson** said that, while the Workers did not wish to block consensus on the draft decision, they were strongly disappointed that their questions, remarks and serious concerns had not been addressed by the Office or taken into account in its actions. He reiterated his group's disagreement with the inclusion of a priority area on sustainable enterprises. Employers had the right to organize themselves and to bargain with workers, but enterprises did not. He furthermore repeated the Workers' request to include, in the Strategic Plan, references to income inequalities and precarity at work.

49. **The Employer spokesperson** reiterated that his group considered sustainability an important approach and welcomed its incorporation into the Strategic Plan. He noted with appreciation the confirmation that employers had the same rights to organize as workers.

Decision

50. **The Governing Body endorsed the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29 appended to document GB.352/PFA/1 and requested the Director-General to take account of the views expressed during the discussion when implementing the Strategic Plan and preparing the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 and for 2028–29.**

(GB.352/PFA/1, paragraph 5)

2. Preview of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 (GB.352/PFA/2)

51. **The Employer spokesperson** noted with appreciation that the Office had taken into account several of the comments made by the Employers during the consultations on the document. Regrettably, however, the introduction of new policy and policy coherence outcomes had compromised previous efforts to streamline the Office's work by merging certain outcomes. There were now overlaps, particularly between outputs under outcomes 8 and 10, and some incoherence with the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29. New concepts and formulations had been introduced that might prove contentious during the discussions. The proposals related to supply chains, included under nearly all the outcomes, should be aligned with ILO strategy on decent work in supply chains. The impact of those proposals was questionable.

52. Outcome 1 should place emphasis on enhancing capacity rather than on ratification. Noting that freedom of association and collective bargaining were occasionally singled out, he said that reference should be made to all the fundamental principles and rights at work, particularly in the light of the recurrent discussion on the topic by the International Labour Conference at

its 112th Session (2024) and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), as amended in 2022 (Social Justice Declaration). All ILO work on human rights due diligence policies and practices should be based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Not all labour rights were human rights and due diligence could not replace a State's duty to ensure access to effective judicial remedies. The extent to which the plan of action on fundamental principles and rights at work (2024–30) would focus on enterprises and supply chains was a sensitive issue that would be discussed by the Governing Body during its current session.

53. Regarding outcome 2, he expressed the strong hope that the dedicated programme for employer and business membership organizations and workers' organizations included in the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 would continue to be funded in 2026–27. Noting the references to collective bargaining in outputs 2.3 and 2.4, he emphasized the equal importance of all forms of social dialogue. While the Employers' group supported structured dialogue on diverse forms of work arrangements, it was for the social partners to decide on the appropriate policies or regulations at the national level, and the Office should not expand collective bargaining processes to groups not covered by the provisions of the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). There were no best comparative practices when it came to the classification of workers, which should be done according to the national context.

54. Concerning outcome 3, he urged the Office to ensure that the proposals met skills-related objectives, including the allocation of sufficient resources and the positioning of the Organization as a global leader in terms of skills development, in line with the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) (Centenary Declaration) and the resolution concerning skills and lifelong learning, adopted by the Conference at its 109th Session (2021). As they stood, the proposals failed to address the need for an appropriate strategy and had overlooked a series of skills-related aspects.

55. He welcomed the improved wording of outcome 4 and reiterated his group's commitment to giving emphasis to sustainable enterprises, competitiveness and productivity growth. The proposals should explicitly promote a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises. The implementation of the productivity ecosystem programme nationally as well as at the enterprise level would more effectively close productivity gaps between and within economic sectors. Expanding and consolidating the programme to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises could provide essential policymaking support and build the capacity of regulatory institutions to help enterprises, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), to thrive. Targeted action for the informal economy should be prioritized to assist informal businesses in their transition into formal, productive enterprises.

56. The proposals on outcome 5 did not fully reflect the essential role of employers in advancing gender equality. Their active involvement in policymaking should be assured. Research and knowledge development on the impact of technological transformations should focus not only on discrimination, but also on the opportunities that technology offered to women and groups in vulnerable situations. A more complete reference to the conclusions concerning decent work and the care economy, adopted by the Conference at its 112th Session (2024), should be incorporated into output 5.2.

57. Regarding outcome 6, his group requested the Office to make a clear distinction between migrants and refugees, and to formulate accordingly actions that reflected the substantial differences between those categories of persons. The work of the Office should remain faithful to the overall approach to living wages agreed on, in February 2024, by the Meeting of Experts on wage policies, including living wages. Economic factors should be considered in the wage-setting process. The reference to limiting working hours was confusing, and the concepts of "decent", "balanced" and "flexible" working time, the "right of workers to disconnect" and "informality in formal enterprises" had not been agreed upon and should therefore be removed from the proposals.

58. Important elements from the resolution concerning skills and lifelong learning, adopted by the Conference at its 109th Session (2021), such as financial sustainability, had been omitted from outcome 7. Clear references should be made to building social protection floors and to providing support for fiscal space analysis. The link between passive social protection and active labour market policies should be properly developed.

59. Turning to outcome 8, he said that including digitalization as a policy outcome meant that more emphasis might be placed on technology itself than on its purpose. The ILO's work should encompass a full range of advanced technologies, not only digitalization and AI, and the updated ILO Strategy on knowledge and innovation should adopt a broader approach to better guide the work of the Office. The proposals should further illustrate the positive impact of digital technologies on job creation, among other benefits, and they should specify how the constituents would be engaged. He expressed his group's concerns about possible overlap with other outcomes and requested clarification of how outcome 8 would be implemented and resourced.

60. With regard to outcome 9, he noted that the priority action programmes established in the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 had been intended to support Office-wide and external coordination and collaboration, and not to directly implement front line capacity-building for the constituents, as the current proposals seemed to indicate. A just transition should be economically viable as well as environmentally sustainable, and social dialogue and the involvement of the social partners in the policymaking process were critical to that end. The Office should seek to prevent crises and support mid- to long-term recovery by focusing on coordinating efforts that built the constituents' capacities and strengthened policy to build back better. The Office should remain focused on the ILO's core strengths of tripartism and standards, which should be better reflected in the wording of the title of output 9.4.

61. Concerning outcome 10, it was important to ensure that the Global Coalition for Social Justice effectively supported the Office's work and did not become a separate entity. He wondered how the Office would fulfil its undertaking that the Coalition would not have any financial implications for the Organization. It was unclear how the implementation of output 10.2 would be coordinated with outcomes 3 and 7, given the overlap between their objectives.

62. Lastly, in relation to enabling outcome A, the lack of an explicit reference to development cooperation as an output raised concerns about the Office's commitment to delivering services, such as capacity development, technical advice and targeted projects, to the constituents.

63. **The Worker spokesperson**, noting that the three new outcomes – outcomes 8, 9 and 10 – appeared to address issues already covered in outcomes 1–7, suggested that their inclusion would create additional work, overlap and compartmentalization and might divert time, funding and resources from existing outcomes and outputs. He expressed concern regarding outcome 10 in particular, noting that the creation of a parallel structure for the Global Coalition for Social Justice should be avoided. If the new outcomes were indeed sufficiently different from the existing ones, reference should be made to their functions as enablers of other outcomes and mechanisms for coordination and synergies. Accordingly, outcomes 9 and 10 could be incorporated into enabling outcome A, which might help avoid duplication when measuring results.

64. Referring to outcome 8, he said that by including AI and digitalization in an outcome separate from other technological changes could mean that the workers concerned would be addressed differently, as would their rights. Furthermore, there was a risk that AI and digitalization might unintentionally fall out of the scope of collective bargaining agreements and agreements on wages and working conditions. If retained, the outcome must be clearly aligned with the other relevant elements of the text, especially the part on the protection of workers. Otherwise, those issues could be integrated into enabling outcomes A and C.

65. Repetition in the proposals could be avoided through the inclusion of a paragraph in the introduction explaining how key initiatives, such as the Global Coalition for Social Justice and the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, would be implemented through the different outcomes. It was unclear why it was necessary to mention the issues of resource mobilization and research under each outcome when those topics were included in outputs under enabling outcome A.

66. Consistency in the use of agreed language to refer to key concepts would be appreciated. Furthermore, the use of the term "just transition" should be avoided in the context of labour market changes other than the transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies, to avoid diluting and creating misunderstandings regarding the concept. Given that the ILO's mandate was primarily to protect workers, the disproportionate focus on sustainable enterprises in the proposals was unacceptable.

67. While partnerships were important, he advised caution when referring to other entities in the proposals to ensure that the social partners would not be excluded from ILO activities and that the Organization would continue to respond to the needs of its constituents, not corporations.

68. Under outcome 1, the Office might wish to consider including an explicit reference to occupational safety and health (OSH) during extreme weather events. The Workers' group disagreed with the proposed approach to conciliation of disputes; instead, there should be a focus on requiring Member States to participate in any procedures under articles 24 or 26 of the Constitution, with conciliation remaining a voluntary option and used only where appropriate. A bullet point highlighting that freedom of association and collective bargaining were enabling rights should be added to output 1.4. He expressed strong support for continuing to hold a minimum of eight sectoral meetings per biennium and emphasized the importance of follow-up action and coherence in the ILO's work concerning sectoral policies. Increased resources should be allocated to the work of the Sectoral Policies Department.

69. Referring to outcome 2, he said that the title should refer to labour market institutions and that the references to freedom of association and collective bargaining should complement those in output 1.4. He reiterated his group's interest in the publication of future editions of the flagship report on social dialogue with a focus on collective bargaining. While welcoming the reference to the correct classification of workers at the national level, he suggested that it could also be included in activities to be carried out at the global level and that the term "classification of employment relationship" might be more appropriate. The proposals should mention the *Guidelines on general principles of labour inspection*, and the reference to compliance should be broadened to cover more than just workplace compliance.

70. Outcome 3 should include references to the conclusions of the General Discussion Working Party: Inequalities and the world of work that had been adopted by the Conference at its 109th Session (2021); in particular, vertical inequalities should be mentioned. In addition, fair taxation and redistribution should be a key element of the outcome. AI and digitalization could be included in an output on structural transformation and industrial policies under the outcome. Further consideration should be given to the links between employment creation and retention on one hand and climate change and energy sources on the other; a strong link to structural transformation, trade and industrial policies would also be advisable. The public sector should be identified in outcome 3 as a significant employer. Outcome 3 should also include references to the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94), a gender perspective with regard to skills, and tripartite consultations and implementation of skills programmes. Furthermore, the document should better reflect the key role played by the social partners with respect to skills. The Sectoral Policies Department should lead interventions in the rural sector, focusing on the recently adopted *Policy guidelines for the promotion of decent work in the agri-food sector*. Collective bargaining, living wages, purchasing practices and pricing should also be included. Overlap between outcomes 3 and 8, specifically with regard to the Global Coalition for Social Justice and the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, should be avoided, and consistency across outcomes and outputs concerning employment and skills should be improved. He recommended adding a reference to the Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208).

71. To align with the ILO's mandate, the title of outcome 4 should be renamed "Industrial policies for sustainable development". The outcome should encompass public companies and investment by development banks and public banks. A rights-based approach was currently missing from its scope. Living wages and collective bargaining should constitute a strong element of any output on enabling environments for sustainable enterprises. He asked the Office to provide information on the concrete impact that its work on enterprises had had on employment creation and decent work and whether impact assessments had been carried out. There was no need to include a stand-alone output on small and medium-sized enterprises, which were addressed as part of the enabling environment for sustainable enterprises. Further emphasis should be placed on the MNE Declaration and supply chains. Outcome 4 contained too many outputs compared to other outcomes, and there appeared to be overlap across outputs 4.4 and 6.3. The term "economic units" should be used when referring to the informal economy rather than "enterprises". Penalties for enterprises contravening labour legislation and circumventing employment relationships should be covered under outcome 4. Output 4.5 should be designed according to a rights-based approach and should fully reflect the conclusions of the General Discussion Committee: Decent work and the social and solidarity economy that had been adopted by the Conference at its 110th Session (2022).

