International Labour Organization

GB.355/PFA/PV

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. Proposed programme and budget of the Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) for 2026–27 (GB.355/PFA/1)

1. **The Worker spokesperson** said that the proposed Programme and Budget for 2026–27 for CINTERFOR constituted not only a technical proposal but a proactive response to the structural challenges facing the region, including a 47.6 per cent informality rate, 13.8 per cent youth employment rate and persistent gender gaps. Regional initiatives and other concrete progress were evidence that tripartism worked when there was investment in skills, dialogue and cooperation. The five strategic pillars of the work plan were solid and consistent. Governance and social dialogue were essential to ensure that vocational training policies responded to real needs and translated into robust regulatory frameworks. On inclusion and equality, the cross-cutting focus on gender, youth and migration was structural and the recognition of prior learning and regional certification mechanisms improved employability. For quality training and just transition, digital and green skills were essential preparation for future jobs, in line with the Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208).

2. From a budgetary perspective, CINTERFOR demonstrated efficient and responsible management. The budget proposals were balanced and the projected income covered all expenditure. The diversification of funding sources and alliances with the UN system would consolidate CINTERFOR as an intelligent investment for the ILO. She sought clarification regarding whether the ILO contribution of US$2,847,917 might be amended under the ILO Review and possible budget cuts. The programme responded to the technical challenges of vocational training and reaffirmed commitment to tripartism, inclusion and social justice. Its approval represented a significant step towards more democratic, equitable training systems prepared for the future of work. Her group supported the draft decision.

3. **The Employer spokesperson** said that while the document provided a good basis for discussion, it did not provide the results of the current biennium or further points to be taken into account in the programme and budget for the forthcoming biennium. The Ibero-American Tripartite Social Dialogue Process on Vocational Training had resulted in the Declaration of the Ibero-American Tripartite Social Dialogue, submitted to the 47th Technical Committee Meeting of ILO/CINTERFOR. The Declaration provided a common tripartite framework to guide vocational training policies in view of technological, environmental, demographic, migratory and informality challenges. It reaffirmed that only with effective social dialogue, supported by solid democratic institutions and respect for fundamental freedoms, could sustainable training strategies be developed. The process had also highlighted the role of employers in training management and skills certification systems. The Talent on the Move event held in Lima in October 2024 had promoted the strengthening of skills certification and more orderly labour mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean, and had resulted in the conclusion of a regional road map. Effective social dialogue was contributing to the establishment of a regional mechanism for mutual skills recognition.

4. He welcomed the ongoing cooperation between CINTERFOR management, the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). The leadership of the CINTERFOR Director had been decisive for its sustainability and relevance. Technological, environmental and demographic challenges were unavoidable, and informality and migration constituted pressing structural challenges that affected labour and production; youth unemployment was a further factor for consideration. Vocational training should be aligned with policies for productive and sustainable development, with a focus on strengthening microenterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs. Training should be tailored to needs and entrepreneurship should be strengthened to promote productivity, formality and employment sustainability, in line with the 2024–25 programme. There would be no growth or employment without a productive, strong and skilled sector of production. Coordinated responses and social dialogue were imperative to build a more inclusive and dynamic economy. His group supported the draft decision.

5. **Speaking on behalf of the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC)**, a Government representative of Paraguay said that GRULAC recognized the importance of CINTERFOR's work in the area of vocational training and expressed appreciation that the work plan was based on current and emerging needs of Member States in the region. It supported the biennial work plan structured around five pillars and welcomed the fact that the allocated budget would permit the implementation of specialized programmes on digital technology, artificial intelligence, automation and the green economy, promoting essential technical and cross-cutting skills. It supported the allocation of resources to research and knowledge-sharing; it was essential to promote innovation and continuous improvement. GRULAC encouraged the strengthening of partnerships with strategic partners to maximize the impact of actions and respond to emerging challenges. Resources should be allocated to ensure gender equality in vocational training, the inclusion of vulnerable groups and to tackle low labour productivity as a central focus of interregional strategies. Equality of opportunity was a fundamental principle in efforts to ensure that no one was left behind in access to training and decent work. GRULAC supported the draft decision.

6. **A Government representative of Uruguay** said that the Government of Uruguay, host country of CINTERFOR, expressed support for the programme and budget. The actions included in pillar 1 of the work plan were vital to the region due to both their relevance within vocational training systems and their broader effect on labour relations in the various countries. Actions arising from pillars 2 and 3 would strengthen the effectiveness of vocational training and contribute to decent work and sustainable development. The plan focused on key system operating processes, ensuring that issues and challenges were effectively addressed. Uruguay reaffirmed its commitment to continue contributing financially to the Centre.

7. **A representative of the Director-General** (Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean) said that CINTERFOR was an example of the value and power of social dialogue. She welcomed the proposals and analysis and acknowledged the priorities expressed. The dialogue would continue in the next biennium and the ILO contribution to the functioning of CINTERFOR would be maintained.

Decision

8. **The Governing Body approved the income and expenditure estimates of the Inter American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR) extrabudgetary account for 2026–27, as set out in Appendix I of document GB.355/PFA/1.**

(GB.355/PFA/1, paragraph 21)

2. Programme and Budget for 2024–25: Regular budget and Working Capital Fund (GB.355/PFA/2 and GB.355/PFA/2/Update)

9. **The Employer spokesperson** expressed appreciation for the fact that, as of 30 September 2025, total income for 2024–25 was US$727.2 million, with expenditure of US$714.9 million, resulting in a surplus of US$12.3 million. He noted that Member States had paid 60.5 per cent of their assessed contributions for 2025 compared to 64 per cent at the same stage in 2024, that 23 had paid partially and 62 had made no payments, and that 17 Member States had lost their voting rights due to arrears exceeding 2 years of contributions. With the understanding that the Working Capital Fund would remain at CHF35 million and that potential budgetary transfers would be finalized in early 2026 once final expenditure was known, the Employers' group supported the draft decision.

10. **The Worker spokesperson** thanked all Member States that had paid their assessed contributions for the current biennium and the 21 Member States that had made payments against their contributions for 2026. Although payments received since the publication of document GB.355/PFA/2 had improved the situation, he expressed serious concern over the unpaid amount of around CHF250 million, which was impacting the implementation of the programme of work for 2024–25 and had made the cash flow situation critical. He asked what the Office was doing to encourage Member States to comply with their statutory obligations. As document GB.355/INS/7 stated that programme needs could no longer be fully funded and that reserves were sufficient to cover salaries only if spending was minimized, he asked whether the situation until the end of the year was manageable with the current funds. He sought details on how activities had been reprioritized while maintaining core services for constituents. The Workers' group believed that the follow-up to decisions of the Conference and the Governing Body should have priority, including the meetings of experts and technical meetings already scheduled, and would comment further during the discussion of agenda item INS/7. He called on all Member States to fulfil their constitutional obligation to pay their assessed contributions, which were financed by taxpayers and thus by the social partners.

