

Committee on the Application of Standards

CAN/PV.Belarus

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Comisión de Aplicación de Normas

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Decimotercera sesión, 6 de junio de 2026, 10.10 horas

Thirteenth sitting, 6 June 2026, 10.10 a.m.

Treizième séance, 6 juin 2026, 10 h 10

Presidenta: Sra. López

Chairperson: Ms López

Présidente: M^{me} López

Trabajos de la Comisión

Las actas relativas a la discusión del PV.1 relativo a la discusión del caso de Eritrea sobre el sobre el Convenio núm. 29, a la discusión de PV.2 relativo a la discusión del caso de Malí sobre el Convenio núm. 182, y a la discusión del PV.3 relativo a la discusión del caso de Sudáfrica sobre el Convenio núm. 100 y el Convenio núm. 111, se adoptaron en su tenor modificado.

Work of the Committee

PVs 1, 2 and 3 are adopted, as amended.

Travaux de la commission

La commission a adopté les PVs 1, 2 et 3 tels qu'amendés.

Sesión especial – Belarús

Special Sitting – Belarus

Séance spéciale – Belarús

Presidenta – Señoras y señores les invito a tomar sus lugares para comenzar las labores de nuestra Comisión. Muy buenos días a todos.

Es un placer darles la bienvenida a nuestra Comisión. Les agradezco la puntual asistencia y confío en que esta jornada se desarrollará de manera constructiva favoreciendo el progreso de nuestros trabajos. La Comisión reanuda sus labores esta mañana con una sesión especial sobre Belarús y por la tarde otra sesión especial sobre Myanmar.

Ambas sesiones especiales se encuentran en la agenda de la Comisión en seguimiento a las resoluciones adoptadas por la Conferencia sobre las medidas recomendadas por el Consejo de Administración en virtud del artículo 33 de la Constitución de la OIT, con miras a garantizar el cumplimiento de las recomendaciones de las comisiones de encuesta establecidas en virtud del artículo 26 de la Constitución con respecto a Belarús y Myanmar.

En ambas resoluciones, la Conferencia decidió celebrar en sus reuniones futuras una sesión especial de la Comisión a efectos de examinar la situación en dichos países hasta que se haya comprobado que dichos países han cumplido sus obligaciones.

En lo que respecta a la gestión del tiempo, los tiempos máximos de intervención para la discusión del día de hoy son los que se aplican en la discusión de casos individuales. Estos tiempos máximos son los siguientes: 15 minutos para el Gobierno cuyo caso se examine, 10 minutos para los portavoces del Grupo de los Empleadores y del Grupo de los Trabajadores, 10 minutos para los miembros empleador y trabajador del país concernido, respectivamente, que se distribuirán entre los diferentes oradores de cada Grupo, 7 minutos para los grupos gubernamentales, 5 minutos para otros miembros, 15 minutos para las observaciones finales del Gobierno cuyo caso se examine, y 10 minutos para las observaciones finales de los portavoces del Grupo de los Empleadores y del Grupo de los Trabajadores.

La presidencia en consulta con los demás miembros de la Mesa de la Comisión podrá reducir este tiempo a 3 minutos para los miembros que hablan a título individual, en particular, cuando haya más de 17 oradores inscritos en la lista. En tal caso, la Oficina intentará informar a los delegados inscritos en la lista de oradores.

Para facilitar la labor de los intérpretes no olviden enviar sus declaraciones con antelación por correo electrónico a la siguiente dirección can-interpret@ilo.org. También quiero informar a la Comisión que el documento que contiene la información escrita enviada por el Gobierno del Uruguay sobre el Convenio sobre el derecho de sindicación y de negociación colectiva, 1949 (núm. 98) está disponible en la página web de la Comisión. Informo también a la Comisión que el proyecto de PV de la discusión del caso de Iraq sobre el Convenio sobre el servicio del empleo, 1948 (núm. 88) y el Convenio sobre la política del empleo, 1964 (núm. 122), y del caso de Kirguistán sobre el Convenio sobre la libertad sindical y la protección del derecho de sindicación, 1948 (núm. 87), se publican en la página web de la Comisión. Los miembros de la Comisión pueden presentar enmiendas a sus propias intervenciones hasta el lunes 8 de junio de 2026 a las 10 horas.

Se ruega a los delegados que remitan sus enmiendas a la secretaría por vía electrónica con control de cambios a la siguiente dirección can@ilo.org. Les invito a leer el anexo III del documento D.1 sobre el procedimiento de enmienda a los proyectos de actas literales. Me gustaría también informarles que, el plazo para la presentación de enmiendas a los PV *verbatim*

relativos a la discusión del caso de Eritrea sobre el Convenio sobre el trabajo forzoso, 1930 (núm. 29), Malí sobre el Convenio sobre las peores formas de trabajo infantil, 1999 (núm. 182), y Sudáfrica sobre el Convenio sobre igualdad de remuneración, 1951 (núm. 100) y el Convenio sobre la discriminación (empleo y ocupación), 1958 (núm. 111), se terminó.