72. Outcome 5 should contain stronger references to gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, OSH, clauses relating to gender in collective bargaining agreements, career progression and the representation of women in social dialogue. Fair pensions should be considered as part of the vertical inequalities agenda. The gender transformative agenda and non-discrimination and inclusion should be separated into two outputs. All groups mentioned in paragraph 113 of the document must be protected, and the Workers' group would not support any attempt to exclude certain groups from its scope. He expressed strong concern regarding footnote 8 to the document, which suggested that one constituent group could make decisions on matters that should be considered by the Governing Body, and demanded that any discussion or decision on policy must take place within the tripartite framework of the Governing Body. He would appreciate reassurance from the Office that all efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples would be carried out in line with the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). A separate output concerning workers with disabilities should be created.

73. The title of outcome 6 should contain a more explicit reference to workers. That outcome should also include a reference to the meeting of experts on OSH in extreme weather events and changing weather patterns. Output 6.1 should include a reference to capacity-building on sectoral guidelines. Regarding output 6.2, the reference to "adequate wages" in the title should be changed to "living wages", the use of the term "flexible working time" should be reconsidered and the right to disconnect should be covered. Language used in relation to wages should be aligned with the conclusions of the Meeting of Experts on wage policies, including living wages. He wished to know how labour protections for all workers, including those on precarious contracts and in high-risk work, would be addressed. The conclusions concerning fair and effective labour migration governance that had been adopted by the Conference at its 106th Session (2017), especially with regard to irregular migration, should be more clearly taken into account.

74. Regarding outcome 7, the link between universal social protection and employment should be strengthened with a view to breaking the cycles of poverty and exclusion. Outcome 8 should cover living wages and make explicit reference to the World Trade Organization and trade and investment negotiations. If the decision was made to have a separate outcome on digitalization, it should be aligned with the ILO's general approach to labour protections and must not establish different standards for workers in the sector or absolve companies from their regulatory obligations.

75. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Malawi said that, in relation to output 3, her group welcomed the proposed focus on employment creation, the socio-economic impact of climate change and environmental degradation, technological transformations and demographic shifts. Since the creation of decent work in rural areas and efficient labour market programmes to support transitions was paramount, the effective implementation of output 3.5 was vital, along with support in implementing the outcomes of a summit on youth employment held in 2015.

76. Her group welcomed outcome 4, which should help address high levels of youth unemployment in her region by creating a conducive environment for sustainable enterprises. The implementation of the MNE Declaration and the *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* should be a priority for the private sector, and MSMEs required support in obtaining loans and credit to facilitate the transition from informal to formal economies and address decent work deficits.

77. Concerning outcome 5, the elimination of discrimination in employment and occupation should be prioritized at the national level by all Member States. Underlining in particular the need to address gender equality, she requested the Office to use in its official documents the generic language agreed upon in Conventions and labour standards. With regard to outcome 6, the Africa group requested the Office to ensure that specific interventions targeting MSMEs in the social and solidarity economy, supply chains and the informal economy were prioritized, including the strengthening of labour administration and inspectorate services within ministries of labour.

78. Labour migration could help address some of the challenges facing the global labour market, and her group supported the proposal to expand pathways towards regular labour migration to meet labour demands in regions with ageing populations. Protection for migrants should be a priority, coupled with a shift to a more positive narrative surrounding migration. The Office should therefore help Member States conclude bilateral labour agreements and ratify and implement instruments that governed labour migration and continue working with specialized agencies in that area. Social protection coverage remained low in Africa, and she welcomed the proposal set out in outcome 7 to help Member States achieve universal social protection.

79. In relation to outcome 8, leveraging digital technologies, including AI, should be a priority, particularly in efforts to close the digital divide. The Office should provide assistance to Member States in Africa in addressing skills gaps and mismatches and helping workers develop digital capabilities and transition to new roles, with a particular focus on MSMEs and the informal economy. Consideration should be given to extending training programmes that promoted access to the digital economy and AI to regional training centres. Digitalization and AI urgently required effective governance to avoid exploitation. Social dialogue remained key in addressing those challenges, and there was a need to establish regulatory frameworks to protect workers' rights and promote equitable access to new technologies, ensuring that progress in digitalization benefited all stakeholders while safeguarding against potential inequalities and job displacement. She suggested that a technical meeting or a meeting of experts be held, with a particular focus on the Africa region.

80. Turning to part IV of the document, she welcomed the policy coherence outcomes that sought to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy, foster environmentally sustainable and resilient economies and promote decent work in supply chains. Advancing social justice through the Global Coalition for Social Justice and Decent Work Country Programmes would help realize country-specific priorities and strengthen partnerships at the national and regional levels. The Office should put in place specific measures, anchored in the principles of social justice and decent work, to help Member States implement the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, create decent jobs and promote universal social protection, ensuring equitable access for all to opportunities and protection in the labour market.

81. Her group welcomed the three pillars that would be the focus of the Second World Summit for Social Development and urged the ILO to take a leading role, within its mandate, in the run-up to the Summit. She wondered how the outcomes of the Summit would be included in the Programme and Budget for 2026–27, given that it would take place after the programme and budget had been adopted. While her group supported the enabling outcomes, it urged the Office to strengthen existing partnerships and develop meaningful cooperation to achieve effective results in Africa, and it drew attention to the importance of relevant research and clear goals and indicators to guide interventions intended to empower communities through knowledge. She called on the Office to develop innovative and accessible capacity-building tools to foster inclusive growth, particularly in low-resource settings. Lastly, the Africa group requested that the itemized programme and budget include details of the distribution of resources for each outcome area in each region. It would also like to receive clarification of the status of the Decent Work Agenda for Africa.

82. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG**, a Government representative of China stressed that joint efforts were needed more urgently than ever to accelerate progress on the SDGs, and she encouraged the Office to play an active role in achieving the SDGs and contribute to the post-2030 Agenda. She requested the Office to ensure synergy between the programme and budget and the Strategic Plan for 2026–29, taking into account the follow-up actions related to the Summit of the Future and the Second World Summit for Social Development. She reiterated her group's request to the Office to present a zero-growth programme and budget to the Governing Body in March 2025 while ensuring that all resources were used effectively and efficiently. She also encouraged the Office to explore innovative financing mechanisms to supplement regular budget resources.

83. ASPAG welcomed the Office's continued development of its normative function to respond to changes in the world of work. It called on the Office to provide targeted technical assistance to Member States on international labour standards, upon request, and it supported the work of the Standards Review Mechanism Tripartite Working Group (SRM TWG) and urged the Governing Body to afford due attention to its recommendations. Her group encouraged the Office's efforts to increase the ratification and implementation of up-to-date Conventions and Recommendations and hoped that it would provide constituents with capacity-building support to strengthen institutions, including through the training courses developed by the International Training Centre of the ILO.

84. She requested the Office to allocate adequate resources to outcomes 3 and 4, which were of critical importance to promoting decent work and realizing social justice. Support should be strengthened for pro-employment policy frameworks and inclusive and resilient skills and lifelong learning systems, and Member States in her region should be helped to design and implement comprehensive and integrated national employment and skills policy frameworks, with the support of Decent Work Country Programmes. She also called for greater focus on supporting the transition towards formality in her region. She called for the Office to take further steps to promote decent work for young people, guided by the Youth Employment Action Plan and other relevant programmes and taking into account the Declaration on Future Generations, and she encouraged it to promote sustainable enterprises.

85. Targeted interventions to support women's economic empowerment and leadership were required. Her group supported the Office's work to enhance gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all. It was regrettable that the reference to national OSH frameworks had been removed from the title of output 6.1, and she expected the ILO to continue to provide Member States with technical support in that area. ASPAG was in favour of universal social protection with sustainable and adequate financing and sound governance.

86. With regard to output 6.4, her group underscored the importance of a strengthened tripartite approach to labour migration that took into account the need to mitigate the impact of brain drain on labour-sending countries. Given the impact of digitalization and AI on the world of work, she asked the Office to redouble its efforts to address the digital divide and other concerns in that area through strengthened capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, international cooperation and good governance. She also called for research and policy guidance on ensuring decent work in the platform economy.

87. Concerning output 9.1, her group encouraged the Office to explore more practical and effective ways to accelerate the just transition process, including tailored approaches for different sectors and types of informal work. ASPAG encouraged the Office to enhance policy coherence and actions, particularly through the Global Coalition for Social Justice, and to build bilateral and multilateral partnerships between the Coalition and other development initiatives at the national, regional and international levels. South–South and triangular cooperation were of particular importance in advancing decent work.

88. With regard to the enabling outcomes, strengthened governance and oversight were particularly vital in enhancing the ILO's operations, and the Office should attract, recruit and retain a more diverse staff with and ensure supportive working conditions, thereby improving organizational culture and human resource management. To improve geographical diversity, the ILO should continue to develop clear and responsive targets and adopt concrete measures to recruit and retain personnel. ASPAG encouraged the Office to promote innovation and capacity-building for adaptation and foster good governance and oversight. She called for continued efforts to enhance the ILO's knowledge base and research capacity in relation to emerging issues in the world of work.

89. **Speaking on behalf of a significant majority of GRULAC,** [2] a Government representative of Peru recognized the need to accelerate transformative measures to meet global and regional challenges relating to inequality, informal employment and universal social protection. The ILO's initiatives to close the gender pay gap and promote equitable access to employment and leadership opportunities should be strengthened in the 2026–27 biennium, and he expressed his group's support for efforts to improve access to childcare and tackle violence and harassment in the workplace. His group remained committed to efforts to combat all forms of discrimination and welcomed the ILO's work in that regard.

90. Concerning enabling outcome C, his group agreed that there was a need to promote diversity, equity and inclusion and a healthy, respectful enabling environment, and it called for specific indicators to be developed in that regard. On the basis of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), the Programme and Budget for 2026–27 should include measures to protect all vulnerable groups, including those mentioned in the United Nations Secretariat strategy on protection from violence and discrimination of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) persons.

91. Welcoming the Office's recognition of the need to redouble efforts to strengthen dispute prevention and resolution systems and promote access to labour justice, as well as the proposal to strengthen the effectiveness and inclusiveness of national tripartite and bipartite social dialogue institutions, he called on the ILO to fulfil all requests for technical support to improve national regulatory and institutional frameworks in that area. He requested more information regarding the proposal to strengthen the capacity of ILO managers and asked whether it would include an increase in resources for the Ethics Office. In the light of the impact of climate change in his region, he expressed support for the ILO's commitment to promoting a transition to a greener economy, and he welcomed the prioritization of digitalization in the biennium 2026–27.

92. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomed the inclusion of seven policy outcomes from the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 in the proposals for the following biennium. She also welcomed the continued efforts to mainstream gender-responsive approaches and encouraged the Office to include details of how adequate resources would be dedicated to that work in the Programme and Budget for 2026–27 to be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2025. She also asked for additional information on how the three new outcomes would be adequately resourced. She welcomed the focus on the ILO's normative work, gender equality and non-discrimination. Concerning footnote 8 in paragraph 113, which recalled that language relating to groups affected by discrimination and exclusion was to be agreed upon via consultations within the Government group, she reiterated that all policy discussions must be tripartite and called on the Office to continue to use detailed indicators to measure the ILO's work on non-discrimination.

93. On outcome 8, she supported plans to step up efforts on digitalization and urged the Office to consider the work being done by other UN agencies to inform its efforts, realize synergies and avoid duplication. She questioned, however, whether digitalization merited a stand-alone outcome, particularly in light of the upcoming standard-setting discussion on decent work in

[2] Barbados, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

the platform economy. Resources should be allocated in accordance with policy prioritization, anticipated ILO engagement and expected extrabudgetary resources. Turning to part IV of the document, she called for the policy coherence outcomes to be better integrated with other appropriate outcomes and enabling outcomes. Under outcome 9, she asked how the activities listed were to be achieved and whether they would be undertaken solely under the action programmes or cross-referenced in other outcomes. She expressed concern that there was insufficient substance to justify outcome 10 as a stand-alone item.