11. The Workers' group supported the draft decision allowing for transfers from one item to another in the same part of the expenditure budget; however, in the current circumstances, the Governing Body should be informed before decisions on any such transfers were taken by the Officers.

12. **A representative of the Director-General** (Treasurer and Financial Comptroller) noted that since 1 October, CHF43 million in contributions had been received, which had greatly improved the cash flow situation. The Office had sent reminder letters to the Member States whose contributions were outstanding. Bilateral discussions were ongoing with some to facilitate payment and a number of Member States were attempting to settle their contributions before the end of the year. He expressed confidence that, with the funds received, the Working Capital Fund and the amounts that would soon be paid, the Office had sufficient funds to meet all needs for 2025.

13. The Office had introduced cost efficiencies by reducing mission travel and the size of its delegations to meetings. All requests for additional funding were being reviewed by the Assistant Directors-General and Regional Directors to decide what activities were critical based on programme needs, and requests were approved by the Treasurer in accordance with the cash position. Should additional funds become available, activities would be expanded as necessary. As it was crucial to the work of the ILO, the Office had ensured that the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) would take place immediately after the Governing Body session.

Decision

14. **The Governing Body delegated its authority under article 16 of the Financial Regulations to the Chairperson, who may approve any transfers within the 2024–25 expenditure budget that the Director-General may propose, if needed, prior to the closing of the biennial accounts and subject to the endorsement of such approval by the Governing Body at its next session.**

(GB.355/PFA/2, paragraph 11)

3. Other financial matters (GB.355/PFA/3)

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

Audit and Oversight Segment

4. Appointment of a replacement member to the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (GB.355/PFA/4)

Decision

15. **The Governing Body decided to appointment Mr Jayantilal M. Karia as a member of the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee for a term of three years commencing on 1 January 2026.**

(GB.355/PFA/4, paragraph 6)

5. Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25 (GB.355/PFA/5)

16. **The Chairperson** opened the discussion on item PFA 5, entitled Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25, recalling that Part I of the report reviewed the work undertaken by the Evaluation Office in relation to the indicators and targets of the ILO Evaluation Strategy for 2023–25, culminating in a recommendation in paragraph 45. Part II assessed the overall effectiveness of the Organization based on evaluative evidence and also ended with a recommendation in paragraph 81. The Governing Body was invited to adopt the draft decision contained in paragraph 82.

17. **The Worker spokesperson** thanked the Office for the comprehensive report and acknowledged ongoing efforts to strengthen the ILO's evaluation function. Turning to Part I of the document, he welcomed the progress made toward achievement of the 21 end targets for 2024–25, noting that 17 had been met, alongside 4 of the 5 enablers. He commented that although progress was encouraging, the Workers' group wished to draw attention to certain unachieved targets and requested further clarification regarding the rationale for the unachieved targets.

18. Turning to indicator 1.2.1 on the institutionalization of evaluation roles, he underscored the importance of institutionalizing evaluation roles within the Organization, pointing to the establishment of a dedicated job family for evaluation staff at headquarters in 2024 and the near completion of a parallel job family for regional evaluation officers in 2025. He reiterated the Workers' long-standing recommendation to develop cost-recovery and cost-sharing mechanisms to compensate for evaluation managers' time, emphasizing that, particularly under current financial constraints, such mechanisms were critical to ensuring sufficient staffing and avoiding over-reliance on voluntary contributions of staff time.

19. On the revised 2026 target for evaluation manager certification, he acknowledged the reduction from 30 to 20 staff and sought clarification regarding the operational functioning of the evaluation manager roster. In particular, he asked how many of the existing 208 certified managers were currently active, how their availability was monitored, and how many evaluations they were reasonably expected to manage annually.

20. Turning to indicator 2.2.2 concerning the fifth edition of the policy guidelines, the Worker spokesperson asked whether the forthcoming edition would incorporate emerging priorities in the world of work and, if so, which themes were envisioned. Regarding indicator 2.4.2 – which had not been achieved – he sought clarification on the barriers preventing use of the quality assessment tool and the community of practice for impact evaluation.

21. Concerning indicator 3.1.1, he welcomed the significant increase – 409 per cent – in the use of the ILO's *i*-eval Discovery dashboard under this indicator and requested precision on the types of use being recorded. He further noted that indicator 3.2.2 had not been met owing to insufficient validation by technical experts and requested additional information on the causes of such gaps. In relation to indicator 3.2.4, he expressed concern that certain managers had failed to respond to recommendations from independent evaluations and called for renewed efforts to ensure accountability.

22. With respect to recommendation 1 of Part I – the rolling work plan for high-level evaluations in 2026 – the Workers' group reiterated its support for the evaluations on normative action and on skills and lifelong learning. He recalled document GB.352/PFA/8(Rev.1), in which strong support had been expressed for both topics. The Workers' group believed that placing normative action in 2026 would reinforce efforts aligned with the Organization's core mandate of standard-setting, supervision and promotion of international labour standards. He requested clarity from the Office on the link between the extension of the Evaluation Strategy to 2026 and the ongoing ILO review.

23. Turning to Part II of the report, he commended the focus on impact and sustainability, describing it as aligned with increased demand for clear value for investment. He highlighted key findings demonstrating that policy impact had been achieved by embedding normative values into national systems, aligning with national priorities and fostering long-term ownership. He emphasized insight 1, which showed that interventions grounded in tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards generated the most sustainable results. He noted with concern the low percentage of development cooperation projects demonstrating targeted responsiveness to vulnerable groups and encouraged further efforts in this area.

24. The Workers' group fully supported recommendation 2 and expressed support for the draft decision in paragraph 82, on the understanding that resource requirements highlighted in paragraph 1 of the document would be duly considered.

25. **The Employer spokesperson** thanked the Office for the clear and comprehensive report and described it as a strategic checkpoint at a time of institutional reform, financial uncertainty and increased expectations for accountability. He welcomed the strong progress toward the Evaluation Strategy's targets, noting that evaluation planning had shifted from quantity to strategic relevance. He commended improvements in evaluation quality, the expanded pool of evaluation managers and the effectiveness of clustered evaluations, which had reduced duplication without jeopardizing accountability.

26. He welcomed the innovation shown in the digital transformation of the evaluation function including the *i*-eval Discovery platform, describing them as valuable tools enabling timely and accessible evaluation insights. He welcomed progress in capacity-building, including expanded training for staff and constituents. Under outcome 2, he noted strengthened methodologies, greater collaboration with the UN system and enhanced quality-assurance mechanisms.

27. Regarding outcome 3, he remarked that learning-oriented evaluations were yielding relevant strategic insights. He underlined that evaluation must remain a practical tool for decision-making, organizational performance and a culture of results. He expressed support for extending the Evaluation Strategy until the end of 2026 and endorsed the proposed high-level evaluations for that year. For 2027 and 2028, he highlighted priority topics, including sustainable enterprise development and normative action.

