



Governing Body

356th Session, Geneva, 23 March–2 April 2026

Institutional Section

INS

Date: 20 March 2026

Original: English

Twentieth item on the agenda

Reports of the Officers of the Governing Body

Second report: Arrangements for the 15th African Regional Meeting

1. In accordance with articles 1 and 2 of the [Rules for regional meetings](#), the Governing Body decides on the composition, determines the date and venue, and establishes the agenda of each regional meeting.

► Background information

2. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body discussed proposals for the format of ILO regional meetings and approved new modalities for future meetings. ¹ The 20th American Regional Meeting was held in Punta Cana (Dominican Republic) from 1 to 3 October 2025 under this revised framework. In line with the approved calendar of regional meetings for the trial period 2025–28, the next regional meeting will be the 15th African Regional Meeting. ²
3. At its 355th Session (November 2025), the Governing Body noted with appreciation the offer by the Government of Namibia to host the 15th African Regional Meeting in the last quarter of 2026 and deferred the approval of the arrangements to its 356th Session (March–April 2026), subject to the availability of funds. ³

¹ GB.350/PV, paras 233–256; GB.350/INS/7.

² GB.352/INS/20/1, para. 3.

³ GB.355/PV, para. 893(d).

► Venue

4. The Introductory note to the Rules for regional meetings provides that “[r]egional meetings are held in the country where the relevant ILO regional office is located, unless the Governing Body accepts the offer of another Member State of the region to host a meeting”.
5. The Government of Namibia has expressed interest in hosting the 15th African Regional Meeting in Windhoek. The Office is in the process of consulting with the Government to clarify the specific requirements and related arrangements, including to ensure that the Government guarantee at least the level of protection afforded under the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex I concerning the ILO.

► Dates and agenda

6. In view of prior commitments and the dates of other major official ILO meetings, it is proposed that the three-day meeting be held from 2 to 4 December 2026 (Wednesday to Friday).
7. In accordance with the Rules for regional meetings, the Report of the Director-General is the only item on the agenda. For the 15th African Regional Meeting, it is proposed that the report examine the profound transformations shaping the world of work in Africa and explore how these transformations can be effectively managed by placing social justice at the centre. The report will include a short section on the progress made in the seven years since the 14th African Regional Meeting, which was held in Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire) in December 2019.
8. In addition, the tripartite constituents in the region may decide to refine the agenda further in line with regional priorities. The agenda could potentially include: (a) a high-level segment to which Heads of State and Government, and senior officials from the United Nations system, international financial institutions, regional organizations and development partners would be invited; and (b) technical thematic panels or round tables on the issues of highest priority or importance to the region. The identification of specific topics and possible thematic discussions will be undertaken in consultation with the tripartite constituents from the region.

► Composition

9. With respect to the composition of the meeting, it is recalled that, under article 1(2) of the Rules for regional meetings, “[e]ach Member State shall be invited by the Governing Body as a full member to the regional meetings of only one region”. It is also recalled that the list of Member States to be invited to attend as full members by region was approved by the Governing Body at its 334th Session (October–November 2018) and is appended to the Rules.
10. Member States from other ILO regions, States that are not Members of the ILO, and official international organizations or non-governmental organizations of universal or regional character that are interested in being represented at the meeting as observers should send their requests to the International Labour Office by the end of May 2026, so that the Governing Body can consider them at its 357th Session (June 2026).

► Languages

11. In line with the arrangements made for the 14th African Regional Meeting, the proposed working languages of the meeting are Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.

► Preparatory process and consultations with constituents

12. One of the key goals of the new modalities for regional meetings is to increase ownership by tripartite constituents. The Office has started discussions to set up a tripartite steering committee to agree on the final arrangements and on the detailed agenda of the 15th African Regional Meeting.
13. Another decision of the Governing Body was aimed at reducing the time spent on general statements during the discussion of the Report of the Director-General in plenary sittings, while increasing the time allocated to discussing the matters of a technical or policy nature that are of relevance to the region. In this respect, at its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body agreed to suspend article 10(7) of the Rules for regional meetings during the trial period and decided that, except with the unanimous consent of the Officers of the meeting, no speech shall exceed four minutes.⁴

► Financial implications for the Office

14. Building on the lessons learned from the 20th American Regional Meeting, the Office is pursuing cost-efficiency measures through the strategic use of new technologies. These measures include the provision of remote interpretation services; the reduction of travel by ILO secretariat staff, including through the remote drafting of the report on the proceedings; and arrangements for the Credentials Committee to discharge its functions with secretarial support provided remotely by the Office.
15. Due to the current uncertainty in the Office's financial situation, the final arrangements for the 15th African Regional Meeting will be subject to the availability of financial resources. In the event of any financial shortfall, the Office will inform the Officers of the Governing Body and submit any related contingency measures to the Governing Body at its 357th Session (June 2026) for consideration and decision.

⁴ GB.350/PV, para. 256(b).

► Draft decision

16. The Governing Body, on the recommendation of its Officers:

- (a) approved the proposed dates, venue, composition and overall agenda and arrangements for the 15th African Regional Meeting, subject to the availability of financial resources;**
- (b) deferred the final decision on the detailed agenda and arrangements for the meeting to its 357th Session (June 2026).**