94. Her group called for more robust actions under output C.3; stronger deliverables were required to support staff and generate a healthy working environment. It also requested a specific output on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment to address long-standing concerns surrounding the complaint mechanisms. She requested an overview of the ILO staffing structure showing the ratio of positions at headquarters, in the field and in top management positions in comparison with other UN agencies. She expressed support for the proposed expanded programme in a context of zero nominal growth, although such an expansion must not compromise the core work of the ILO. She requested the Office to continue to provide robust indicators and to consider how the constituent-facing indicators could more clearly illustrate the impact of the ILO’s work.

95. **Speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States,** a Government representative of Hungary said that Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and North Macedonia aligned themselves with the statement. The EU and its Member States aligned with the statement made by IMEC. She noted that the language used in the document in relation to the protection of all persons from discrimination and exclusion represented a compromise reached after difficult and lengthy discussions and that concessions had been made by all parties. She therefore called on all constituents to agree to the text as proposed in paragraph 113.

96. **Speaking on behalf of the Arab group,** a Government representative of Sudan said that the ILO should do more to promote genuine tripartite dialogue, which was the only route to decent work via increased employment and strengthened social justice, competitiveness and productivity. Efforts were ongoing in his region to strengthen tripartite structures, boost the skills required by workers in the digital economy and transition workers from the informal to the formal economy.

97. Expressing support for the ILO’s efforts to combat all forms of discrimination, he noted the inclusion of controversial concepts in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27, such as "sexual orientation and gender identity" in paragraph 113. That language had not been agreed by consensus and did not reflect universal values, approaches or policies. Human rights issues must be approached with neutrality and objectivity to avoid infringing social and cultural rights and creating division that damaged the work of the ILO. He recalled that paragraph 23(e) of the resolution concerning inequalities and the world of work, adopted by the Conference in December 2021, contained agreed language in that regard. Unless the language in paragraph 113 of the document under discussion was revised, the Arab group would be unable to approve any decision on the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 at the 353rd Session of the Governing Body.

98. **Speaking on behalf of a cross-regional group of countries,** [3] a Government representative of Canada expressed the hope that the 2026–27 budget would allocate resources to all key

[3] Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Iceland, Mexico, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

priorities and the ILO's full mandate. She recalled that, following lengthy discussions, in June 2023 an agreement had been reached to respect divergent positions on various matters without the need to amend documents prepared by the Office. Her group remained committed to engaging in tripartite dialogue to build on that delicate balance. While it was important for all constituents to express their views, they should not seek to negotiate documents prepared by the Office, including the programme and budget. The inclusion of footnote 8 in paragraph 113 went against the ILO's tripartite nature and the Office's prerogative to prepare, edit and publish documents, and she hoped that it was not intended to encourage constituents' micromanagement of Office documents. The programme and budget set out the Office's proposals on how it would deliver the ILO's mandate; it was not a binding or negotiated text.

99. The ILO had a clear mandate to promote equality, opportunities for all and non-discrimination. Her group called on the ILO to intensify its support for constituents' efforts to develop inclusive policies and measures, particularly for vulnerable groups that had historically suffered discrimination. Those groups, which must be recognized by name, included persons discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. More detailed indicators should be developed on the basis of the current Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27. She emphasized the importance of disaggregated data and the development of tools and initiatives to identify and address the specific needs and barriers faced by vulnerable persons and groups in the world of work.

100. **Speaking on behalf of the countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), with the exception of Albania,** a Government representative of Pakistan expressed support for the overall framework of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 and for the ILO's work to address discrimination. Nevertheless, work could be supported by all Member States only if it was defined without controversy and carried out within agreed normative limits, including with regard to universally agreed forms of discrimination. Introducing controversial concepts risked undermining consensus. Thus, he expressed his group's disappointment that references to controversial categories of groups and individuals had been included in paragraph 113. All programme and budget proposals must reflect universally recognized principles of human rights; language or concepts that lacked international consensus should be avoided.

101. The language used in paragraph 23(e) of the resolution concerning inequalities and the world of work, adopted by the Conference in December 2021, sufficiently covered all forms of discrimination and enjoyed consensus. In the view of the countries of the OIC, unilaterally inventing new grounds of discrimination risked undermining the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), which allowed Member States to determine their own distinctions, exclusions and preferences in the area of discrimination. The countries of the OIC would support a future decision on the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27 only if paragraph 113 was revised.

(The Governing Body resumed consideration of the item at a later sitting.)

102. **A Government representative of Nepal** expressed support for a balanced approach that took into account both emerging global challenges and the resource constraints of Member States. She called on the ILO to provide enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building support to developing and least developed countries to ensure that digitalization generated decent work for all; to develop region- and country-specific measures to address the challenges of transitioning from informal to formal employment; and to allocate adequate resources to supporting women's access to decent work and reinforcing OSH standards. The ILO could support countries vulnerable to climate change by providing technical assistance for building climate-resilient workplaces and for integrating green jobs into national employment policies.

103. **A Government representative of Mexico** said that his Government supported the ten proposed outcomes. It particularly appreciated the emphasis on eliminating discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, and supported the promotion of measures to close the wage and opportunity gaps that affected historically marginalized groups. Mexico, as chair of the Government group, would foster open, frank and inclusive dialogue within the group as it sought to improve conditions for progress in the fight against discrimination in employment on any grounds; was committed to social justice through decent work; was hopeful that polarization and divisions in the budget approval process would be overcome; and looked forward to the development of indicators and the allocation of adequate resources for the effective implementation of the programme and budget.

104. **A Government representative of Japan**, noting that the views expressed during informal consultations had unfortunately not led to significant changes to the text, expressed the hope that the guidance provided during the current discussion would be reflected in the proposals to be presented in March 2025. Concerning output 6.1, he recognized the need for OSH measures to be tailored to each occupation, but wondered why public administration was cited in paragraph 128 as an example of a specific occupation. In relation to outcome 8, while it was important to ensure that digitalization was harnessed for the promotion of decent work, the issue did not merit an entire dedicated outcome. His Government would pay close attention to whether meaningful results were achieved under the three outputs; it had concerns that the staff of ILO country offices may lack the skills needed to carry out the tasks in paragraph 164. Japan supported outcome 10 and its outputs, as amended following the informal consultations.

105. **A Government representative of the Russian Federation** said that his Government welcomed the inclusion of enabling outcome B, and would be in favour of increasing the involvement of the Governing Body in oversight issues. He called for the annual report by the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee to be retained and for Member States to be provided with a facility through which they could express their opinions on approved oversight plans. In order to enhance the ILO's system of accountability, enabling outcome B should also include the development of two publicly accessible online portals: one for tracking compliance with the recommendations of oversight bodies and the other providing up-to-date statistics on the ILO's human resources. The introduction of AI into ILO work processes should involve manual quality control and appropriate levels of cybersecurity and data integrity. In the future, information on the financial implications of AI initiatives should be published. His Government would like to see genuine transparency in the process used to establish evaluation reference groups, which should allow for the participation of all stakeholders.

106. Concerning paragraph 113, the Russian Federation opposed all forms of discrimination and inequality at the workplace. However, it was necessary to abide by consensus; the text should not include wording that was unacceptable to many States, including the Russian Federation. Gender identity was a very controversial issue that had no universal definition under international law. Care should be taken to use agreed terminology that was sufficiently general to chime with the prevailing approach in most Member States. His Government supported the approaches outlined in the statements made on behalf of the Arab group and the OIC.

107. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** expressed support for all ten policy outcomes and the three enabling outcomes and encouraged the Office to enhance the quality of the actions planned under outputs 6.1–6.4 at the country level. In addition to promoting ILO Conventions and Recommendations, ILO country offices should support national implementation efforts. Outcomes 3 and 4 were crucial to the developing world, because full and productive employment, skills-development systems and employment-generating economic policies all needed to be pursued if labour rights were to be improved. The Office should intensify its efforts to advance sustainable enterprises and resilient and competitive MSMEs. Bangladesh advocated a non-discriminatory approach but was disappointed with the use of language to identify certain groups of people in paragraph 113. ILO documents should not include terminology that lacked global consensus.

108. **A Government representative of the United States of America** noted the importance of strong, modernized normative action and efforts to strengthen the connection between the guidance of the ILO's supervisory bodies and the implementation of actions. Further information would be welcomed on the proposed piloting by the Office of tools, including AI, for research purposes. She welcomed the focus on addressing threats to freedom of association and collective bargaining and the focus on supporting the constituents in integrating decent work principles into economic, investment, trade and social development policies and plans. She was heartened by the Director-General's confirmation that discrimination in employment on any grounds, including against LGBTIQ+ populations, was unacceptable and would be eliminated, although a stronger focus on the issue would have been preferable. With respect to inequalities, the Office should consider including a focus on assisting constituents in taking action to counter the risk of declining labour income share and to implement policies that promoted an equitable distribution of economic benefits.

109. **A Government representative of Barbados**, noting the challenges faced in finding language that was acceptable to all Member States, said that he was hopeful that compromise in the name and spirit of social justice, without sacrificing fundamental principles, would allow the Member States to reach an outcome that they could agree on, even though it may not be perfect. Upholding the principles of social justice meant that mistreatment, marginalization, lack of access and injustice generally must always be issues of concern. The Governing Body should keep in mind the decision that had been taken on the matter in 2023, in order to be able to move forward.

110. **Speaking on behalf of the EU and its Member States**, a Government representative of Hungary said that the work of the Office should continue to address any form of discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. Discrimination in employment on any grounds conflicted with the universality of human rights and the fundamental principle of non-discrimination, and was unacceptable. The list of grounds for discrimination in Convention No. 111 was not exhaustive, and each country had a sovereign right to add further grounds to their legislation; many had added discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. It was important to ensure that countries that had taken such a step could request and obtain ILO assistance in that regard. Combating violence and discrimination in any form and regardless of ground was essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The EU would continue to strongly oppose and step up action to combat all forms of discrimination, with specific attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including on grounds of sex, race, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity.

111. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Strategic Programming and Management Department), responding to comments on the three new proposed outcomes, said that including digitalization as a stand-alone policy outcome (outcome 8) would consolidate and enhance the visibility of the ILO's work in that area, and encourage the development of partnerships, including under the Global Digital Compact adopted at the Summit of the Future in September 2024. He noted the acknowledgement of the impact of digitalization on the world of work and of the role that the ILO had to play in making digitalization a source of decent jobs and in ensuring improved working conditions in the digital space, and that a number of other international organizations had also included outcomes on digitalization in their programmes and budgets.

112. Based on lessons learned from the implementation of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25, the proposal was to introduce two new policy coherence outcomes in 2026–27 (outcomes 9 and 10), each containing elements of outcome 8 of the current programme and budget. Outcome 9 was focused on strengthening the ILO's internal capacity to promote integrated approaches to cross-cutting issues, whereas outcome 10 focused on promoting policy coherence across the multilateral system to enhance financing for and the effectiveness of social justice and decent work interventions. Coordinated work in those areas should enhance the ILO's leading role in that regard and contribute to the mobilization of resources for the renewal of the social contract.

113. He took note of the concerns raised about the potential duplication of work and the financial implications of the three new proposed outcomes, and confirmed that the Office would seek synergies at all levels and ensure that the policy coherence outcomes strengthened the ILO's capacity rather than diverting it from core functions. Additional information would be provided at the 353rd Session (March 2025) of the Governing Body.

114. Regarding the lack of references to development cooperation, he said that such cooperation was embedded in all the outcomes and was specifically covered by output A.4. The current ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 had not been mentioned, because it would be superseded by a new strategy that would be submitted to the Governing Body for adoption in 2026. The importance attached by the Office to development cooperation had not changed.

115. He noted the other concerns regarding overlap and duplication between the outcomes, in particular with regard to partnerships and knowledge development. While the intention was for partnerships and knowledge development efforts to be outcome-specific, any Office-wide policy efforts would be covered by enabling outcome A. The Office would make sure that there was no duplication, and only complementarities, between the outcomes.

116. He also took note of the comments made on specific outcomes and the concerns raised regarding terminology. All comments would be taken into consideration in the preparation of the proposals that would be submitted to the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025), together with more detailed information on the budget, including the budget allocations for each outcome.