28. The Employer spokesperson expressed appreciation for the thematic focus on impact and sustainability but noted that certain long-standing concerns remained, particularly regarding project efficiency, sustainability and constituent engagement. He noted that development cooperation activities remained, in many cases, overly donor-driven, which risked weakening national ownership and sustainability. He urged improved systems for developing, monitoring and supporting development cooperation projects, as recommended in previous evaluations, and encouraged the Office to make greater use of real-time data of project assessment against 29 key performance indicators and AI-based tools to strengthen accountability and evidence-driven performance.

29. He expressed support for recommendation 2, noting that the continued development of real-time dashboards – particularly those integrating AI-based analytical tools – would constitute a meaningful step toward enhancing transparency and organizational accountability. He concluded by emphasizing that the Employers' group remained committed to supporting the evaluation function and that resources should not be cut to the evaluation function.

30. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group,** a Government representative of the United Republic of Tanzania commended the Office for the comprehensive and forward-looking report, which demonstrated significant progress in implementing the Evaluation Strategy. He underlined the importance of contextualizing evaluation findings to better reflect regional diversity and experience, particularly the realities of Africa, including pervasive informality, high youth unemployment, gender disparities and gaps in social protection, and therefore called for more nuanced evaluative attention.

31. The Africa group requested the inclusion of a dedicated regional analysis in future reports, expansion of thematic evaluations that incorporate African priorities, strengthening of regional evaluation capacity – including through greater participation of African staff in the certification programme – and equitable access to digital evaluation innovations. He emphasized the need to preserve resources for evaluation work in Africa, expressing concern that efficiency measures might inadvertently restrict learning in regions where evidence was most needed.

32. The Africa group supported recommendation 1 and endorsed the extension of the Evaluation Strategy to 2026. He called for Africa's priorities to be fully embedded in its implementation and concluded by reaffirming the group's support for the report's recommendations.

33. **Speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG),** a Government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the report and noted the substantial progress achieved, including the completion of 17 of the 21 targets under the Evaluation Strategy. He highlighted the region's appreciation for improvements in evaluation capacity-building, including expanded training and the significant growth of certified evaluation managers. He emphasized, however, that clearer guidance was needed on how the 2026 evidence mapping pilot would be adapted to regional priorities and contexts, given the diversity of labour market challenges across Asia and the Pacific.

34. While acknowledging strong progress, the representative expressed concern regarding the 25 evaluation waivers granted during the reporting period. He recommended the establishment of more robust standard operating procedures to guide and coordinate oversight functions across the Office. He welcomed the expansion of regional training efforts, which exceeded expectations by a wide margin, and encouraged the Office to integrate evaluation training modules within ITCILO's core offerings and to strengthen regional training hubs.

35. He praised the 91 per cent satisfactory rating under the corporate quality assessment mechanism but noted that indicator 2.4.2 on impact evaluations had not been reached. He welcomed increased usage of the *i*-eval Discovery dashboard and the *i*-eval AI assistant and encouraged broad multilingual public rollout.

36. The ASPAG spokesperson expressed concern about weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation systems, particularly declining standards in monitoring, with acceptable systems present in only 24 per cent of projects. He stressed the need for mandatory sustainability assessments at design stage and stronger results-based management.

37. Highlighting specific regional achievements – including progress under the Safe and Fair Programme – he expressed concern regarding missing exit strategies and over-ambitious project design. He supported recommendation 1, especially proposed evaluations on skills and social protection, and urged prioritization of the delayed evaluation on normative action in 2027.

38. The ASPAG spokesperson fully endorsed recommendation 2 and emphasized the importance of systematic use of evaluative evidence in decision-making processes. He described the report as demonstrating an evolution of evaluation from compliance to strategic learning.

39. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC,** a Government representative of Paraguay thanked the Office for the report and highlighted the strategic importance of evaluation for the region. GRULAC would continue to systematize integrated approaches so that lessons from evaluations lead to better future activities.

40. She stressed the preference for quality over quantity in evaluation work and the need to ensure sufficient resources. She encouraged the use of innovative tools, including AI, to enhance inclusiveness and transparency, and underlined the value of technical assistance and capacity-building for the region in the coming period.

41. She welcomed the successful integration of South–South cooperation in the region and emphasized that evaluation should support policy transformation, helping to integrate evidence into policy development. GRULAC called for robust feedback mechanisms by 2025 in regional and national offices and for evaluation findings to be systematically translated into concrete, actionable follow-up. GRULAC agreed to the extension of the evaluation until the end of 2026 and supports the draft decision.

42. **Speaking on behalf of the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC),** a Government representative of Canada reaffirmed support for a strong evaluation function within the ILO, recognizing its critical role in promoting flexibility, learning, and evidence-based decision-making. IMEC endorsed the extension of the Evaluation Strategy to 2026 and the continued use of high-level evaluations to inform strategic planning. Strategic improvements in evaluation planning, including the criteria-based integrated evaluation system and the use of constant evaluations, were welcomed, as they reduce staff burden and provide clearer programmatic insights.

43. IMEC highlighted the evaluation findings in Part II, that focusing on core ILO values, embedding projects within national systems and tripartite structures, and improving operational efficiency have strengthened sustainable impact and policy uptake. Concerns remain regarding persistent gaps in results-based management, monitoring, and inclusion of vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities. IMEC requested a time-bound plan to address these issues, welcomed the upcoming AI-assisted evaluation tools, and noted progress in evaluation capacity-building, quality assurance, and certification of evaluation managers. IMEC endorsed the 2026 rolling work plan and encouraged continued strategic oversight and follow-up on evaluation recommendations.

44. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** expressed alignment with the statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran on this agenda item. He thanked the Office for the report detailing its work on the progress made on the Evaluation Strategy. He noted the 3.5 per cent increase of performance of development cooperation portfolio from 2022 to 2023 and encouraged the office to ensure higher performance especially in the context of declining financial resources for development cooperation programmes. He also appreciated the higher prevalence of cost-effectiveness of development cooperation interventions and noted the high success of development cooperation interventions in normative work and the promotion of international labour standards. Bangladesh supported the proposal for extension of the Evaluation Strategy until the end of 2026.

45. **A Government representative of the Russian Federation** expressed gratitude for the very high-quality report. He noted efforts made by the office in implementing clustered evaluations and asked if it is possible to use them for joint initiatives with partner organizations and asked for clarity on how the criteria-based evaluation system works. He expressed support for extending the Evaluation Strategy to 2026 as it would allow time for the Office to prepare a new strategy taking into account the reforms proposed by the Director-General.

46. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Evaluation Office) welcomed the feedback and stated for the record that all evaluation work presented was conducted independently and without interference, as required by principles of impartiality and independence.