Se adoptan dichos PV con las enmiendas respectivas.

(Las actas 1, 2 y 3 se adoptaron en su tenor modificado).

Ahora vamos a iniciar el examen de la aplicación por parte del Gobierno de Belarús de los Convenios núms. 87 y 98. Como ustedes saben, en su 111.^a reunión en 2023, la Conferencia adoptó una resolución sobre las medidas recomendadas por el Consejo de Administración en virtud del artículo 33 de la Constitución de la OIT sobre la cuestión de Belarús. Al adoptar esta resolución, la Conferencia decidió dedicar en sus futuras reuniones una sesión especial de la Comisión al examen de la adopción por el gobierno de Belarús de los Convenios núms. 87 y 98, así como las recomendaciones de la comisión de encuesta hasta que se haya comprobado que Belarús ha cumplido sus obligaciones.

Sobre la base de esta decisión, esta cuestión se ha incluido en el orden del día de la Comisión. Me permito señalar a la atención de los miembros de la Comisión, la información escrita proporcionada por el Gobierno de Belarús sobre la aplicación de las recomendaciones de la comisión de encuesta, que ha sido publicada en la página web de la Comisión en la sección dedicada a la sesión especial. Además, les informo que, en su 356.^a reunión celebrada el año pasado, el Consejo de Administración encargó al enviado especial de la OIT para Belarús que facilitara toda la información pertinente a la Comisión, para su tercera sesión especial relativa a la observancia por Belarús de los Convenios núms. 87 y 98.

En ese contexto, doy la bienvenida al Sr. Lelio Bentes Corrêa, enviado especial de la OIT para Belarús, y le invito a tomar la palabra para presentarnos su informe de situación.

Special Envoy to Belarus, Brazil (Mr BENTES CORRÊA) – It is an honour to address our Committee for the first time following my appointment by the Governing Body in June last year.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate your Committee on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. For a century, this Committee has been an essential pillar of the ILO supervisory system, providing a forum in which representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations review measures taken by Member States to give effect to the provisions of the Conventions they have ratified.

Your Committee constitutes a unique platform for tripartite dialogue on the application of ratified international labour standards. Your work is closely interlinked with that of the Committee of Experts, which is also celebrating its centenary. Over the years, both supervisory bodies have demonstrated that sustained and rigorous supervision grounded in constructive dialogue can have real, practical and tangible effects within various domestic legal systems and consequently on the daily lives of working women and men. The positive results achieved by both Committees as elements of a mutually reinforcing supervisory machinery rests on a careful balance between independence and legal expertise on the one hand, and tripartite participation and dialogue on the other. The system as a whole is built on dialogue, cooperation, trust and accountability.

It is important to underline these defining features of the ILO's century-old supervisory system as you are about to examine the case of Belarus and its compliance with the two freedom of association Conventions.

While it is your third Special Sitting on Belarus, this case is not new. Over the past 25 years, Belarus has been regularly requested to appear before your Committee – 13 times in connection with the measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. This period was marked by thorough monitoring by the ILO supervisory bodies, sustained technical assistance of the Office, engagement with the Government, and some positive outcomes achieved through dialogue with the social partners at both national and international levels. Unfortunately, recent years have seen a rollback of progress and a growing stalemate despite the stated good intentions of all parties.

My mandate as conferred by the Governing Body echoes the conclusions of your Committee and is designed to serve as a bridge between the ILO supervisory bodies and the Government. I wish to underline that my mandate does not originate from article 33 resolution, but rather from a pragmatic objective: to help identify a way forward in a situation where the Government calls for the repeal of the supervisory bodies' decisions and the 2023 Conference resolution while the only pathway back to the regular supervisory cycle is for the Government to fulfil its obligations and implement the decisions of the supervisory bodies. My mandate is not political. It is independent and grounded in trust and dialogue.

Mr Deputy Minister, I wish to once again invite your Government to take into account the mutual benefits of overcoming the deadlock situation we find ourselves in. I reaffirm my availability to engage with you in a spirit of impartiality, transparency and good faith.

The resolution invites ILO constituents to take appropriate measures to contribute as far as possible to the implementation by Belarus of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry adopted over 20 years ago. Esteemed Delegates, there are various ways in which you can respond to this call by the Organization of which your country is a member. One such contribution would be to facilitate my dialogue with the Belarusian authorities. Many of you emphasized the importance of dialogue at the last special sitting. I would warmly welcome all constructive engagement in this regard.