117. **The Director-General**, welcoming the constructive guidance provided by the Governing Body on both the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29 and the preview of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27, observed that, while the ILO had been created to protect workers, there seemed to be some recognition that employers also needed protection. Any such protection required the promotion of full, productive and freely chosen employment. Policies encouraging sustainable enterprises – which should be sustainable from an economic, social and environmental point of view – sought to meet that strategic objective. Moreover, enterprises were sustainable only if they created decent jobs and contributed to poverty alleviation. Neither the Strategic Plan nor the preview of the programme and budget proposals were designed to contradict those principles.

118. The ILO would continue to lead work on living wages. The issue of was of concern to employers and workers alike, and had been identified as one of the key areas of work under the Global Coalition for Social Justice. He expressed optimism that progress could be made in that regard.

119. In response to concerns expressed that the Office had not taken previously made comments into account, he reassured the Governing Body that all comments were noted and considered. However, as some proposals contradicted others, they could not all be included. Consultations would continue up until the publication of the proposals in early 2025.

120. Change was difficult for any organization, and budgetary change even more so, as increasing or creating an allocation in one area had to mean a reduction in another if a zero-growth budget was to be maintained. Moreover, digitalization and AI was an area of work in which the ILO was out of step with the rest of the UN system. While it was the Governing Body's right to decide not to approve a budgetary allocation for an area of work, he emphasized that policy coherence was not just an internal concern; the ILO must also be coherent with other international organizations. The Office had debated the introduction of new outcomes at length, and had concluded that they were necessary. The intention was for the new outcomes to add to, not take away from, the ILO's core work, as the institution had to adapt to an evolving world of work.

121. Lastly, turning to the concerns expressed regarding the inclusion of a reference to sexual orientation and gender identity, he recalled that similar concerns had stalled the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25 in June 2023. It was very important to avoid that situation being repeated in 2025. In his view, there were two options. The members of the Governing Body could maintain their divergent positions, which would inevitably lead to a vote on the programme and budget proposals by the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025) and the need to negotiate and vote on a resolution at the 113th Session (June 2025) of the Conference. Alternatively, they could engage through diplomatic channels to try to reach a consensus agreement. It was in that spirit that the Office had included footnote 8 under paragraph 113. He urged the members of the Governing Body to take action, while respecting one another's opinions, to avoid uncertainty regarding the adoption of the Programme and Budget for 2026–27.

122. **The Employer spokesperson** expressed appreciation for the clarifications that had been provided, particularly regarding the issue of reaching a consensus on terminology related to inequalities that would be acceptable to all without changing the principles of the ILO. He looked forward to receiving the updated programme and budget proposals and to the ongoing consultations on that document. Furthermore, he reiterated that sustainable enterprises and decent jobs and the protection of workers and employers were not mutually exclusive, and he welcomed the comments by the Director-General in that regard.

123. **The Worker spokesperson**, noting the strict speaking time limits for each item, said that sufficient time should be allotted to the groups in the future to allow them to express their opinions on important matters such as the programme and budget proposals. Responding to the Director-General's remarks, he clarified that the treatment of employers and workers in the ILO should not be the same. While employers' rights were enshrined in the ILO's fundamental principles and rights, the ILO had been created for the protection of workers and that mandate remained, even as the world of work evolved. He urged the Office to ensure clarity on that issue.

124. Concerning the living wage, he expressed appreciation for its inclusion as a key area of work under the Global Coalition for Social Justice. However, the living wage was a matter of global importance and any decisions adopted must also be implemented. Thus, the matter should be

fully incorporated into the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2026–29 and the Programme and Budget for 2026–27, thereby ensuring the visibility and resource allocation required for progress to be made.

125. It was not surprising concern had been expressed regarding the inclusion of three new policy outcomes, in the light of the desire for a zero-growth budget. He recognized the importance of work relating to the digital transformation and AI, but he urged the Office to guarantee that such work was not being duplicated elsewhere, particularly if the duplicated work had already been funded. He expressed the hope that the ongoing consultations would provide clarity in that regard, and that the next version of the proposals would take the Governing Body's concerns into account.

126. **The Chairperson** said that Office would take into account the comments made and guidance provided by the Governing Body in the development of the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27, to be presented to the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025).

3. ILO Strategy on knowledge and innovation across the Organization: Updated Strategy and implementation plan (GB.352/PFA/3)

127. **The Employer spokesperson** commended the Office for its thoughtful and forward-thinking approach to integrating knowledge and innovation across the Organization and welcomed the three priorities. The updated Strategy was more streamlined and coherent.

128. His group supported the first strategic priority, strengthened internal capacity and culture, and encouraged the Office to allocate the necessary resources. Innovation was no longer about new technological tools alone, but also understanding what structural changes were needed, for whom and, most importantly, why. True innovation had to have clear goals and be part of a long-term approach that took into account the needs of all constituents and the ILO staff. Therefore, innovation should be addressed more broadly. Internally, innovation should bring about continual operational improvements. Strengthening internal culture for innovation went hand in hand with strengthening internal capacity. The ILO should explore the possibility of leveraging innovative tools not just for administration but also to advance core agendas such as skills development, anticipation and recognition. However, with innovation came risk, and the Organization must embrace a culture of calculated risk-taking backed up by robust risk assessment processes.

129. Regarding the second strategic priority, improved products and services for constituents, the ILO had to share and promote its knowledge in a more innovative way to serve the real needs of constituents, who must be systematically consulted in the development and finalization of research and publications. He urged the Office to pursue its capacity-building efforts, particularly among employers without easy access to innovative tools, to increase their knowledge on current and future issues related to new technologies. The transfer of responsibility for guiding and coordinating the follow-up to the Strategy to the office of the Deputy Director-General demonstrated a commitment to embedding innovation at the highest levels of decision-making and would enable better internal coordination, policy coherence and synergies. He asked whether the dedicated innovation unit had been dismantled, and sought information on the staffing of the new structure and the status of the four "innovation facilities".

130. On the third strategic priority, enhanced partnerships, the Employers' group believed that the International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin Centre) should be involved in, but not entirely responsible for, the implementation of the Strategy.

131. Lastly, on the basis that efforts related to innovation and knowledge should continue well beyond 2025, the group wished to propose an amendment to the draft decision, to read:

> 66. The Governing Body endorsed the updated ILO Strategy and implementation plan on knowledge and innovation, and requested the Director-General to take into account its guidance in implementing the Strategy, ~~and~~ to undertake an Office-wide review of its implementation at the end of 2025, <u>and to provide a new draft strategy to the Governing Body at its 356th Session (March 2026)</u>.

132. **The Worker spokesperson** welcomed the shift in approach of the Strategy and implementation and the acknowledgement that innovation should be leveraged across various departments and field offices. The establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee on Innovation addressed the Workers' previous comments over the potential for duplication of efforts. However, she expressed concern about the far greater role assigned to the Turin Centre under the updated Strategy and sought clarification of the extent to which: innovation would take precedence over training at the Centre; the Innovation Lab and other initiatives of the Centre would be more actively coordinated from Geneva; and the Centre's own innovation fund would be integrated into the fund proposed in paragraph 18 of the document, particularly in light of the intention for departments to use regular budget allocations for innovation.

133. The Workers' group considered that several points on the role of the Turin Centre had not been adequately reflected. Capacity-building and peer learning for ILO staff must be rights-based, with a focus on thematic issues and on how the ILO could use tools to implement its normative mandate in a more efficient and innovative manner. Increasing the capacity for innovation within an organization was not an end in itself. Capacity-building should thus promote strategic thinking and the development of substantive content.

134. She sought more information about how the networks proposed in paragraph 19 would interact with existing networks such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). Furthermore, there was a lack of consideration within the Strategy on addressing the digital divide; the Office must help constituents to overcome barriers, including by paying greater attention to challenges related to access to and affordability of technology.

135. The mainstreaming of knowledge-related deliverables in the programme and budget rather than a separate implementation plan was logical, as it would avoid duplication in reporting. She enquired about the improved products and services to constituents referred to in paragraph 31, particularly about what a "digital-first", data-driven dissemination strategy would entail. ILO knowledge products and data were generally acceptable, but recent changes to the ILO website had made some documents harder to find, leaving many users reliant on the support of the library staff.

136. The Workers' group encouraged the Office to leverage strategic foresight across many departments, which would be in line with the call in the United Nations (UN) Pact for the Future for increased strategic foresight. The spokesperson questioned the nature of the technical support that ILO staff might have to provide to facilitate the use of the chatbot on workers' rights. In addition, she requested information on the extent of the Office's participation in the AI for Good Global Summit, on the messages that the Office had conveyed at the event and on whether major technology companies had been involved. She also sought further details on the ambitious plan to create 1 million green jobs under the Green Jobs for Youth Pact. The Workers' group could support the original draft decision.

137. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group,** a Government representative of Ethiopia said that the ILO was to be commended for the progress achieved in updating the Strategy and for its ongoing efforts to refine its strategic priorities. He encouraged the Office to strengthen partnerships, explore innovative funding mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of knowledge and innovation activities, support more transformative projects to strengthen country offices in Africa and redouble its efforts to share information on good practices.

138. He welcomed the establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee on Innovation and, in particular, the inclusion of representatives from the regional offices on it, which would ensure that no region was left behind as a result of the digital divide between the global North and the global South. It was important for the ILO to maintain its leadership role in promoting knowledge-sharing and innovation and to learn from its activities to date and insights gained from forums to guide future efforts and effectively implement the Strategy in line with regional priorities. His group was in favour of further capacity-building initiatives on artificial intelligence (AI) and data and supported the draft decision.

139. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG,** a Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the alignment of the updated Strategy with the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change and the resultant focus on critical skills; the establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee on Innovation; the emphasis on strengthening internal capacity and enabling a culture of innovation; the creation of observatories and platforms to facilitate access to ILO knowledge, tools and guidance; the shift to “digital-first” approaches; the focus on experimenting with new technologies to enhance services; and efforts to promote partnerships and networks for knowledge-sharing and innovation.

140. Nevertheless, the Office could further enhance the effectiveness and relevance of the Strategy by ensuring greater regional balance in innovation and capacity-building initiatives; placing more emphasis on knowledge and innovation solutions tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises; including more specific upskilling and reskilling activities; better leveraging South–South and triangular cooperation; ensuring equitable resource allocation across regions; developing more comprehensive metrics to measure the impact of knowledge and innovation initiatives on constituents, especially in developing countries; making knowledge products and innovative tools available in multiple languages, particularly those used widely in Asia and the Pacific; and incorporating a stronger focus on green innovation and knowledge-sharing related to just transitions.

141. On the subject of resource allocation, he requested details of existing funding gaps and plans to address them. His group supported the amendment proposed by the Employers’ group, and requested regular progress updates on the Strategy.

142. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC,** a Government representative of Paraguay welcomed the Office’s efforts to update the Strategy in line with the guidance provided by the Governing Body at its 347th Session (March 2023). With regard to strengthened internal capacity and culture, the Office should foster collaboration and exchange among all units and the Turin Centre in order to promote greater involvement of staff in the creation and incorporation of new technological tools.

143. Concerning improved products and services for constituents, her group was in favour of encouraging constituents to use innovative solutions and called for the prototype developed under the Formalization Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean (FORLAC 2.0) to be replicated and implemented on a wider scale.

144. Enhanced partnerships would be particularly important, given the collaborative nature of knowledge management and innovation. The building of networks and communities of exchange should involve a wide range of actors, with equitable geographic representation.

145. The Strategy should be implemented in coordination with all entities involved in knowledge management and innovation in a manner that promoted greater coherence. Additional resources should be allocated to ensure coordinated and efficient implementation in the long term. Her group supported the draft decision. Regarding the proposed amendment, she asked why the Employers' group was requesting a new draft strategy rather than a review of the implementation of the current strategy.

146. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of the Netherlands said that AI and digital tools offered tremendous opportunities to advance decent work and enhance the ILO's efficiency. She noted with great interest the work of other UN organizations, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which had made significant progress in developing AI-driven solutions such as speech to text systems, automated translation tools and intelligent classification methods. AI-powered tools could also be used to alleviate Member States' reporting burden. However, it was essential for AI to be deployed safely, with due consideration for data protection, privacy, labour rights and other rights, and for relevant stakeholders to be involved in the development and implementation of AI systems. She requested information on how those two objectives would be achieved, on how the ILO would ensure due diligence in the value chains of its AI systems and on how the expertise of the Turin Centre would contribute to promoting digital literacy and capacity-building initiatives. Furthermore, she asked whether an innovation unit at headquarters was envisioned to spearhead knowledge and innovation activities.

147. She encouraged the Office to integrate behavioural science and foresight methodologies into its policy and programmatic approaches to improve anticipation of and response to emerging challenges in the labour market. Noting the Office's valuable work to promote innovation in crisis contexts, she proposed that it should further explore opportunities to share experiences and best practices drawn from disaster management, post-conflict reconstruction and resilience-building initiatives to ensure that innovation would serve as a tool for recovery and growth in the future. Lastly, she encouraged the ILO to deepen its collaboration with multilateral partners to drive innovation and address global challenges.

148. IMEC supported the original draft decision, as a request for a new strategy could be more appropriately considered after a review of the current Strategy's implementation.

149. **A representative of the Director-General** (Deputy Director-General) noted that the Office would continue to consult all the tripartite constituents during the implementation of the ILO Strategy on knowledge and innovation. Good progress had been made with efforts to decentralize and mainstream knowledge management. Innovation required a greater boost, particularly with regard to skills development and capacity-building, hence the need for a specific implementation plan. The focus would be on practical deliverables, aligned with the available resources, to create a sustainable and effective programme for knowledge and innovation. As had been noted, there were also clear linkages between the Strategy and policy outcome 8 of the proposed programme for 2026–27.

150. The Business Innovation Unit had indeed been dismantled, as relying on a single unit to steer innovation across the Organization had not been an effective approach. Instead, innovation would be mainstreamed within all regions and all technical departments. A new structure was therefore being established to build a culture of innovation at the ILO, with her office overseeing knowledge and innovation activities and taking on accountability for progress. The

Turin Centre would then support that work by acting as an “innovation enabler”, harnessing its advanced experience with innovative technologies. There was no question of outsourcing implementation to the Turin Centre alone; rather, it would work in partnership with the Office to ensure a more sustainable, effective approach.

151. In terms of resources, the Turin Centre had allocated its own surplus funds to support the Implementation Plan on Innovation, which would be financed without diverting resources from other capacity-building programmes, including those targeting workers. The Turin Centre would be involved in all the deliverables, as it would work to implement the Plan in collaboration with the Office and the social partners, and external partners where relevant, with the Technical Advisory Committee on Innovation playing a coordinating role.

152. While the Turin Centre would help develop digital skills for staff to enable them to assist constituents, its core function was to support constituents directly by providing training, notably on new technologies and digital skills. Synergies created as part of the new approach would lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness.

153. Although the focus in the document was on digitalization and AI – areas requiring the ILO’s leadership – the Organization was also engaging in other kinds of innovation. The priority action programmes were an example of innovative ways of working, as they integrated work across the Office to provide constituents with full-service programmes, instead of simply addressing a single matter within one specific technical department. The network of “innovation scouts” and the teams that were implementing the priority action programmes formed a network across the Organization, encompassing both the Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV) and the Bureau for Employers’ Activities (ACT/EMP). They were also working with the Turin Centre on all kinds of innovation, both technological and methodological.

154. Regarding “digital-first” approaches, she clarified that the aim was to consider the digital uses of research and publications at the development stage, including how they would be accessed and shared. For instance, it might be advantageous to produce a shorter web version of a longer report.

155. Recognizing the call to encourage partnerships and knowledge-sharing, she highlighted the example of the regional knowledge-sharing forums that had been hosted under the priority action programme on transitions from the informal to the informal economy, with special efforts to promote further South–South cooperation. Collaboration with UN partners would also be further enhanced, especially under the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change. The Office was already cooperating closely with UN partners in New York and Geneva, including the International Telecommunication Union. In terms of regional inclusion, the Technical Advisory Committee on Innovation had members from every region and sought to guarantee balanced representation; the examples in the document were merely a sample of the current projects.

156. At the AI for Good Global Summit, the Office had promoted the embedding of the fundamental principles and rights at work in UN system-wide work on AI, and had highlighted both the opportunities and risks of using AI and the need for safeguards.

157. She welcomed the examples of WIPO’s use of AI and the possibility of using tools to facilitate constituents’ reporting. For its own use of AI, the Office had an obligation to use products that were consistent with ILO values and principles.

158. **Another representative of the Director-General** (Director of Training of the Turin Centre) added that the Ignite Innovation Sparks initiative was intended to create a safe space for experimentation by ILO constituents and staff, guided by the Turin Centre’s Artificial Intelligence Manifesto and the Principles for Digital Development. It was also anchored within the UN system, notably linking to Action 45 of the Pact for the Future and the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change. The initiative was based on four pillars: (1) the Innovation Lab, where significant capacities had been developed (without diverting any funding) that could now be leveraged to serve ILO constituents; (2) campaigns to promote an innovation culture, scheduled to start in early 2025, including an ILO-wide innovation day; (3) innovation partnerships, with the Turin Centre representing the ILO within both UN system-wide innovation networks and local innovation ecosystems; and (4) the Innovation Fund, which was run on a co-financing basis to ensure that projects were demand-driven and guided by partners. Examples of projects supported by the Fund included the creation of chatbots using large language models, the delivery of micro-learning training modules via social media, and the provision of live interpretation into 40 languages based on software used by the Turin Centre.

159. **The Employer spokesperson** explained that his group's proposed amendment was intended to consider the possibility of having a new strategy from 2026, but that could also mean a continuation of the current Strategy, based on an evaluation at the end of 2025. The group's main concern was to ensure that the Governing Body retained oversight of work on innovation and knowledge within the Organization.

160. **The Worker spokesperson** thanked the Office for the extensive explanations, particularly regarding the enabling role of the Turin Centre and the lack of significant budgetary impacts. Concerning the Employer spokesperson's clarification on the proposed amendment, she said that the intention would be better captured by a reference to an implementation report for information or review by the Governing Body at its 356th Session, instead of a completely new draft strategy.

161. **The Employer spokesperson** said that his group could support a subamendment to that effect.

162. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC**, a Government representative of the Netherlands said that her group could support the subamendment, on the understanding that the Office would internally review the implementation of the Strategy at the end of 2025 and report to the Governing Body in March 2026.

163. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC**, a Government representative of Peru expressed support for the subamendment.

164. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of Ethiopia also supported the subamendment.

Decision

165. **The Governing Body endorsed the updated ILO Strategy and implementation plan on knowledge and innovation, and requested the Director-General to take into account its guidance in implementing the Strategy and to undertake an Office-wide review of its implementation at the end of 2025 and to report to the Governing Body on the implementation at its 356th Session (March 2026).**

(GB.352/PFA/3, paragraph 66, as amended by the Governing Body)

4. Update on the premises for the ILO Regional Office for Africa and Country Office for Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo in Abidjan (GB.352/PFA/4)

166. The Worker spokesperson urged the Governing Body to take immediate action to allow for the renovation of the ILO premises in Abidjan to be launched before inflation further increased the cost of the project. The Workers' group supported the draft decision.

167. The Employer spokesperson welcomed the significant progress outlined in document GB.352/PFA/4, in particular the receipt by the ILO of the required building permit from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire. It was hoped that the rigour and transparency of the bidding process for the construction services contractor would serve as an example for similar projects in the future. The Employers' group supported the draft decision.

168. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Benin underscored the crucial importance of the project to redevelop the ILO premises in Abidjan. It would optimize the ILO's ability to carry out its activities in Africa, which was of particular importance in areas facing pressing challenges relating to decent job creation, social justice and social protection. The group thanked the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the Director-General for their continual support, urged all parties involved in the project to discharge their duties in an effective and timely manner and promised, for its part, to put into place a mechanism to follow up on the work done. It was high time to launch the project to avoid delays that might incur additional costs. The Africa group supported the draft decision.

169. Speaking on behalf of IMEC, a Government representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland said that the group recognized that the draft decision would incur additional costs but fully supported the necessary investment to ensure the long-term viability and functionality of the ILO premises in Abidjan. IMEC welcomed the continuation of discussions to explore opportunities for enhancing efficiency and achieving cost savings in future projects. It was hoped that such efforts would contribute to the sustainable management of ILO resources while ensuring the highest standards of its operations. IMEC supported the draft decision.

Decision

170. The Governing Body:

(a) approved the updated estimated budget of US$11.2 million for the redevelopment of the premises of the ILO Regional Office for Africa and ILO Country Office for Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo in Abidjan; and

(b) authorized the use of the Building and Accommodation Fund to finance the estimated additional cost of US$4 million, on the understanding that this amount will be re-credited to the Fund using future savings on the cost of renting ILO accommodation in Abidjan and income from the rental of any surplus space.

(GB.352/PFA/4, paragraph 9)

5. Matters related to ILO-owned premises and potential renovation of the premises for the ILO Country Office for Pakistan in Islamabad (GB.352/PFA/5)

171. The Employer spokesperson welcomed the Office's proposal to renovate the existing premises in Islamabad since the location, importantly, provided easy access to constituents, thereby promoting inclusion and facilitating the execution of the Office's mandate. Renovating the existing premises was far preferable to moving to a new location, as had been suggested by other UN agencies. He highlighted that the temporary relocation of staff during the renovation works would require proper planning that included consideration for staff safety. A small task force should be formed for that purpose and should include a focal point responsible for receiving and responding to staff queries and communicating what needed to be done, by whom and by when. In addition, it would be important to ensure that the ILO partnered with reputable companies in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Clear and systematic communication would be key to anticipating bottlenecks, finding solutions and making maximum use of the resources available to the ILO for the renovation project. Lastly, communication with local people living and working near the building would be important, in particular regarding disruptions. The Employers' group supported the draft decision.

172. The Worker spokesperson emphasized the importance of including structural resilience in the renovation works in order to ensure that the ILO-owned premises would withstand earthquakes, which had hit Islamabad in recent years and caused buildings to collapse. The Workers' group agreed that the suggestion to move the ILO Country Office in Islamabad to the UN House would be unsuitable because of access problems for the social partners. Assessing the potential for rental income from other UN agencies in the renovated ILO-owned premises and, therefore, the potential to re-credit the Building and Accommodation Fund, would be helpful.

173. Speaking on behalf of IMEC, a Government representative of Italy said that her group understood that substantial improvements to bring the building into compliance with occupational safety and health standards and enhance safety and security measures were required. Given the importance of maintaining premises in locations accessible to constituents, IMEC welcomed the renovation initiative and supported the draft decision.

174. A representative of the Director-General (Treasurer and Financial Comptroller) said that the Office would take into account the suggestions put forward by the Employers' group regarding planning, procurement and communication with local people in Islamabad. A local team would lead the renovation work and would correspond with colleagues at the Office in order to ensure that the project was handled effectively. Regarding sharing the premises with other UN agencies, he indicated that one agency was already on the premises and another, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, had agreed to join. Substantial improvements to the building were indeed required, including improvements to guarantee its structural resilience against natural disasters, and every effort would be made to ensure the best value for money.

Decision

175. The Governing Body:

(a) authorized the use of the Building and Accommodation Fund to finance the renovation of the ILO Country Office for Pakistan in Islamabad at an estimated cost of US$5.7 million; and

(b) requested the Director-General to address, as a matter of priority, the urgent works identified, initiate the studies and detailed design related to the renovation project and provide an update on progress to the Governing Body at its 353rd Session (March 2025).

(GB.352/PFA/5, paragraph 21)

6. Other financial questions

(No other financial questions were submitted to the Governing Body at this session.)

Audit and Oversight Segment

7. Appointments to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (GB.352/PFA/7)

176. **The Employer spokesperson** expressed confidence that the outcome of the process to select new members of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC) would ensure its continuity and benefit the governance and operational structure of the ILO. She emphasized the paramount importance in any selection process of the criteria of professional competence, experience and integrity, along with considerations such as geographical distribution and gender balance. The Employers' group endorsed the recommendation of the selection panel and supported the draft decision.