47. Responding to the questions and remarks, he appreciated the recognition of progress made in implementing the Evaluation Strategy 2023–25 and thanked the members for their support in extending the Strategy to 2026, a step essential for consolidating achieved results. He noted that the extension was independent of the ongoing ILO review, while emphasizing the importance of using evaluation results to inform that process. He clarified that waivers to evaluations under the criteria-based evaluation planning system were granted only when accountability remained uncompromised, and that evidence-based mapping was increasingly important to ensure the planning system effectively addressed existing evidence gaps. He affirmed that the new *i*-eval AI Assistant is among the first AI tools within evaluation offices across the United Nations. Currently, the *i*-eval AI Assistant is accessible exclusively to ILO staff, the tool could be made publicly available subject to resource availability. On the matter of data privacy, he clarified that the tool relies solely on publicly available evaluation reports, which are produced in accordance with established protocols to ensure data protection.

48. Regarding management follow-up to evaluation recommendations, he explained that accountability systems are in place to strengthen management responses by reporting non-submissions through the Annual Evaluation Report, maintaining records via the Automated

Management Response System, informing management and the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO) as needed.

49. With respect to the increased referencing to evaluations in key strategic documents, he acknowledged that even further improvements could be made through protocols and procedures in how evaluation findings are fed into Governing Body discussions, although this falls beyond the direct control of the Evaluation Office. He noted that the creation of evaluation job families was already final, with current application in headquarters and across four of the five regions. Evaluation managers continued to be trained, with a pool of 150 active staff members managing 60 to 70 evaluations in a given year, which exemplified a best practice of increased efficiency in leveraging internal resources. He agreed that cost-recovery should be considered by the Office to support the role of evaluation managers in the decentralized evaluation system of the ILO.

50. Turning to unmet targets, he explained that the guidance on impact evaluations is not mandatory and that there is an uneven methodological understanding of what impact really means – real and measurable results affecting people's lives for the better. Concerning good practices, in the absence of online technical communities of practice for validation, the Evaluation Office has established a system of targeted technical publications based on evaluative evidence, to be validated by the relevant ILO technical departments. On monitoring, reporting and results-based management, in general, he noted that these are enablers for evaluation and not under the responsibility of the Evaluation Office for implementation.

51. Regarding the rolling work plan, he clarified that the inclusion of the social protection topic responds to the need for evidence-based findings in preparation for the International Labour Conference recurrent discussion in 2026. Similarly, the high-level evaluation of skills and lifelong learning responded to the Governing Body request to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the relevant strategy on Skills in 2026. This would place the high-level evaluation of the ILO normative work in 2027.

52. On Part II, in response to questions it was noted that the figures reflect thorough analysis of the available data. In terms of positive trends, more projects are delivering results, aligning with organizational priorities, influencing policies, and making efficient use of resources. On the downside, some projects are overly ambitious and tend to overpromise. Vulnerable groups are not always fully included, with disability, and in some cases gender, being particular areas of concern. Results are also not always fully sustainable. In simple terms, the ILO is achieving better results and improving performance, but there is still considerable room to enhance inclusiveness and ensure long-term, sustainable impact. He acknowledged that, as several of the speakers noted, impact is stronger when ILO core values are applied. This stood out as one of the positive outcomes of the analysis of the large set of evaluations.

53. **The Worker spokesperson** followed up on the question on the connection between the extension of the Evaluation Strategy and the ongoing review process in the ILO.

54. **The representative of the Director-General** (Director, Evaluation Office) responded that as mentioned earlier there was no immediate connection, but evaluations had been used to inform some elements of the review.

Decision

55. **The Governing Body endorsed the recommendations of the Annual Evaluation Report 2024–25 (paragraphs 45 and 81) for implementation by the Office.**

(GB.355/PFA/5, paragraph 82)

6. High-level evaluations of strategies and Decent Work Country Programmes (GB.355/PFA/6)

56. **The Employer spokesperson** thanked the Office for the evaluations and underlined their importance for accountability, learning and strategic direction.

57. On the evaluation of the Youth Employment Action Plan, she acknowledged progress in the five areas of the Plan, including alignment with international policy frameworks and adaptive responses to global and national challenges. She noted, however, persistent shortcomings relating to coordination, fragmented funding cycles, the absence of costed planning and weak monitoring structures. Those weaknesses, in her view, limited the Office's ability to demonstrate results and ensure coherent delivery.

58. She stressed that an imbalance remained between supply-side and demand-side interventions. While skills development, employability measures and labour market programmes had advanced, policies related to macroeconomic frameworks, sectoral strategies and job creation lagged behind. Without a stronger demand-side focus, she said, impact on youth employment would remain modest. Employers stood ready to support substantive work on job creation, enterprise development, labour market reforms and talent retention.

59. She encouraged deeper research on demand-side policies, including documentation of good practices and analysis of enterprise-level constraints. She strongly supported recommendation 2 to mandate the Youth Employment Unit to coordinate youth employment activities across the Office, and she underlined the need for an operational and monitoring frameworks to track results. She also supported strengthening private sector engagement under recommendation 4.

60. Turning to the Better Work Programme, she recognized its significant contributions to compliance, gender equality and productivity and its expanded use across sectors. She expressed concern that sustainability remained weak, owing to the programme's dependence on resource-intensive enterprise-level interventions and limited national institutional capacity. Shrinking donor funding had exacerbated those vulnerabilities, and some programmes faced uncertainty or abrupt closures. She called for accelerated transition strategies, time-bound country plans, a more viable financing model, a gradual shift from enterprise-level work to national-level capacity-building, greater access to Better Work tools and data for constituents, and strengthened national institutional ownership through accredited entities.

61. She said that recommendations 2 and 5 were necessary but insufficient, noting that a deeper structural shift was required to ensure long-term sustainability. Without decisive action, she considered that earlier gains risked being reversed.

62. On the evaluation of Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) strategies in Central America, she noted that ILO support aligned well with national priorities and multilateral strategies, although results remained uneven across countries. She acknowledged that constituent participation had strengthened legitimacy in some cases but remained inconsistent and often procedural. She encouraged more inclusive participation at subnational levels so that DWCPs reflected enterprise and worker realities.

63. She said that variable national capacities, political instability and weak institutions constrained results across the subregion. The outcome related to sustainable enterprises remained underdeveloped despite its centrality to job creation. She noted that DWCPs continued to prioritize compliance-driven themes while under-addressing issues such as competitiveness, informality, enterprise growth and the investment climate. Strengthening partnerships with employers’ and workers’ associations aligned with employers’ priorities. She supported calls for clearer exit strategies and workforce planning and encouraged focused efforts to strengthen the institutional foundations for social dialogue.

64. **The Worker spokesperson** thanked the Office for the evaluations. On the Youth Employment Action Plan, he noted the evaluators’ positive assessment of its strategic vision. Given the vulnerability of young workers to precarious work and unemployment, he stressed the importance of demand-side policies, labour rights and youth participation in social dialogue. He expressed concern that supply-side measures received greater emphasis than those areas. He endorsed recommendation 1 and welcomed the Office’s commitment to implement it. He urged the Office to ensure that demand-side elements and youth rights were strengthened in the next phase of the Plan. He reiterated the importance of a dedicated output on youth employment in the programme and budget and supported recommendation 2.