Many of you emphasized the importance of dialogue at the last special sitting. I would warmly welcome all constructive engagement in this regard. Pursuant to my mandate, I must engage with all social partners referred to by the Commission of Inquiry, including the Belarusian Congress of Democratic Trade Unions (the BKDP). To date, it is the only workers' organization among those mentioned in the report of the Commission of Inquiry to have engaged with me. I therefore call upon the others, including the Belarusian employers' and workers' organizations, to do the same.

In parallel and in line with my mandate, I have engaged with a range of international actors. As reported to the Governing Body at its last November and March sessions, within the UN system, my team and I work in collaboration with representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Group of Independent Experts on the human rights situation in Belarus, and the UN Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in Belarus, on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, on the independence of judges and lawyers, and on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

Moreover, I have held discussions with the European Economic and Social Committee and the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission. I would like to emphasize and, hopefully, reassure all concerned that these exchanges are aimed solely at finding solutions and ensuring that workers and employers in Belarus can exercise their freedom of association rights as enshrined in Conventions Nos 87 and 98.

While I welcome the release in 2025 of Mr Aliaksandr Yarashuk, Mr Hennadz Fiadynich and Mr Maksim Senik, it is concerning that the passports of Mr Yarashuk and Mr Fiadynich have not been returned and their pensions not reinstated. I have been informed that Mr Senik's passport was recently annulled.

More than 50 trade union leaders and labour activists remain under criminal prosecution, including at least 19 who are still detained. I am particularly concerned by the serious health condition of Mr Vatslau Areshka, who has become blind during imprisonment. His life and well-being are at risk. I therefore reiterate my urgent humanitarian appeal to the Government of Belarus for his immediate release.

If there is one message I would like you to retain, it is my firm commitment to supporting Belarus in meeting its obligations under the freedom of association Conventions. I remain fully open to dialogue with the authorities, the Federation of Trade Union of Belarus (FPB) and employers' organizations active in the country in order to hear their views and identify concrete proposals on addressing the outstanding ILO requests.

Ultimately, it is essential that we all work together to ensure lasting respect for freedom of association in Belarus for the benefit of its workers, employers and society as a whole. I stand ready to engage and to facilitate that journey.

Presidenta - Muchas gracias, Sr. Bentes Corrêa, por la información suministrada a esta Comisión. Para esta discusión contamos con 42 oradores inscriptos en la lista. Sobre esta base, la Mesa decidió reducir el tiempo máximo de intervención de los delegados que hablan a título individual de 5 a 3 minutos. Contamos con su comprensión y colaboración para adaptar su discurso al tiempo otorgado. Invito ahora al representante gubernamental de Belarús, el Sr. Aleh Takun, Viceministro de Trabajo y Protección Social, a tomar la palabra.

Interpretation from Belarusian: **Government representative (Mr TAKUN)** - The Committee is again considering the Belarusian case today. This is the third sitting of the Committee, which is the result of the most unfair and mistaken decision of the entire history of the ILO. I am talking about the 2023 resolution on Belarus lobbied by unfriendly forces to escalate pressure on our country.

This resolution is a case in which the instruments and mechanisms of the UN institutions are used not for the purpose of developing current problems or protecting human rights and freedoms but as a lever of undue pressure. The goal of this pressure is clear: destabilization of Belarusian society, change of power, undermining state sovereignty and reversal of integration processes. Belarus has long been forced to change its course and foreign policy priorities through legal sanctions and attempts at isolation. Unfortunately, the ILO was drawn into this process through the efforts of those who support pressure on Belarus.

We keep asking ourselves: how did this happen? How did the bodies of the ILO – the oldest, most authoritative international organization – end up as pawns in a geopolitical game, instruments for the implementation of political orders? Everybody understands that the world today more than ever needs a fair, constructive dialogue and balanced decisions. We should not incite confrontation but work towards resolving conflicts and achieving stable development.

We believe that the ILO is capable of becoming and should become an example of a platform for healthy dialogue, which is a prerequisite for peaceful development for individual countries and the international community.

But any dialogue will be effective only if the interests of parties are respected, when its participants are constructive, listen to each other, and operate with reliable information. That is why for many years we have been calling on ILO Member States and bodies to respect the interests of Belarus and its people and refrain from unjustified pressure, false narratives and speculation regarding the observance of trade union and human rights in the country.

We will never tire of repeating: discrediting Belarus, pressurizing our country and attempting to isolate it are at a dead end. We reject double standards and interference in internal affairs, and we will never, under any pressure, take measures that do not serve the interests of the State and the people. There is only one way out of this situation, and we have spoken about it many times.