177. **The Worker spokesperson** welcomed the Office's work in conducting a strict and transparent selection process, which had made it possible to thoroughly examine detailed documentation and appoint members based on their professional competence and integrity and in such a way that ensured balanced representation.

Decision

178. **The Governing Body decided to:**

(a) convey its appreciation to Ms Malika Aït-Mohamed Parent and Mr Verasak Liengsiriwat for their valuable contributions to the work of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC) during the periods 2019–21 and 2022–24;

(b) approve the extension of Ms Marian McMahon for an extra year from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025;

(c) appoint Ms Lipika Majumdar Roy Choudhury and Ms Agnieszka Słomka-Gołębiowska as members of the IOAC for a first term of three years commencing on 1 January 2025;

(d) appoint Mr Clyde M. MacLellan as a member of the IOAC for a first term of three years commencing on 1 January 2026;

(e) extend the appointments of Mr Gonzalo Castro de la Mata and Mr Marcel Jullier for a second term of three years commencing on 1 January 2025; and

(f) retain the candidatures of Mr Tuncay Efendioğlu, Mr Jayantilal M. Karia, Ms Maria Rios and Mr Bolton Tarleh Nyema on a reserve list.

(GB.352/PFA/7, paragraph 13)

8. Annual Evaluation Report 2023–24 (GB.352/PFA/8(Rev.1))

179. **The Employer spokesperson** welcomed the good progress made with the targets of the evaluation strategy that had been achieved or were on track and expressed his group's support for the selection of the high-level evaluation topics for 2025, although he reiterated his group's request for an evaluation of the ILO's action programmes and of the Global Coalition for Social Justice by 2027. His group was pleased that developments were under way to harness the potential of technology, particularly AI, to support the evaluation function. He urged the Office to address, however, the insufficient uptake of evaluation findings in the ILO's strategic documents.

180. While he welcomed the aim to increase constituents' involvement in the design and implementation of development cooperation projects, he wished to know why their level of participation had decreased by 10 per cent between 2022 and 2023. His group was particularly concerned at the "at risk" status of some targets and supported more strategically oriented evaluations that provided important feedback and lessons learned in order to improve results under sub-outcome 2.1. He was disappointed at the insufficient number of recommendations that had been fully or partially implemented within 12 months of an evaluation and called on the Office to lead by example and step up its efforts to address the situation. Concerning enabler 3, the Office should focus on integrating evaluation needs into the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of development cooperation projects by 2025.

181. He acknowledged some positive developments reflected in Part II on the assessment of the ILO's overall performance in 2023 but emphasized the need to improve overall effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the importance of involving the constituents in project design in order to meet needs at the national level. He welcomed the results of the independent ex post quality review of impact studies and evaluations and expressed his support for recommendation 3. His group supported the draft decision.

182. **The Worker spokesperson** welcomed the achievement of the targets set under indicators 1.2.2, on providing training for constituents; 1.2.3, on increasing the percentage of qualified staff under the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme; and 2.2.2, on developing improved ILO evaluation policy guidelines. He noted with interest the ongoing efforts to build the internal and external capacity of ILO staff through the Evaluation Manager Certification Programme and the involvement of constituents in evaluation training for decent work. The Office should clarify why worker representatives had not benefited from training to the same extent as representatives of other constituents. He supported the suggestion in the report to establish mechanisms for cost recovery and sharing between departments and regions to compensate for certified evaluation managers' time. He reiterated the importance of cluster evaluations in improving effectiveness in terms of staffing and costs and endorsed recommendation 2 on establishing cluster evaluations as the default option for donors. The Organization's meta-scores in the UN Country Teams Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women were commendable.

183. Regarding recommendation 1, he recalled that the Governing Body had proposed a high-level evaluation on the topic of social dialogue and tripartism that had not been included in the rolling work plan set out in the document. He welcomed the proposed evaluations on normative action on skills and lifelong learning proposed for 2026. He requested clarification on how AI had been used to select the topics for high-level evaluations; if that tool was to be employed in the selection process again, the constituents should be consulted on the criteria that it used. The evaluation of the ILO Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy and the Office's use of evaluation in its strategic planning were welcome.

184. He noted with satisfaction that most of the ILO project interventions evaluated in 2023 had exhibited good strategic relevance and coherence, and that the sustainability of results and impact had been rated as satisfactory in more than half of cases. He was nonetheless concerned at the relatively low proportion of projects that had performed well in terms of overall effectiveness and efficiency. Weaknesses in the area of efficiency should be analysed in greater detail, particularly with regard to the lack of financial and human resources, which undermined the Organization's ability to achieve its ambitious development cooperation goals. He encouraged the Office to step up its efforts to achieve tangible results in disability inclusion and environmental sustainability. He welcomed the improved performance of the ILO's work to strengthen tripartite constituents and ensure inclusive social dialogue, and of projects related to effective protection at work for all. He supported recommendation 3 and the draft decision.

185. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group**, a Government representative of the United Republic of Tanzania noted with appreciation that discussions on the rolling work plan for 2024–27 would consider the specific needs and environment of Africa. Acknowledging that impact evaluations were more resource-intensive than standard evaluations, he nevertheless called for them to be strengthened in order to gain value for money and positively impact the lives of persons served by the ILO; the Evaluation Office's work should be adequately resourced. Regarding the assessment of the ILO's overall performance in Part II, he expressed concern at the limited involvement of the constituents in the formulation and implementation of projects, and emphasized that it was essential for the Organization to engage fully with constituents to ensure that projects were needs-driven and fit for purpose. He wished to know why the effectiveness of interventions had declined between 2022 and 2023 and what measures were being considered to address the situation. He noted with concern the poor performance in disability inclusion.

186. He asked the Office to specify the measures that it intended to adopt to enhance efficiency, given the low overall performance in that area. It would be helpful to know what the causes of high management turnover were and whether they had been addressed. Welcoming the focus on employment promotion and sustainable enterprises, he urged the Office to incorporate impact evaluations at the project design stage. He proposed reformulating the draft decision to clarify precisely what the Governing Body was being invited to endorse.

187. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC**, a Government representative of Peru encouraged the Evaluation Office to continue to prioritize the strategic planning of evaluations and improve coordination with other parties exercising oversight functions. The lessons learned from evaluations, and the recommendations stemming from them, were very valuable and must be applied by all stakeholders. GRULAC agreed with the rolling work plan for 2024–27, in particular the proposed evaluation of the Youth Employment Strategy 2020–30 and the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean. In future years, evaluations of the care economy should be included, with a focus on the areas prioritized in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27.

188. His group encouraged the Office to continue its efforts to strengthen monitoring and reporting practices in relation to development cooperation projects, and it would like to understand the impact of failing to meet the relevant target in the evaluation of the ILO's effectiveness. The ILO's poor performance in relation to development cooperation-funded interventions, disability inclusion and the transition to environmentally sustainable practices was a matter of concern, and GRULAC was grateful to the Director-General for implementing measures under the Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy to address some of the shortcomings identified. Lastly, the group would welcome the Office's recommendations on addressing the weaknesses identified in the independent ex post quality review of impact studies and evaluations. GRULAC supported the draft decision.

189. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC**, a Government representative of the United States of America said that her group would welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the evaluation functions of ILO departments other than the Evaluation Office. Her group welcomed the information on how the global evaluation of the Better Work programme would offer added value compared to previous evaluations, since the programme had its own evaluation procedures. Her group urged the Office to engage with donors in the evaluation of that programme, including during the design and data collection phases. Moreover, the rolling work plan for high-level evaluations should take account of developments in the agenda-setting procedures of the International Labour Conference.

190. Her group welcomed the outcome-level evaluation of skills and lifelong learning, since digital, demographic and environmental transitions highlighted the importance of ensuring that programming in that area was fit for purpose. IMEC would appreciate information on the links between the institutional-level review of the ILO's priority action programme modality included in the rolling work plan, and the mid-term review of the implementation of the priority action programme proposed in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27.

191. Her group would also welcome the Office's reflections on whether the use of non-generative AI to identify potential topics for high-level evaluation had been successful, and whether it had reduced tripartite input into the process. IMEC welcomed the growing evaluation uptake in the ILO's strategic documents and governance discussions, as well as the progress made in relation to impact evaluations, and encouraged the Office to continue to address the weaknesses identified in the report. Noting that ambitions for more strategic, ex post and impact evaluations were hindered by limited support for flexible evaluation funding, IMEC requested further information from the Office on the exact nature of such funding and how it would work in practice.

192. Regarding Part II, the very poor performance in the area of disability inclusion was concerning and required immediate attention at the regional and country levels. A further area of concern was the deterioration of results in relation to gender-responsiveness, in particular the decline in performance against the UN Country Teams Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; greater attention should be paid to that matter.

193. Given that fewer than 50 per cent of ILO interventions had performed at an average or above-average level in terms of overall efficiency, IMEC encouraged the Office to foster and mainstream the implementation of outcome-based management approaches and comprehensive monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Furthermore, IMEC supported the proposed actions to improve the quality of the ILO's impact evaluations, which were only moderately compliant with global standards. Lastly, IMEC welcomed the fact that the importance of learning was highlighted throughout the Evaluation Strategy 2023–25. Further efforts should be made to strengthen the communication of evaluation-based findings and the timely use of evidence. IMEC supported the draft decision.

194. **A Government representative of the Russian Federation** suggested that, with regard to possible topics for long-term targeted evaluation, the Office should consider studying the ILO's experience of the UN Secretary-General's UN 2.0 initiative. He would appreciate the Office's comments on the reason for the decline in the percentage of recommendations implemented within 12 months of an evaluation. In light of the need for greater participation by all parties in evaluations that had been highlighted by directors of country offices and project staff, he encouraged the Evaluation Office to ensure full transparency in the establishment of evaluation reference groups by allowing all stakeholders to participate in evaluation activities. That could be achieved by issuing an open call or invitation to stakeholders, including Member States.

195. While his Government supported the Evaluation Office's use of innovations such as AI, manual quality controls should also be performed to ensure that outputs met Standard 5 ("Quality") of the UN Evaluation Group. Furthermore, consideration must be given to cybersecurity and data integrity risks. He supported the three recommendations proposed for endorsement by the Governing Body.

196. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Evaluation Office) welcomed the recognition that good progress had been made in implementing the Evaluation Strategy. It was crucial to work together to tackle the issues affecting the "at risk" targets. Responding to the questions raised, he stated that there was only one independent evaluation unit in the ILO – the Evaluation Office – and although some other departments had a monitoring and evaluation officer, all independent evaluations were managed by the Evaluation Office. Moreover, the Better Work programme did not have separate evaluation procedures, and every independent evaluation of that programme or any other programme in the ILO was managed and overseen by the Evaluation Office. Consequently, the Evaluation Office had a very heavy workload. Although that had been partially alleviated through clustering – which would continue, as the Evaluation Office sought to prioritize quality over quantity – it remained excessive, with 74 independent and 35 internal evaluations having been completed in the reporting period. The around 190 certified evaluation managers were a very important asset, but their involvement needed to be incentivized as they were fulfilling their voluntary role in addition to their normal duties. Unfortunately, there were currently no alternative sources of funding for the evaluation function.

197. With regard to the need for impact evaluation, it was clearly important to know the real-world impact of the ILO's work. However, proper impact evaluations based on randomized control trials were rare, partly because they were extremely expensive and were not always justified given the small scale of the ILO's projects. Impact evaluations were nevertheless being conducted as part of programmes that used donor funding without the involvement of the Evaluation Office. Regrettably, there had been little demand for a facility established by the Evaluation Office to assist in the design of those impact evaluations, which partly explained the concerning results of the ex post quality control of impact evaluations provided in the report.

198. The lack of flexible funding was a further obstacle to conducting impact evaluations: most of the funding for evaluations was earmarked for particular projects and linked to the project duration and could therefore not cover ex post or impact evaluations that required funding beyond the project end date. The ILO Evaluation Trust Fund – established in the hope that donors would provide flexible funding for impact evaluations of key themes and programmes over the long term – had so far received very little funding and needed to be promoted. With regard to management responses, although the submission rate had been lower than in the previous year when it was 100 per cent, it remained impressive, at 96 per cent. Unfortunately, the rate decreased substantially if a few offices did not submit responses, and despite many reminders the reasons for non-submission were sometimes beyond their control.