65. On the Better Work Programme, he recognized its contributions to improving working conditions and compliance. He remained concerned, however, about weaknesses in occupational safety and health, freedom of association and collective bargaining. He noted the low sustainability score, which reflected the absence of time-bound goals. Tripartite bodies were important, but sustainability required a strong foundation in freedom of association. He supported recommendation 3 and urged the Office to embed the programme’s results more effectively across the Organization, in particular with the Sectoral Policies Department. He welcomed the Office’s commitment to strengthen work on industrial relations and wages under the “One ILO” approach.

66. On the DWCP strategies in Central America, he welcomed the evaluators’ comprehensive assessment. While projects aligned with national priorities, he said that coordination gaps persisted among interventions, work plans and offices. He emphasized the need to strengthen trade union capacity for social dialogue. He cited structural barriers such as competition among agencies, weaknesses in internal coordination and limited understanding of the ILO mandate. He highlighted the need to prioritize work on persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, the just transition, non-discrimination, gender equality, international labour standards, labour migration and youth. He stressed the importance of recommendation 3 on sustainability, ownership and engagement of all constituents. He concluded that the Workers’ group supported the draft decision.

67. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group,** a Government representative of the United Republic of Tanzania welcomed the findings and recommendations of the three evaluations and commended the Evaluation Office for its independent assessments. He highlighted the positive outcomes of the Better Work Programme and encouraged the Office to sustain and consider expanding implementation to other sectors, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

68. He said that youth employment challenges in Africa stemmed from structural constraints such as informality, limited industrialization and underdeveloped rural economies. He called on the ILO to support Member States in designing cross-sectoral policies that foster job creation in labour-intensive sectors and to harness opportunities in the green and digital economies. The group supported the draft decision and reaffirmed its commitment to advancing decent work and inclusive growth.

69. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG,** a Government representative of Australia reaffirmed the importance of evidence-based learning and welcomed the recommendations. On the Youth Employment Action Plan, he encouraged the Office to address demand-side gaps, strengthen monitoring frameworks and ensure meaningful youth participation, including for young persons with disabilities. He emphasized context-sensitive approaches for small island developing States and least developed countries, and adequate regular budget allocations. He encouraged mechanisms to engage small enterprises and informal-sector employers.

70. On the DWCP strategies in Central America, he noted parallels with challenges in the Asia and Pacific region and highlighted the usefulness of simplified administrative procedures, South–South cooperation, stronger national ownership, sustainability planning, improved coordination and enhanced resource mobilization.

71. On the Better Work Programme, he welcomed ongoing reforms and encouraged transparent consultation with partners and donors. He stressed that transition strategies must consider national institutional capacity, especially in small island and least developed States. He supported diversified financing mechanisms with equitable cost sharing, without compromising programme neutrality, and emphasized capacity-building for labour inspectorates. He underscored the need to address disability inclusion, gender gaps and priorities such as the care economy, platform work, digital transitions, informal economy transitions and climate-resilient employment strategies. ASPAG endorsed the draft decision.

72. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC,** a Government representative of Paraguay thanked the Office for the evaluations. On the Youth Employment Action Plan, she recognized the Office's work in policy design, skills enhancement and business initiatives and encouraged continued support for sustainable youth employment. She emphasized combating informality and strengthening social protection. She highlighted the need for additional financing, private sector cooperation, skills retention and decent work. She encouraged support for tripartite and integrated employment policies, particularly in the green and digital economies.

73. On the Better Work Programme, she supported efforts to diversify financing, strengthen sustainability and expand training through the Better Work Academy. She stressed the importance of continued cooperation with brands to ensure compliance with international labour standards.

74. On the DWCP strategies in Central America, she subscribed to the recommendation to undertake a specific project for country teams to enhance coherence and coordination. She welcomed the inclusion of risk management, needs assessment and participatory design and encouraged follow-up mechanisms and continuous feedback between the ILO and beneficiary countries. GRULAC supported the draft decision.

75. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland commended the Evaluation Office for its rigorous work and noted that the high-level evaluations are a cornerstone of the ILOs Evaluation Strategy in strengthening accountability. He noted that the evaluations were not only aligned with ongoing strategic initiatives but also served as an essential tool for evidence-based decision-making and organizational learning. He noted that IMEC appreciated the quality and depth of the evaluation reports, which contained a wealth of information and offered valuable insights into the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the ILO's programmes and strategies. He noted that all three evaluations found that the activities and initiatives were relevant and largely effective, but identified concerns regarding efficiency in the Youth Employment Action Plan and Better Work, largely owing to staffing shortages, fragmented programming and reliance on extra-budgetary funding. Strengthening institutional delivery models and planning frameworks was therefore important.

76. He noted that sustainability was rated low across all three evaluations and emphasized the importance of embedding exit strategies and capacity development from the outset. IMEC welcomed the positive assessment of Better Work's contributions and encouraged the Office to strengthen integrated approaches in line with recommendation 3. IMEC supported accelerating phased withdrawal in long-standing Better Work countries, ensuring that national institutions could sustain progress. With those comments, he supported the draft decision.

77. **A Government representative of Bangladesh** aligned himself with the ASPAG statement. He attached priority to effective implementation of the Youth Employment Action Plan and noted positive momentum on supply-side measures, though demand-side progress remained limited. He encouraged stronger private sector engagement and welcomed the inclusion of output 3.5 in the programme and budget. He valued Better Work's contributions and encouraged the ILO to engage emerging global brands to ensure adequate funding in the context of declining development cooperation budgets. He warned that withdrawal under Phase V could pose serious challenges for least developed and recently graduated least developed countries. He supported the draft decision.

78. **A Government representative of Cuba** welcomed the evaluations, which he said highlighted both achievements and constraints. He stressed the importance of international cooperation and solidarity for inclusive development. While progress had been made on employment policy and social dialogue in Latin America and the Caribbean, challenges such as informality, limited implementation capacity and weak sustainability persisted. He emphasized the need for productive job creation, particularly in green sectors, health and education, and for sustainable financing not reliant on short-term external projects. He supported the call for renewed attention to the recommendations and for specific measures by the Director-General.

79. **A Government representative of Colombia** welcomed the evaluations as an important learning tool. He highlighted Colombia's collaboration with the ILO, which had strengthened social dialogue, formalization, wage policies and labour-law reform. He expressed concern that the evaluations did not sufficiently disaggregate results by country, limiting their usefulness for national decision-making. He encouraged greater analytical depth in future evaluations.

80. He emphasized Colombia's plans for technical cooperation with the ILO, particularly regarding informality, social protection, local-level policy evaluation and digital and green transitions. He supported stronger youth participation in social dialogue, citing recent national experience. He reaffirmed Colombia's commitment to the ILO.