The ILO bodies should abandon the false perceptions relating to Belarus that have been imposed on them. It is precisely the assessment of the situation on the basis of facts that is the condition for restoring cooperation, which, in turn, determines the usefulness of ILO membership. The main obstacle to effective dialogue is the unfounded statements based on assessments and recommendations by opponents of Belarus. I once again emphasize the actual state of affairs in the country. The Belarusian authorities are accused of suppressing peaceful and legal protests aimed at resolving economic and social issues, but the facts tell a completely different story.

The events of 2020 were not related to social dialogue and the implementation of trade union rights. No economic or social demands were put forward. The protest activity was stimulated by external forces and the goal of a coup d'état. These were the grounds for holding those who violated the law accountable. This means that the events of 2020 cannot be interpreted as peaceful and legitimate actions by trade unions to protect workers' rights. They do not fall within the scope of the Conventions and should not be considered at the ILO level. Any attempts to present the situation in a different light are manipulations. Our opponents deliberately misrepresent the concepts. They describe illegal actions as peaceful protests and those who committed crimes as victims of anti-union or political repression. Human rights are a favourite tool of Western countries to justify interference in internal affairs, pressure, and sanctions policies.

However, the trade union status does not grant the right to break the law. By holding those who have committed crimes accountable, the Belarusian authorities are not violating international norms and obligations. In this regard, the calls addressed to the Government of Belarus to overturn court decisions, release citizens appearing on the known lists, drop all charges against them, restore their rights, and provide compensation have no legal basis. What is this if not interference in internal affairs and support for destructive activities? Do the ILO bodies not understand that such recommendations do not follow from the ILO Conventions and go beyond the mandate of the Organization?

For objective reasons, Belarus cannot fulfil the demands regarding individuals allegedly persecuted for trade union work. The fact is that there are no citizens in the country who are serving sentences for the legal and peaceful exercise of trade union rights and freedoms. Let me emphasize once again: those portrayed as victims of repression are not. Criminal prosecution and punishment of those who commit crimes is standard practice in any State. We urge everyone to face the truth and stop speculating about the persecution of trade union activists in Belarus.

Trade unions in Belarus have always been a vital part of civil society, an equal partner in the social partnership system. Trade union activities to protect the labour and socio-economic rights of citizens are only encouraged. In Belarus, citizens freely and actively exercise their right

to freedom of association, creating and joining trade unions. The national trade union centre – the FPB – represents the interests of approximately 4 million people, a figure that speaks for itself. All trade unions are independent from government authorities and operate without outside interference or discrimination.

Guarantees of trade union rights are enshrined in the law and implemented in practice. Restricting trade union rights or creating obstacles to their work is prohibited. Legislation and practice do not contradict the ILO standards on freedom of association. Trade unions have the right to hold mass events. The procedure for holding lawful, peaceful events fully complies with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Labour Code guarantees the right to strike. The ban on raising political demands during strikes is a justified international practice. Trade unions fully cooperate with trade unions in other countries, join international associations, and have the right to receive foreign aid for socially significant purposes. The ban on use of foreign aid for political work applies to all organizations in the country and is based on national security interests. Demands that Belarus loosen control on foreign funding, legalize political strikes, and liberalize procedures for holding mass events do not serve the country's interests. They are aimed at creating conditions for destructive external influences.

Another example of disinformation and manipulation is the claim that Belarus has failed to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and has failed to provide new information on this issue. However, ILO bodies are well aware that serious work has been carried out in this direction. That is why progress in implementing recommendations was noted and the issue of the country's compliance with the Conventions was removed from the agenda of the Conference. Today we can confirm that the vast majority of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations, 10 out of 12, have been implemented.

Detailed information on this issue has repeatedly been provided to ILO bodies. However, the Government's arguments are systematically ignored. Our opponents, driven by a desire to denigrate Belarus as much as possible, see no moral obstacles. They found an opportunity to increase pressure in discrediting the national trade union centre – the FPB. For several years, attempts have been made, without any real reason, to deprive the FPB of its powers at the Conference. The Workers' group is blocking the participation of representatives of the FPB in its meetings at the site of the Governing Body. What else can we call such actions if not a direct attack on the right of Belarusian workers to freedom of association? On what grounds are they being denied the right to be represented at the ILO? Is this based on the unsubstantiated claims of the initiators of the odious anti-Belarusian resolution or because the FPB is engaged in constructive dialogue with the Government? What is this if not a violation of the ILO principles?

The FPB has always been and remains a free, independent and the most representative association of workers in the country. It is the largest public organization. It comprises 15 sectoral trade unions representing, I repeat, 4 million workers across all sectors of the economy and all regions. The FPB's independence from government bodies, political parties and other organizations is clearly stated in its Charter. It is a real trade union centre, the authenticity and independence of which is confirmed by the principles of its organization and activities.