199. The Evaluation Office was in the very early stages of using AI. It was working with the Information and Technology Management Department on a chatbot that would be embedded in *i*-eval Discovery to help identify among the 1,500 evaluation reports and even more lessons learned and good practices what would be useful when designing projects. When selecting evaluation topics, the Evaluation Office had used non-generative AI – essentially qualitative data analysis software – to search all Governing Body documents for requests for evaluations. The constituents had then been consulted, based on that analysis, about which topics they deemed most important.

200. Regarding capacity-building, the Evaluation Office had limited funding for training for constituents. It trained constituents on evaluation matters where possible, and although in 2023 it had trained more employer representatives than worker representatives, the opposite had been true in 2022.

201. With regard to the assessment of the ILO's effectiveness in Part II, the Evaluation Office was the messenger of the findings, which were based on a thorough review of 60 project evaluations every year. There was scope for the Evaluation Advisory Committee to examine how follow-up to systemic issues could be improved, and the issue of evaluations repeatedly returning the same findings had been raised at recent Committee meetings. It was important not to focus only on the negative findings, since the report contained some very positive ones: around 60 per cent of development cooperation projects had performed at an above-average level, and 70 per cent of the evaluated interventions had exhibited good strategic relevance.

202. There was a lack of mainstreaming of gender equality, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability into project documents, but that did not reflect the ILO's overall performance in those areas, and the report showed exceptional performance in terms of capacity-building, with over 85 per cent of projects achieving their goals. Moreover, the ILO's technical expertise had been rated very positively in almost 90 per cent of cases. Although the ILO's efficiency had decreased slightly during the reporting period, end cost efficiency had in fact risen, demonstrating that projects represented value for money despite occasionally being delayed or overly ambitious. The draft decision proposed that the Governing Body endorse the three recommendations highlighted in the report.

Decision

203. The Governing Body endorsed the recommendations of the Annual Evaluation Report 2023–24 (paragraphs 15, 48 and 79) for implementation by the Office.

(GB.352/PFA/8(Rev.1), paragraph 80)

9. High-level evaluations of strategies and Decent Work Country Programmes (GB.352/PFA/9)

204. The Worker spokesperson welcomed the conclusions of the independent high-level evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 and the related implementation plan, which highlighted serious shortcomings. The lack of vision for improvement and theory of change meant that it was not possible for the Strategy to address major and systemic issues currently affecting workers worldwide. The ineffective implementation mechanism and the decrease in monitoring and reporting after the 2023 mid-term review were extremely concerning as they could lead to weakened transparency and accountability, and thus serious failings in social dialogue and less protection for the social partners. The gaps in the use of development cooperation were particularly worrying, as they could directly impact the capacity of trade unions to engage in social dialogue. The Office's recent development cooperation approach, which seemed to focus more on a business case for resource mobilization, if poorly managed, could limit the role of development cooperation in the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism. The Workers were concerned by the limited contribution of the Strategy to the securing of financing, and the lack of innovative guidance for future priorities. The fact that the Strategy concentrated on reaffirming existing practices rather than providing innovative solutions severely limited any prospect of a long-term impact. A more targeted, innovative and transparent approach was urgently needed.

205. The positive evaluation of the ILO strategies and approaches for the development and use of labour statistics reflected the key and leading role of the ILO Department of Statistics and for that he congratulated the Office. On the need for improvements, he raised the need to have data from labour inspection, particularly in view of informal work, and, regarding data on digital platform work, he reiterated the importance of more precise concepts when discussing the platform economy at the 113th Session of the International Labour Conference. He mentioned the need to address statistics on living wages, labour migration and occupational safety and health, ensuring the timely provision of labour statistics. He also mentioned the need to engage workers in capacity-building activities, in addition to national statistical offices or ministries of labour. He agreed with the recommendation to have an Organization-wide strategy for statistics that could take into account the needs of workers, for which additional funding would be required. The Office should ensure that the Department of Statistics had the resources necessary to fulfil its mandate.

206. Regarding the independent high-level evaluation of the ILO's DWCP strategies and activities in Western Africa, his group was concerned by the lack of focus on the integrated programmatic approaches to address the complex causes of decent work deficits. Concerning vulnerable groups of workers, the Office should allocate further resources to strategies for the implementation of living wages. More sustained efforts were required in that domain to promote equal opportunities and better working conditions for all workers, particularly women. The Office should ensure that trade unions were more actively involved in both the development and implementation of programmes. It was necessary to prioritize the scaling-up of interventions that had been successful at the local level. Tailoring interventions to the specific socio-economic and cultural context of each country was essential. In terms of the financial sustainability of programmes, the Office should improve coherence between country-specific child labour programmes and other international development frameworks, and ensure that the priorities of workers were systematically integrated into broader development strategies. Any delays in financing and administrative inefficiencies would adversely impact workers and their organizations by slowing down key programmes. He once again urged the Office to implement all the recommendations contained in the document, and endorsed the draft decision.

207. **The Employer spokesperson** said that the findings of the evaluation were deeply concerning. It was imperative for the evaluation outcomes to be clearly aligned with the recommendations, and for them to be integrated into the programme and budget, together with close collaboration with constituents to enable a responsive approach to constituent needs. Regarding the evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25, the Employers strongly supported the conclusions. Constituents needed to have clear and explicit commitment to the strategic focus of development cooperation, the enhancement of national ownership and constituent empowerment, and tangible progress on improving ILO systems for developing, delivering, monitoring and supporting development cooperation projects. She noted the Office's response, particularly to recommendation 1 on strengthening the engagement of constituents and local stakeholders. However, development cooperation should be a stand-alone output in the programme and budget, with a clear commitment to address the recommendations of the evaluation.

208. Concerning the evaluation of the ILO strategies and approaches for the development and use of labour statistics, the Employers supported the recommendations, particularly recommendation 1 on developing an Organization-wide strategy for the ILO's statistical function, to be presented to the Governing Body by the end of 2026, and recommendation 4 on developing a labour statistics training programme for social partners. Regarding resource constraints, as the ILO had a global leadership role, relying solely on development cooperation might not be the best strategic choice. Adequate and regular funding should be allocated to build upon the ILO's statistical work, ensuring that it was beneficial for all constituents. Resources used in the collection, processing and analysis of quality and reliable statistics should be regarded as a strategic investment to support the evidence base for social dialogue and add weight and credibility to tripartism.

209. On the evaluation of the ILO's DWCP strategies and activities in Western Africa, the Office should devote all necessary resources to address the often weak institutional capacity of social partners in the region, which limited their role in monitoring and implementing projects. An increased focus on collaboration with constituents, particularly workers' and employers' organizations, was necessary, ensuring their involvement from the planning stage. She urged the Office to seriously consider all the lessons learned and recommendations contained in the document. A draft new development cooperation strategy, which was not donor-driven, but rather was responsive to the needs of constituents, should be presented at the 353rd Session of the Governing Body.

210. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group,** a Government representative of the United Republic of Tanzania said, with regard to the evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25, that future efforts should focus on enhancing connectivity and improving monitoring and data collection to better measure long-term progress, as the current Strategy lacked a clear definition of what success entailed. He expressed concern that some issues raised in the 2015 ILO high-level evaluation of development cooperation remained unresolved and that projects continued to suffer from overly ambitious designs and slow start-ups. The ILO should avoid spreading its resources when little or no impact was being achieved on existing programmes. On the evaluation of the ILO strategies and approaches for the development and use of labour statistics, it would be useful for the Office to provide information on the options to address the resource deficiencies in ILO support for governments and employers' and workers' organizations in policymaking. Regarding the evaluation of the ILO's DWCP strategies and activities in Western Africa, he agreed with the findings that several areas required continued attention, such as resource mobilization efforts to achieve better distribution among countries and improve the alignment of resources. Focused resource mobilization addressing skills, gender equality, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and challenges in the informal economy, was essential for all developing countries, not just Western Africa. DWCPs should be guided by national priorities to ensure relevance, sustainability and the achievement of desired impacts.

211. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG,** a Government representative of Bangladesh, on the evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25, urged the Office to respond to the possibility of a development cooperation operations unit and the feasibility of creating a dedicated function for monitoring and developing operations. The Office's responses to the recommendations to improve innovation, strengthen communications strategies and promote transparency and accountability lacked the required level of clarity. A new ILO development cooperation strategy 2026–29 should contain more concrete objectives with adequate space for national priorities in programmes. ASPAG would welcome programmes that helped enterprises to expand their human resources alongside normative developments. Consultations should commence shortly in order for such priorities to be included in the new strategy. Regarding the evaluation in relation to the development and use of labour statistics, in addition to being used for national and global policymaking, ILO statistics also needed to cater to the everyday needs of tripartite constituents. The group welcomed the recommendation to present a strategy for labour statistics to the Governing Body, aligned with the UN Secretary-General's Data Strategy and the establishment of a Data Coordination Group. The group agreed with the Office response that activities like standard-setting and technical support to countries should be funded through stable mechanisms independent of donor-driven orientation. However, the Office should explore further financing options, including trust funds and South–South cooperation for additional funds. On the evaluation of the ILO's DWCP strategies and activities in Western Africa, he urged the Office to develop a mechanism to measure the different impacts of DWCPs separately.

212. **Speaking on behalf of a significant number of GRULAC countries,** [4] a Government representative of Peru said that he appreciated the ILO's work on DWCPs and development cooperation as those initiatives were essential to tackling structural challenges, such as informal employment, social exclusion and discrimination at work. Programmes must have clear and measurable indicators to evaluate results and make adjustments as necessary. He noted the proposals to address the challenges faced by the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 and expressed support for increased resources and funding for areas with lower coverage by ILO programmes, in particular areas of development that supported progress towards the SDGs, and the promotion of tripartite participation to make the ILO's work relevant and sustainable. A focus on priority areas would provide clarity on the impact and expected benefits of development cooperation. He supported the recommendations contained in the document, including on consultations for a new development cooperation strategy 2026–29 and the development of follow-up mechanisms for projects; more information would be appreciated on the form and scope of those processes, which should be transparent, with a view to their presentation to the Governing Body in 2025.

213. He noted the positive evaluation of the labour statistics function – an area in which progress had been made during the evaluation period. He commended the progress made in the quantity and quality of ILOSTAT as the world's largest repository of labour statistics, and the statistical standard-setting activities led by the Office. He supported recommendation 1 to develop an Organization-wide strategy for the ILO's statistical function that should improve coordination between technical departments and regional offices on statistical work in the field. Recommendation 2 required adequate financing. He urged the Office to ensure the necessary funding to address the gaps identified in the evaluation and deliver on the commitments made at the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2023.

214. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of Spain welcomed the three high-level evaluations. Limited access to ILO data had resulted in delays and gaps in analysis, however, which demonstrated the importance of strong data management, accountability and learning while generating evidence for decision-makers and practitioners. As noted in the document, a balanced approach was needed to produce labour statistics by using multiple sources to ensure data availability.

215. He expressed disappointment at the findings of the overall evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25. IMEC agreed that a new strategy was needed for the continuous improvement of ILO systems and approaches to development cooperation projects and appreciated the recommendations set out in that regard. The ineffective monitoring and

[4] Barbados, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

reporting of the Strategy gave rise to concern about its perceived value. Regarding recommendation 1 on the Strategy, he requested further details regarding how a development cooperation operations unit could be established, given limited staff and resources. The Office's commitment to address the evaluation findings and integrate the recommendations in the implementation of the Strategy and related initiatives was appreciated. The recommendations on enhanced accountability and performance management, and improved evaluation and measurement of progress were key, given the importance of fostering trust in the ILO. IMEC encouraged the Office to further promote and strategically position the Organization's unique approach to development cooperation, which should be data-driven, impact-oriented, closely monitored and evaluated, with clear objectives and priorities that were aligned with the ILO's core mandate and comparative advantage.