81. **A Government representative of Malawi** aligned himself with the Africa group statement. He focused on the Youth Employment Action Plan and reiterated the need for continued ILO support to address youth unemployment in Africa. He highlighted Malawi's graduate internship programme, which had enabled skills acquisition and employment for young people. He called for greater investment in youth skills development, including digital skills and green jobs. He agreed with the recommendations in the evaluation and supported the draft decision.

82. **A Government representative of Oman** welcomed the evaluations and endorsed the ASPAG statement. He said that youth employment should remain a priority and that DWCP implementation required continued technical assistance in many countries. On Better Work, he emphasized the need for full consultation with social partners and adequate financing. Access to training materials in local languages would be essential for effective national engagement.

83. **The Chairperson** recalled that, to the best of her understanding, no specific questions had been directed to members of the Office. She noted that a number of comments and observations had been made, but that no requests for clarification had been identified.

84. She expressed appreciation for the interventions and indicated that the responsible department directors would take due note of the views expressed under this agenda item. The Office would, as appropriate, reflect these considerations in the ongoing and forthcoming implementation of the relevant programmes.

Decision

85. The Governing Body requested the Director-General to take into consideration the recommendations of the three independent high-level evaluations presented in document GB.355/PFA/6 (paragraphs 22–25, 42–46 and 69–74), and to ensure their appropriate implementation aligned with the Office response.

(GB.355/PFA/6, paragraph 81)

7. Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit (GB.355/PFA/7)

86. The Worker spokesperson emphasized the importance of the Joint Advisory Appeals Board as a key component of the internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanism in the ILO. He said that the Board's annual report should continue to be submitted for approval through the Joint Negotiation Committee. His group concurred with the Office's remarks on recommendations 4 and 5 in these regards. In relation to recommendation 4 on flexible working arrangements, he cautioned against any undue pressure for staff to telework because of reduced office occupancy. He reminded the administration to continue to consult the Staff Union on this matter. In relation to recommendation 5 on the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities, he said that a report on the use of external collaborators could be useful, given the budget constraints and in the context of the ongoing ILO review. In relation to recommendation 7 on health insurance schemes, he noted that it would be important to address after-service health insurance (ASHI) liabilities, considering the changing demographics of the workforce with increasing presence in the field, and through discussion with the Staff Union. On budgeting in organizations of the UN system, his group supported all three recommendations addressed to the Governing Body. In relation to recommendation 5 on the principle of mutual recognition within the UN system, his group would welcome reporting on efficiency gains from mutual recognition in the context of the ongoing UN reform initiative and ILO review.

87. The Employer spokesperson noted the positive steps taken by the Office in terms of flexible working arrangements. He underlined the importance of maintaining strong performance management, accountability, and service delivery standards, regardless of work location. In relation to the review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities, he was of the view that each organization should retain the capacity to manage its workforce efficiently within its operational context. While sharing the concern about excessive reliance on non-staff contracts, he called for caution against overly rigid, UN system-wide definitions that could limit flexibility or increased costs. In relation to the review of consideration of and action taken on Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) reports and recommendations by UN system organizations, he commended the Office's commitment to make improvements through oversight, noting that the ILO had accepted and implemented the majority of recommendations from this review. On budgeting, he urged the Office to continue ensuring that resource allocations clearly reflect organizational priorities and deliver measurable outcomes, while maintaining an appropriate level of detail in budget documentation for informed decision-making. His group considered that the JIU's programme of work for 2025 was addressing highly relevant themes and encouraged the Office to maintain a constructive approach to JIU findings.

88. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC,** a Government representative of Mexico said that her group supported recommendations 2 and 3 on budgeting in organizations of the UN system. In relation to recommendation 5 on the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities, her group would welcome future reports on human resources incorporating statistics on “non-affiliate personnel”. In relation to the review on health insurance schemes, her group considered that it was necessary to recognize the ASHI liabilities and to review the current conditions in the light of the changing circumstances. Referring to the ILO’s follow-up status on the JIU recommendations presented in the previous years, her group was concerned that some of the recommendations addressed to the executive heads could not be applied in the ILO in the absence of their UN system-wide application. She asked the JIU which recommendations could be addressed to Member States to expedite the decision-making with UN system-wide implications, or if executive heads could act individually for their implementation. She also asked for an update on formal policy and procedure for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads. Her group requested that the JIU would continue to be invited to participate in the Governing Body discussions.

89. **Speaking on behalf of IMEC,** a Government representative of Japan conveyed her group’s expectation that the ILO should lead reform discussions in inter-agency mechanisms, including in the specialized agencies cluster in the ongoing UN reform initiative. In relation to recommendations 3 and 7 on health insurance schemes, she urged the Office to provide detailed information on the ASHI liabilities in the ILO Human Resources Strategy 2026–29, considering their potential impact on the ILO’s budget and any cost implications of the right of family members of staff to participate in ASHI. She further advised the Office to consider a long-term health insurance strategy, taking account of the ILO’s financial situation. In relation to recommendation 5 on the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities, her group appreciated the Office’s efforts to enhance transparency and expected further data and information on consultants. She pointed out that the Office’s report only covered JIU reports issued over the past three years and that the status on recommendations more than three years ago were not shared with Member States due to the document compilation policy. Her group expected to receive further updates on the accountability framework in the next discussion in 2026. She also asked for updates concerning the independence of the Ethics Officer and the investigation function for complaints of misconduct by executive heads. She conveyed her group’s proposal to maintain the JIU’s participation in the next Governing Body discussion in 2026.

90. **A representative of the Joint Inspection Unit** said that the ILO had accepted 63.9 per cent of the recommendations issued during the 2016–23 period, which was below the UN system-wide average. It had implemented 86.9 per cent of the accepted recommendations. In relation to recommendation 4 on budgeting in organizations of the UN system, she noted that the action addressed to the ILO concerned an information annex to the programme and budget, which presented the operational budget by item and object of expenditure. She said that the JIU maintained the applicability of this recommendation for the ILO.

91. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Strategic Programming and Management Department) said that the Office took note of the comments and observations concerning internal pre-tribunal-stage appeal mechanisms, the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities, and on health insurance schemes, for appropriate follow-up including through the development of the ILO Human Resources Development Strategy for 2026–29. He acknowledged the comments and some concerns in relation to the flexible working arrangements, and assured that the Office would follow due process, including in the review of office space distribution at headquarters. He emphasized that the independence of

the Ethics Officer was assured with his direct reporting to the Director-General and indirect reporting to the Governing Body through the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC). Referring to an observation made by the JIU Chairperson in relation to recommendation 4 on budgeting, he reiterated that the Office had not removed the information on the operational budget or any other elements from the programme and budget documents over the past few biennia. He recalled that the Office had been advised by the Governing Body to strike a balance between the level of details to be ensured in the programme and budget for corporate governance purpose and the management discretion to be safeguarded in line with the results-based management principles.