The FPB has independently develops its own Charter, determines its structure and elects the governing and auditing bodies. It provides for voluntary membership and withdrawal, equal rights and responsibilities of member organizations, their organizational and financial autonomy, collegiality and transparency in the work of elected bodies, and accountability to

member organizations. The activities of the FPB are not overseen, controlled or financed by the Government. The inclusion of representatives of the FPB in the tripartite delegation of Belarus to the Conference is carried out in full compliance with the ILO Constitution.

In this regard, the monitoring of the situation with the formation of the delegation of Belarusian workers by the Credentials Committee makes no sense. This is an example of inefficient use of ILO resources. At the same time, the practice of blocking the FPB's participation in ILO meetings by the Workers' group requires condemnation and the harshest evaluation.

Belarus is an ILO Member State; it pays contribution and has every right to ensure that its representative workers' and employers' organizations participate freely in the activities of the Organization. At the same time, we insist on the illegality of positioning individuals who have no connection to Belarus as representatives of the national trade union movement. I am talking about the main source of the false information about Belarus – a group of individuals operating abroad calling themselves the BKDP.

There used to be an association under this name in the country and the Government tried to establish dialogue with it. However, in 2020, the BKDP's focus shifted completely from protecting workers' rights to openly destructive actions against the interests of society and the State. As a result, their activities were legally terminated by the Supreme Court. This association of trade unions no longer exists. However, the former leaders of the BKDP continue to adhere to an anti-State line and cannot come to terms with this decision. For them, trade union status is an opportunity to further advance the anti-Belarusian agenda at the ILO in the interests of countries pursuing a policy of isolation and restrictions against Belarus.

That is why these people call themselves the only independent trade union association in Belarus. At the same time, the so-called BKDP is just a small group of former trade union leaders and activists. There are no members or primary organizations of trade unions that were previously part of the BKDP at the country's enterprises. The reasons are clear: workers need real trade unions and do not want to be drawn into dubious political adventures.

Representatives of the BKDP are based abroad. Their activities promoting false narratives about Belarus to justify sanctions are financed by foreign sponsors. All this does not correspond to the status of a trade union, genuine independence and representativeness that the BKDP claims to have.

As we have repeatedly pointed out to the Office and ILO bodies, there are no legal grounds for dialogue with the BKDP as a structure that has no relation to workers in Belarus. The participation of the BKDP in meetings on the Belarusian case and their positioning as representatives of the country's workers are unacceptable.

At the same time, our opponents' statements about the absence of genuine and independent trade unions in Belarus and, consequently, the absence of social dialogue, demonstrate a total misunderstanding of the situation. Belarus has a successfully functioning social partnership system. Trade unions' employers are fully engaged in the development and implementation of socio-economic policies.

The rejection of confrontation by the parties and the resolution of any issues through negotiations allow us to take into account the interests of all groups in society as much as possible and maintain the stable economic and social development of the State.

Thus, based on the facts presented, it can be concluded that there were and are no objective grounds for applying article 33 of the ILO Constitution to Belarus and for adopting

the 2023 resolution calling for a review of relations with our country. The Belarusian case is considered several times a year by the ILO. It is built on distorted facts, false accusations against the Government, and our opponents' desire to use the ILO to pressure Belarus.

Moreover, the subject matter of the complaints addressed to us does not correspond to the ILO mandate, which has been noted more than once and which is unacceptable. We understand that there is a campaign against Belarus at the ILO, which is part of the information and sanctions war declared against us. It is unlikely that our opponents will stop any time soon, and I am sure that today we will hear a new batch of reality-distorting accusations.

In this regard, I urge everyone to face the truth and stop following the anti-Belarusian rhetoric out of simple inertia. I ask national delegations and ILO bodies to be more selective in their use of information from the former BKDP leaders and Western countries. Do not allow yourself to be misled and manipulated again.

The Belarusian case, built on a politicized approach, has long since exhausted itself. Repeating unfounded demands against Belarus will achieve nothing. No self-respecting country will follow recommendations that ignore the real state of affairs and are aimed at destabilizing the situation.

The Government of Belarus still hopes that common sense will prevail within the ILO and that Member States' contributions will no longer be wasted on fruitless sittings, identical conclusions, recommendations and reports.

I would specifically address the members of the Committee. It is within your power to change the situation and return the discussion to a framework which is consistent with ILO principles. The shortest and most effective way forward is to reject the unfair conclusions regarding Belarus and call on the ILO supervisory bodies to abandon their policy of undue pressure, accept the realities of sovereign interests of the country and take into account the factual information from the Government. I call on everyone to stop the politicization of the ILO, not to make unfair decisions, and to return to the path of constructive dialogue and full cooperation with the Belarusian side.