216. Concerning the high-level evaluation of the ILO strategies and approaches for the development and use of labour statistics, he noted that, despite the general high regard for the labour statistics produced by the ILO, some concerns remained about the availability of data in certain policy areas due to human and financial resources constraints. The predominantly positive findings were welcome, as was the Office's continued dedication to data quality and availability. IMEC agreed with recommendation 1 to develop an Organization-wide strategy to be presented in 2026 that should seek greater coordination among ILO structures, particularly in the field, and a more comprehensive response to constituents' evolving needs. As for recommendation 2, the group thought that the statistical activities were part of the core business of the Office and they would need to be supported by the regular budget, particularly in view of the mandate received by the last International Conference of Labour Statisticians, for which the Governing Body requested adequate resource allocation during its March 2024 session. He called on the Office to find a way to enhance financial allocations for statistics in the next programme and budget proposals. IMEC endorsed the recommendations contained in the document and requested the Director-General to ensure their appropriate implementation.

217. **A representative of the Director-General** (Assistant Director-General, External and Corporate Relations) welcomed the comments by constituents, noting that the findings of the evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 were indeed disappointing. She expressed her commitment to developing a new strategy that had a clearer vision and greater ambition, was more responsive to constituents' needs and set out the expected measurable impact. The strategy would need to be attractive to donors, since it would be difficult to achieve results without resource mobilization, and should be developed transparently, following broad consultation. One step that had already been taken was the improved integration of development cooperation work in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2026–27. Country ownership of development cooperation projects was supported through the development cooperation frameworks that established countries' priorities. The Office was working with major donors to find areas in which constituents' needs and donors' interests converged.

218. To address the implementation of development cooperation more generally, a small group of ILO technical staff were doing an analysis of what had worked in order to replicate successes. She agreed with the evaluation that there was a lack of innovation in the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25, noting that efforts had already started to identify and scale up innovative practices in development cooperation. A comprehensive proposal would be developed on better integrating development cooperation projects in the Organization's work and ensuring that measures were in place to address deficiencies in implementation.

219. **Another representative of the Director-General** (Chief Statistician and Director, Department of Statistics) said that he had noted comments on the need to focus further on capacity-building for constituents. Although scarce available resources were generally channelled into the production of statistics, the Office was committed to capacity-building and had plans in place to work with ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, the IOE and ITUC.

220. The development of a strategy for strengthening labour statistics would allow for enhanced coordination and planning, and engagement with tripartite constituents, relying on the tripartite format of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. In 2023, that Conference had handed down an ambitious mandate that should be fulfilled and it had been requested to support constituents to produce reliable statistics. That was adopted by the Governing Body at its March 2024 session. While the Office had heard strong views regarding enhancing more regular funding to statistical activities, it welcomed suggestions of setting up trust funds and enhancing South–South cooperation to support the process. He acknowledged that greater emphasis was needed on living wages, occupational safety and health, and platform employment. He expressed his commitment to implementing the recommendations made in the high-level evaluation.

221. **A representative of the Director-General** (Regional Director for Africa) said that she had noted the comments made regarding the high-level evaluation of DWCP strategies and activities in West Africa and expressed her commitment to acting on the recommendations therein, in particular on the involvement of constituents in DWCPs from development to implementation.

222. **Another representative of the Director-General** (Director, Evaluation) noted with appreciation the support expressed by constituents and management for the implementation of the recommendations made in the three high-level evaluations. The evaluation of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 contained a detailed analysis of what did and did not work, which should prove useful to the Office in the follow-up steps to be taken.

223. **The Worker spokesperson** welcomed the comments and commitments made by the Office.

224. **The Employer spokesperson** thanked the Office for its comments and commitments. She highlighted her group's request to include a clear output for development cooperation in the Programme and Budget for 2026–27, in order to secure its place in the Organization's programme and activities.

Decision

225. **The Governing Body requested the Director-General to take into consideration the recommendations of the three independent high-level evaluations presented in document GB.352/PFA/9 (paragraphs 32–38, 72–78 and 105–117), and to ensure their appropriate implementation.**

(GB.352/PFA/9, paragraph 119)

10. Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit (GB.352/PFA/10)

226. **The Worker spokesperson**, drawing attention to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the review of accountability frameworks in UN system organizations, requested the Office to provide detailed information on its response to recommendation 2, noting that the guidance issued under that recommendation did not necessarily run contrary to a risk-based approach to the selection of individual audit and oversight efforts. The Office could focus on audits that might yield more results while ensuring that all elements of an accountability framework would

be covered over a certain time period. Since the Office had not accepted recommendation 3, he asked whether it considered that current submissions of annual reports to the Governing Body would meet the relevant requirements once the accountability framework was updated. His group looked forward to receiving a report on the Office's response to recommendation 3 of the JIU report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices in UN system organizations. He encouraged the Office to pursue its work on mental health and well-being among its staff and to cooperate closely with the ILO Staff Union on those issues.

227. **The Employer spokesperson** urged the Office to implement recommendation 1 of the JIU report on the review of accountability frameworks, highlighting the importance of maintaining the ILO's tripartite structure and specific mandate and ensuring that the Organization could build on its special role within the UN system. Regarding the JIU report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices, she said that policies on facilitating the return to work of personnel with mental health conditions after absences were largely neglected in the UN system. The ILO should set an example as the leading UN agency in the world of work, particularly as such initiatives benefited employees and employers, supported staff retention, enhanced productivity and were cost-effective. The Office should take a data-driven approach to routine monitoring of the effectiveness of well-being programmes. She supported the draft decision.

228. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG,** a Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran commended the detailed follow-up on JIU recommendations, including those from previous years, as a systematic approach to ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to UN system-wide concerns. He encouraged the Office to consider a more tailored approach to its response to the review of accountability frameworks that was aligned with its unique mandate and structure while still adhering to UN system-wide standards. The Office might wish to revisit its decision not to accept recommendation 3 and explore ways to integrate accountability reporting into existing mechanisms without creating unnecessary duplication. Turning to the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices, he urged the Office to expedite the implementation of recommendation 4 and proposed that a more detailed timeline be established for the implementation of recommendation 10. He encouraged the Office to prepare proactively for upcoming JIU reviews on budgeting and the single-audit principle, in order to ensure that the Organization's financial management strengths were reflected therein, and to engage proactively with the forthcoming review on policies and practices to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse in UN system organizations. Lastly, the report could provide more context on how JIU recommendations were aligned with the ILO's strategic objectives and outcomes, particularly in relation to improved leadership and governance.

229. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC,** a Government representative of Paraguay said that the prompt implementation of recommendation 1 of the JIU report on the review of accountability frameworks would improve the Office's accountability mechanisms and promote a culture of accountability. Regarding recommendation 2, she highlighted the need for internal oversight services to remain independent and respond to general guidelines that recognized the diverse institutional mandates, nature and governance structures of UN organizations. The Office should take a pragmatic approach to the implementation of JIU recommendations by taking stock of actions already implemented and assessing the feasibility of implementing further recommendations in the context of tripartism. With respect to recommendation 3, it would be appropriate to continue following the current course of action to avoid overlap with existing reporting requirements and ensure optimal use of resources. She requested further information on the implementation of recommendation 4 of the JIU report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices and on the Office's assessment of the resources and time needed for the implementation of recommendation 10. Lastly, she requested the Office to invite a representative of the JIU to a future session of the Governing Body to discuss progress in implementing its recommendations. She supported the draft decision.

230. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of Canada said that her group expected the Office to accept all recommendations in the JIU report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices. She encouraged the Office to outline an evidence-based, data-driven approach to monitoring and assessment in the ILO's Mental Health and Well-being at Work Action Plan 2024–26. With respect to the review of accountability frameworks, she acknowledged that each UN organization should adapt the JIU model to their unique contexts and advised the Office to ensure that there were no gaps in oversight in the ILO's accountability framework and governance structure.

231. She requested clarification on measures in place to ensure the independence of the ILO's Ethics Officer and further information on the ethics reporting structure. The report of the Ethics Officer should be discussed annually by the Governing Body. She sought an update on the implementation status of a 2020 JIU recommendation regarding the adoption of appropriate formal procedures for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads and recommended that the Office refer to the JIU report on the review of whistle-blower policies and practices in UN system organizations when implementing that recommendation. The JIU should be invited to take part in an upcoming session of the Governing Body to exchange views on good governance and accountability. She supported the draft decision.

232. **A Government representative of the Russian Federation** said that a full review of the ILO's accountability framework by the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO) would grant the Office and Member States a comprehensive insight into the situation. Member States should have the opportunity to express their wishes and make recommendations regarding oversight initiatives without prejudice to the IAO's independence. He asked whether the Office considered the current version of the ILO accountability framework document, published 14 years previously, to be up to date. It was regrettable that the Office had not accepted recommendation 3 of the JIU report on the review of accountability frameworks; he called on the Office to look into the JIU's comments on the introduction of a regular report on the accountability framework and the associated costs. In view of concerns regarding potential duplication of work, it might be appropriate to launch a portal on the ILO website to provide constituents with comprehensive information on the functioning and costs of the accountability framework. The Office should implement the JIU's recommendations promptly and in full, and should continue to participate actively in its reviews.

233. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Strategic Programming and Management Department) said that the Office would take steps to implement recommendation 1 of the JIU report on the review of accountability frameworks and report on progress to the Governing Body. Recommendation 3 had not been accepted by any of the members of the UN system Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); however, the Office would give further thoughts on ways to address the matter. Efforts to implement the recommendations contained in the JIU report on the review of mental health and well-being policies and practices would be accelerated, and the Office would report back to constituents in 2025 on progress in that regard.

234. The Ethics Officer enjoyed independence and reported directly to the Director-General and indirectly to the Governing Body through the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee

(IOAC). The IOAC was looking into issues raised by the JIU regarding the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads, and the Office would update the Governing Body on that process in March 2025.

235. The Office was actively participating in ongoing JIU reporting exercises for 2024. The JIU had been invited to participate in Governing Body sessions over the years and would continue to have access to the relevant sessions.

236. **Another representative of the Director-General** (Treasurer and Financial Comptroller) said that the Office planned to review the ILO's accountability framework within the scope of existing processes. It had decided not to accept recommendation 3 of the JIU report on the review of accountability frameworks, as producing a single annual accountability framework report would require the Governing Body to dedicate a significant portion of time to the ILO's audit and oversight functions at one of its sessions each year. At present, the Governing Body considered separate reports on different areas of the audit and oversight system across its three sessions through the year, ensuring that each report received due attention. The different areas of the ILO's audit and oversight system currently produced their respective reports at different times of year.

Decision

237. **The Governing Body took note of the information contained in document GB.352/PFA/10 and endorsed the Office's assessment of the status of the follow-up by the ILO to the JIU recommendations presented in the document.**

(GB.352/PFA/10, paragraph 17)

Personnel Segment

11. Statement by the Chairperson of the Staff Union

(The statement by the staff representative is reproduced in *Appendix II*.)

12. Amendments to the Staff Regulations

(There was no document for discussion under this item, but a document for information: GB.352/PFA/INF/5)

13. Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO: Recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by other international organizations (GB.352/PFA/13)

238. **The Worker spokesperson** noted with satisfaction the request by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) to recognize the jurisdiction of the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO and welcomed the fact that, subject to the approval of the Governing Body, the Tribunal's jurisdiction would extend to 59 organizations other than the ILO. He conveyed his group's satisfaction that the Tribunal continued to attract new international organizations, undoubtedly on account of its reputation, independence and impartiality. The Tribunal's mandate was of unique importance in the multilateral system. His group supported the draft decision.

239. **The Employer spokesperson** said that, having been confirmed that the ICPDR met the requirements set out in article II(5) of the Tribunal's Statute, and on the condition that the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction over additional organizations imposed no extra financial burden on the ILO, his group supported the draft decision.

Decision

240. The Governing Body approved the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) with effect from the date of such approval.

(GB.352/PFA/13, paragraph 11)

14. Other personnel matters

(No other personnel matters were submitted to the Governing Body at this session.)