92. **A representative of the Director-General** (Treasurer and Financial Comptroller) reminded, in relation to recommendation 7 on health insurance schemes, that the full cost of the ASHI scheme had always been indicated in the financial statements, based on actuarial study and subject to annual audit. In response to the request for updates concerning the development and adoption of formal policy and procedure for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads, he said that an agenda item would be placed on the 356th Session of the Governing Body in March 2026 to that effect. Prior consultations were under way during the current session of the Governing Body, to inform the final document to be submitted for the said session.

Decision

93. **The Governing Body took note of the information contained in document GB.355/PFA/7 and provided guidance on the follow-up by the ILO to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System.**

(GB.355/PFA/7, paragraph 38)

Personnel Segment

8. Statement by the Chairperson of the Staff Union

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

9. Amendments to the staff Regulations (GB.355/PFA/9)

94. The Governing Body had before it two proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations. The first proposed the deletion of article 4.2(c), which read: “The Director-General may designate a Deputy Director-General, in which event such designation shall be made after consultation with the Officers of the Governing Body and with the agreement of the Governing Body”, and the deletion of footnote 1 of the salary scale for the Professional and higher categories under article 3.1. The second amendment proposed inserting, in article 12.2 on the Disciplinary Committee, the words “one representative of” before “the Legal Adviser” and before “the Director of the Human Resources Development Department”.

95. **The Worker spokesperson** rejected the assertion in document GB.355/PFA/9 that a mistake had been made in deleting only the word “Principal” in article 4.2(c) of the Staff Regulations and that the entire subparagraph (c) should have been deleted instead to enable the Director-General to appoint the Deputy Director-General after consulting the Governing Body but not obtaining its agreement. The matter had not been explained when the amendment had been adopted at the 350th Session (March 2024) of the Governing Body. If indeed an error had been made, it might have been in not deleting the reference to “Deputy Director-General” in subparagraph (b) of the same article, which would have made the deletion of "Principal" in subparagraph (c) even more logical. The proposed amendment was significant, as it concerned the appointment of the Deputy Director-General, a person second in command of the ILO who would assume the duties of the Director-General when required. The current wording was valid without further interpretation, and it would be inappropriate to change the applicable rules and procedures in the middle of the current process.

96. Regarding article 12.2, because the Disciplinary Committee dealt with sensitive private data of staff members, he stressed the need for careful consideration of the representatives of the Legal Adviser and of the Director of the Human Resources Development Department. He asked how they would be selected and what training they would receive, and emphasized the need to ensure that the same representative could follow an entire procedure at each Committee meeting to ensure continuity and preserve institutional memory.

97. As both proposed amendments required further discussion, the Workers' group proposed an amendment to the draft decision in order to defer decision-making to the subsequent session of the Governing Body.

98. **The Employer spokesperson** expressed strong support for deleting article 4.2(c), as it was a pragmatic solution that would resolve the current inconsistency in the Staff Regulations. The amendment would align the text with the long-standing practice, remove obsolete references to the Principal Deputy Director-General, and improve legal coherence without altering the substance. The group understood that the amendment would not have any impact on the way in which the Deputy Director-General was appointed, and had been since 1964, and that the appointment was a constitutional prerogative of the Director-General. He asked the Legal Adviser what the implications of deferring the decision would be.

99. The proposed amendment to article 12.2 was appropriate, as allowing for substitutes would support the continuity of disciplinary proceedings without compromising oversight or equality. It was critical to ensure that the members of the Disciplinary Committee were neutral, to avoid any conflicts of interest with the persons who were subject to disciplinary proceedings, and would maintain confidentiality at all times.

100. He supported the proposed amendments, as they were consistent with the Organization's practice and would enhance clarity and efficiency. He also supported the draft decision.

101. **Speaking on behalf of a group of countries from Latin America and the Caribbean**, [1] a Government representative of Brazil asserted that articles 4.2(b) and 4.2(c) were not contradictory and that there was currently no reason to delete the latter provision. The specific requirement that the Governing Body must approve the appointment of the Deputy Director-General was prudent in view of the importance of the role. While the proposed amendment to article 12.2 and the deletion of footnote 1 to article 3.1 were simpler and thus could be approved at the current session, the group could support deferring the discussion on article 4.2 and on possible adjustments to eliminate repetition in its two subparagraphs, especially as more urgent matters were on the agenda of the current session.

102. **A Government representative of the United States of America** did not agree with the interpretation that article 4.2(c) of the Staff Regulations required the Governing Body's explicit approval for the appointment of the Deputy Director-General. He considered the issue to be a clerical error rather than a substantive matter and suggested that it could be resolved during

[1] Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

the current session of the Governing Body. He sought clarification from the Legal Adviser on whether the appointment of a Deputy Director-General fell under article 4.2(b) or 4.2(c) of the Staff Regulations.

103. **A Government representative of Japan** expressed support for the original draft decision. He noted that article 4.2(b) referred to "appointment", while article 4.2(c) used the term "designation", which suggested that the latter was a different process that came after the appointment. He sought clarification from the Legal Adviser on whether, under the current Staff Regulations, the Director-General could appoint a Deputy Director-General without the Governing Body's agreement, and whether the appointment was governed solely by article 4.2(b) or also by 4.2(c).

104. **A representative of the Director-General** (Director, Human Resources Development Department) confirmed that, should the amendment to article 12.2 be approved, the Office would ensure that representatives of the ex officio members of the Disciplinary Committee were trusted staff members who would have a full mandate and would safeguard the confidentiality of the proceedings.

105. **Another representative of the Director-General** (Legal Adviser) explained that the legal basis for appointing a Deputy Director-General was article 4.2(b) of the Staff Regulations. The term "appointment" under that provision reflected the term used in article 9(1) of the ILO Constitution to refer to the recruitment and selection of officials of the Office. Article 4.2(c), by contrast, used the term "designate", and until the 2024 amendment had read "designate a *Principal* Deputy Director-General". Article 4.2(c) had been introduced in 1964, when additional positions of Deputy Director-General were created. (Prior to 1964, there had been only one Deputy Director-General at any one time.) The rationale was to distinguish between their initial appointment (under article 4.2(b)) and the subsequent designation of one of them as the Principal Deputy Director-General. Unlike the initial appointment, that designation required the Governing Body's agreement, and it came with a salary supplement of US$600. However, the designation of a Principal Deputy Director-General had occurred only twice (in 1964 and 1967) and the amount of the salary supplement had never been revised. The intention behind the amendment adopted by the Governing Body at its 350th Session (March 2024) was to remove the reference to the designation of a Principal Deputy Director-General, a practice that had become obsolete. The fact that only the word "Principal" had been removed from article 4.2(c) must be considered to be an error. The Office was proposing to remedy the error by deleting article 4.2(c) and the related footnote of the salary scale for the Professional and higher categories.

106. **The Worker spokesperson** said that the Legal Adviser's explanation showed that the issue was an important constitutional matter, not merely an error, as stated without explanation in document GB.355/PFA/9. An in-depth discussion should have been held when the Staff Regulations were amended in 2024. The historical logic of requiring the Governing Body's agreement on the designation of a Principal Deputy Director-General indeed reflected the critical importance of the role in assuming the duties of the Director-General when required – a role comparable to that of a single Deputy-General. He stressed the need for constitutional clarity and a full understanding of the historical context of the provisions.