Presidenta – Muchas gracias, Sr. Takun. Quisiera ahora pasar la palabra al Vicepresidente empleador, Sr. Kaizer Moyane, para que realice su declaración inicial.

Employer members – We want to thank the Government of Belarus for their presence here this morning in this special sitting. We have taken note of the written and oral information they have provided on this case.

At the outset, let us confirm that both Conventions were ratified by Belarus in 1956, and that the Employers' group would like to highlight the importance of States' compliance with these two Conventions, which are both considered as fundamental Conventions. The Employers' group would like to stress that this case has a long-standing history in the ILO.

Since 1997, the Committee of Experts has issued numerous observations and the case has been dealt with in various ILO supervisory committees, including this Committee, over the years. We take note of the Government's position that this case is unfounded and politically motivated, and that the events of 2020 had nothing to do with processes of social dialogue in the labour sphere or the exercise of trade union or other civil rights and freedoms.

The Employers' group, however, would like to recall that, in May 2024, a High-Level Roundtable on Freedom of Association in Belarus organized by the ILO took place. Three UN Special Rapporteurs, including the Special Rapporteurs on Belarus, on freedom of peaceful

assembly and association, and on the independence of judges and lawyers, participated in the Roundtable and presented their findings that indicated otherwise.

The ILO Governing Body has considered this case on several occasions. Most recently, at its March 2026 session, in the context of the follow-up to the resolution adopted under article 33 of the Constitution, the Governing Body:

- one, noted with growing concern that the Government of Belarus had once again provided no new information on measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies.
- two, called on the Government to review its position and to fully collaborate with the Special Envoy.
- three, once again requested the Government of Belarus with the utmost urgency to accept an international humanitarian mission to ensure that independent doctors could visit all imprisoned trade unionists to assess their health and offer medical assistance as necessary, and an ILO tripartite mission to assess the situation and visit trade unionists that are in prison or detention.
- four, urged the Government of Belarus to submit to the Director-General all information on concrete steps taken in that regard following the 356th Session of the Governing Body by 21 September 2026.
- five, requested the Special Envoy to report back to the 358th Session of the Governing Body and further provide all relevant information at the third special sitting of the Committee.

In this regard, we pause to take note of the presence of the Special Envoy and of the report, the information that he shared with this Committee this morning, including his plea for collaboration with the Government.

In the 2024 and 2025 conclusions, the Committee, among other things, urged the Government to:

- take all possible measures with the greatest urgency to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and all subsequent observations made by the supervisory bodies of the ILO regarding compliance with the Conventions;
- furthermore, to accept an international humanitarian mission to ensure that independent doctors can visit all imprisoned trade unionists to assess their health and offer medical assistance as necessary and an ILO tripartite mission to assess the situation and visit trade unionists who are currently in prison or detention.

Turning now to the observations of the Committee of Experts, which in its recent comments requested the Government to provide comments on the allegation that two trade unionists were unlawfully deported to Lithuania and their passports and personal medication were confiscated. The Committee of Experts further asked for the information on the allegation that more than 70 trade union and labour leaders and activists remained under criminal prosecution and 21 trade union leaders and activists were still in prison or detained.

Moreover, the Committee of Experts noted with deep regret that the Government had provided no new information on the measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies and its statement that it did not support the appointment of the Special Envoy.

The Committee of Experts once again deplored the absence of progress in implementing the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and in addressing the outstanding recommendations of the supervisory bodies. With reference to the decision of the Governing Body, the Committee urged the Government to review its position and to fully collaborate with the Special Envoy.

It further urges the Government to take concrete measures to implement the remaining recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies and the decisions of the Governing Body. The Committee requested the Government to provide detailed information on the specific measures taken in this regard.

Now, as in the last years and in line with previous contributions from the Employers' group, we would like to highlight that, in line with Article 2 of Convention No. 87, freedom of association implies and requires that workers and employers must be able to decide freely without State interference whether to set up their own organizations. According to Article 3 of Convention No. 87, the right to organize constitutes an important aspect of the activities of employers' and workers' organizations. According to Article 11 of Convention No. 87, States must take all necessary and appropriate measures to ensure that workers and employers may exercise freely the right to organize.

Taking into account all these developments, we urge the Government to start engaging in a constructive dialogue with the ILO, including meeting the ILO Special Envoy without further delay to improve the country's situation in respect of freedom of association and the right to organize. The Employers' group stands ready to constructively support this process.

The national employers of Belarus also confirm, and will do so again, their commitment to cooperation and interaction. In conclusion, and based on the observation of the Committee of Experts, the Employers recommend the Government to:

- first, review its position and collaborate with the Special Envoy;
- second, take concrete measures to implement the remaining recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies and the decisions of the Governing Body;
- third, provide comments on the allegations that two trade unionists were unlawfully deported and that more than 70 trade union leaders and activists remain under criminal prosecution and 21 trade union leaders and activists are still imprisoned or detained;
- finally, take measures to amend without further delay several legal provisions to bring them into compliance with the Government's international obligations on freedom of association.

Presidenta – Doy ahora la palabra a la Sra. Anne Vermorgen, Vicepresidenta de los trabajadores, para que haga uso de su declaración inicial.

Membres travailleurs – En 2023, la Conférence a adopté une résolution en vertu de l'article 33 de la Constitution de l'OIT concernant le Bélarus. Cette résolution faisait suite à de nombreuses années d'efforts infructueux pour obtenir le respect des recommandations de la commission d'enquête établie en lien avec les conventions.

L'article 33 représente le plus haut niveau d'action possible au sein du système de supervision de l'OIT. Il reflète la détermination collective des Membres de l'OIT à garantir le respect des conventions et des valeurs de l'OIT, y compris les principes et droits fondamentaux au travail, là où tous les efforts entrepris ont échoué.

La séance spéciale que nous tenons aujourd'hui fait partie de ce processus. Elle n'est pas destinée à «nuire» au Bélarus. Elle vise à parvenir à enfin concrétiser le respect des obligations librement acceptées par le Bélarus en vertu de la Constitution de l'OIT et des conventions qu'elle a ratifiées. Il s'agit d'améliorer les conditions de travail au Bélarus pour tous les travailleurs.

Au centre de cette discussion se trouvent la liberté d'association et le droit à la négociation collective.

Ces principes reconnaissent que les travailleurs et les employeurs doivent être libres de créer et d'assurer la gestion de leurs organisations de manière indépendante, d'élire leurs représentants librement, de déterminer leurs activités et de défendre leurs intérêts et droits sans ingérence.

L'histoire, en particulier celle qui a précédé la création de l'OIT et l'adoption des conventions n^{os} 87 et 98, a démontré que les organisations indépendantes de travailleurs et d'employeurs sont indispensables à la justice sociale et au développement économique durable. Lorsque les organisations deviennent soumises au contrôle de l'État, lorsqu'elles ne sont pas libres, elles perdent l'indépendance nécessaire pour remplir leur rôle.

C'est pourquoi la convention n^o 87 accorde tant d'importance à l'autonomie et à l'indépendance organisationnelles.

Les problèmes auxquels nous faisons face ne sont pas neufs.

Suite aux préoccupations concernant les droits syndicaux au Bélarus, une mission de l'OIT avait déjà visité le pays en 1997 et avait observé à l'époque certains progrès. Cependant, ces progrès furent de courte durée.

En 2000, une nouvelle plainte fut déposée par plusieurs syndicats, dont le BKDP. D'autres missions ont suivi en 2000 et 2003. Malgré ces efforts, la situation n'a cessé de se détériorer.

Les allégations concernaient l'ingérence dans les affaires syndicales, la législation restrictive, la discrimination envers les syndicalistes et le harcèlement des dirigeants et membres syndicaux.

En juin 2003, une plainte en vertu de l'article 26 de la Constitution de l'OIT a été déposée, aboutissant à l'établissement d'une commission d'enquête.

La commission a conclu que les syndicats indépendants au Bélarus avaient été soumis à une ingérence importante et à des efforts soutenus pour les placer sous contrôle de l'État.

La commission a souligné que la liberté d'association ne pouvait exister véritablement que si les syndicats extérieurs aux structures officielles pouvaient s'organiser et fonctionner librement et de manière indépendante.

Il est important de noter que la commission a clairement indiqué que ses recommandations visaient à bénéficier à la société biélorusse dans son ensemble. Les syndicats libres et indépendants étaient reconnus comme des acteurs essentiels du développement social et économique du pays.

Tout cela reste vrai aujourd'hui.

La commission d'experts et le Conseil d'administration ont clairement indiqué que des violations graves persistent.

Les syndicats indépendants ont été démantelés.

Des dirigeants syndicaux et membres des syndicats ont été emprisonnés.

Les travailleurs continuent de faire face à de graves obstacles dans l'exercice de leurs droits. De nombreux syndicalistes libérés de détention restent soumis à des restrictions, à la stigmatisation, d'autres font face à l'exil forcé, à la perte de documents, à des pensions impayées et à la séparation de leurs familles. D'autres restent emprisonnés dans des conditions qui ont causé des dommages graves et durables à leur santé physique et mentale.