107. **The Employer spokesperson** reiterated his group's support for the original draft decision.

108. **A Government representative of the United States** noted the Legal Adviser's confirmation that article 4.2(b) was the sole basis for appointing a Deputy Director-General. In past situations where there had been a single Deputy Director-General, the appointment had been made without the Governing Body's approval. The current amendments were not an attempt to abandon that long-standing practice or dramatically rebalance the authority over the appointment of Deputy Directors-General, as major institutional decisions by the Governing Body were taken only after discussion in search of consensus. The 2024 amendment had been approved relatively recently, by some of the same Governing Body members participating in the current session, who would surely recall the intent of the amendment.

109. **The Worker spokesperson** proposed that the discussion should be postponed until later in the session and requested the Legal Adviser to provide her advice in writing beforehand.

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

110. When the discussion resumed, **the Chairperson** announced that the Office had published online and circulated among all groups a document that provided additional information and answered questions that the Workers' group had submitted to the Legal Adviser in writing. [2]

111. **The Employer spokesperson** said that the additional information provided by the Office had clarified the doubts raised by constituents by detailing the origin and legal logic of the proposed amendments, as well as their consistency with past practice. His group still supported the original draft decision.

112. **The Worker spokesperson** reiterated that the Governing Body ought to have had an in-depth discussion when it adopted the amendment in 2024 that had deleted the word "Principal", and noted that there had also been no explanation when the provision was introduced in 1964. The additional information provided by the Office confirmed his group's view that deleting article 4.2(c) would be a mistake, as it was logical to require the agreement of the Governing Body for the appointment of a person who would represent the Director-General and the Office in the Governing Body and other international organizations. Furthermore, clarity was needed in the rules on who would assume the responsibilities of a Director-General in the event of their resignation or their temporary or permanent incapacity to perform their duties. His group considered that the Governing Body must approve such a replacement, which would require either an amendment to article 4.2(c) or a new provision, and invited the Office to make a corresponding proposal. As the discussion was a matter of legal and constitutional concern, the group maintained its proposal to defer the decision to the March 2026 session.

113. **A Government representative of Japan** confirmed his support for the original draft decision on the basis of the explanations of the Legal Adviser.

114. **A Government representative of the United States** stated that the issue was straightforward, as an error made in 2024 should now be corrected in the interest of good governance. The concern raised by the Worker spokesperson about the lack of clear rules for replacing the Director-General in cases of resignation or incapacity was wholly separate from the current agenda item and it was not appropriate or feasible to address it in the current discussion or to defer the discussion. She reiterated her Government's support for the original draft decision.

115. **The Employer spokesperson** observed that there was no support in the room for the Workers' group's proposal to postpone the discussion until March 2026. The proposed amendments merely aligned the Staff Regulations with the long-standing practice and no legal ambiguities remained. The latest concerns raised by the Workers' group with respect to the resignation or incapacity of the Director-General were a different issue. Moreover, the Staff Regulations could

[2] GB.355/PFA/9/Additional information.

not anticipate every possible scenario; in the past, the Governing Body had considered such extraordinary situations on a case-by-case basis.

116. **A Government representative of Colombia** said that the information provided by the Office had not clarified the matter in depth and he did not see any urgency to take a decision immediately. Deferring the matter to March 2026 would allow Governing Body members more time to consider the additional information and the relevant provisions; he therefore supported the Workers' group's proposal.

117. **A Government representative of Germany** fully supported the Office's analysis that article 4.2(c) had become obsolete and that retaining it would only cause confusion, without offering any legal or practical benefit. Deleting it was the only logical solution. He supported the original draft decision.

118. **A Government representative of Hungary** expressed support for the amendments to the Staff Regulations and for the original draft decision.

119. **A Government representative of Brazil** asked the Office to clarify why the discussion and decision-making had to take place at the current session.

120. **The Director-General** explained that the current wording of article 4.2(c) had already caused confusion earlier in the year, which had led to the detection of the error. It was appropriate to correct the error as soon as possible to avoid further confusion. He considered that there could indeed be a gap in the rules concerning the procedure in the event the Director-General was incapacitated, but that was an entirely separate matter that would require a separate discussion, not a postponement of the current discussion.

121. **The Worker spokesperson** asked the Legal Adviser whether retaining article 4.2(c) could be justified in order to provide for clarity in cases where there was more than one Deputy Director-General and the Director-General became incapacitated.

122. **A representative of the Director-General** (Legal Adviser) explained that article 4.2(c) had originally been introduced to allow the Director-General to designate one of multiple Deputy Directors-General the special status of Principal Deputy Director-General. Historical documents stated that the Principal Deputy Director-General would replace the Director-General when the latter was absent, but did not mention cases of incapacity. They also stated that the Principal Deputy Director-General and the Director-General should never be absent at the same time so that one of them would always be able to manage the Office. There was no rule addressing the situation of the incapacity of a Director-General due to illness or death, but there were three precedents where the Governing Body had made ad hoc decisions following the resignation or death of a Director-General, pending the election of a new Director-General. She noted that the appointment of the Director-General was governed by Annex III to the Compendium of rules applicable to the Governing Body and thus the issue raised by the Workers' group might be addressed by a separate set of rules, not the Staff Regulations.

123. **The Worker spokesperson** acknowledged that the issue of the Director-General's incapacity was separate from the current proposed amendments. He requested the Office to prepare a proposal to address the identified ambiguities and provide greater constitutional and legal clarity in the future. The Workers' group joined the consensus in the room and withdrew the proposal to defer the discussion.

124. **A Government representative of Brazil** underlined that comprehensive information on complex subjects should always be made available together with the documents submitted to the Governing Body so that constituents could consult experts and consider matters thoroughly from the outset.

Decision

125. **The Governing Body approved the amendments to the Staff Regulations set out in Appendices I and II to document GB.355/PFA/9, with effect from 1 December 2025.**

(GB.355/PFA/9, paragraph 7

10. Matters relating to the Administrative Tribunal of the ILO: Recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by other international organizations (GB.355/PFA/10)

126. **The Employer spokesperson** said that, having noted that the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation and the International Rubber Study Group appeared to comply with the criteria set out in the Statute of the Tribunal, her group would support the draft decision, on the understanding that extending the Tribunal's jurisdiction to those organizations would not generate additional costs.

127. **The Worker spokesperson** expressed support for the draft decision.

128. **A representative of the Director-General** (Legal Adviser) confirmed that the recognition of the jurisdiction of the Tribunal by the two organizations did not imply additional financial resources.

Decision

129. **The Governing Body approved the recognition of the Tribunal's jurisdiction by the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) and the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG) with effect from 26 November 2025.**

(GB.355/PFA/10, paragraph 13)

11. Other personnel matters

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