Nous sommes heureux que notre frère Aliaksandr Yarashuk puisse être présent avec nous aujourd'hui. Son expérience illustre les conséquences persistantes auxquelles font face les syndicalistes même après leur libération de détention. Nous restons profondément préoccupés pour tous ceux qui restent emprisonnés, y compris Vatslau Areshka, dont la santé s'est considérablement détériorée pendant sa détention. Il est devenu aveugle.

Le gouvernement soutient que certaines recommandations de la commission d'enquête ne peuvent être mises en œuvre en raison de considérations de sécurité nationale.

Les membres travailleurs ne peuvent pas accepter cette position.

Le système de supervision de l'OIT repose sur le dialogue, les preuves et l'engagement de bonne foi. Lorsque des intérêts publics légitimes émergent, ils doivent être traités de manière conforme aux obligations internationales et aux réalités nationales, mais ils ne peuvent pas être utilisés comme une réserve indirecte excluant l'État Membre de toute responsabilité.

Les restrictions qui empêchent les organisations de travailleurs d'exercer leurs activités, d'exprimer leurs opinions, d'organiser des événements ou d'administrer librement leurs finances affectent l'essence même de la liberté d'association. Criminaliser ou imposer de lourdes considérations de sécurité nationale aux aspirations et aux droits légitimes impose à l'État de tolérer le fardeau d'un examen minutieux. L'équilibre doit pencher en faveur de l'exercice des droits.

De même, les organisations de travailleurs et d'employeurs doivent pouvoir entretenir des relations avec les organisations internationales et recevoir un soutien, dans le cadre de leur droit de former ou d'adhérer à leurs propres organisations internationales et de bénéficier de son administration, y compris un soutien financier protégé par l'article 5 de la convention n° 87.

Ce ne sont pas des droits négligeables. Ce sont des éléments essentiels d'une véritable indépendance pour les organisations de travailleurs et d'employeurs.

Nous sommes particulièrement préoccupés par le refus persistant du gouvernement de s'engager de manière significative dans les mesures de mise en œuvre adoptées dans le cadre de la résolution de l'article 33.

Nous regrettons le manque de coopération avec l'Envoyé spécial du Directeur général et exhortons le gouvernement à s'engager de manière constructive avec lui et les efforts qu'il déploie.

Nous saluons les actions entreprises par les États Membres, les organes des Nations Unies et les organisations syndicales pour soutenir les syndicalistes du Bélarus et atténuer les conséquences humanitaires de l'exil forcé et de la répression.

Nous saluons également les recommandations des mécanismes des Nations Unies en matière de droits de l'homme appelant à un environnement sûr et favorable à l'activité syndicale et à l'abrogation des mesures qui démantèlent les syndicats indépendants.

Les membres travailleurs restent convaincus que des progrès significatifs sont possibles. Cependant, cela nécessite un engagement réel, le respect du système de supervision et des actions concrètes pour restaurer la liberté d'association et le droit à la négociation collective en droit et en pratique.

En 2004, la commission a considéré, et je cite: «qu'il est crucial que des mesures significatives soient prises dans un avenir immédiat pour permettre aux syndicats extérieurs à la structure du FPB de pouvoir former leurs organisations et exercer librement leurs activités. Ce n'est que dans de telles circonstances que la liberté d'association peut être considérée comme existante au Bélarus».

Cela fait maintenant vingt-deux ans depuis ces recommandations, et il n'existe aucun syndicat indépendant en dehors du FPB.

Le gouvernement affirme désormais que le BKDP n'opère pas dans le pays, alors que le gouvernement a lui-même créé les conditions d'exil forcé empêchant leurs dirigeants de rester dans le pays. Toute personne s'engageant avec des syndicats indépendants est susceptible de faire l'objet de poursuites pénales. Cela n'empêche pas le BKDP de militer fermement pour le respect des libertés civiles et un climat de liberté permettant aux syndicats de véritablement pouvoir opérer au Bélarus. S'il ne s'agit pas là d'un travail au bénéfice des syndicats indépendants en Biélorussie, alors je ne sais pas ce qui le serait.

Ce travail, ce n'est en tout cas pas le FPB qui le mène. Le gouvernement en a pris le contrôle. Le gouvernement a été sévère contre le FPB quand ce dernier avait soutenu le BKDP par le passé. Le message envoyé par le gouvernement est donc clair: il faut garder le silence et s'intégrer pleinement au gouvernement. Perdre son autonomie et son indépendance. Mais cela signifie que vous n'êtes essentiellement plus un syndicat. Vous faites peut-être beaucoup de bonnes choses sous le contrôle du gouvernement, mais vous n'êtes pas un syndicat si vous ne pouvez plus vous exprimer en défense des travailleurs, même s'ils ont des opinions différentes des vôtres. La fonction de président du FPB est enregistrée par le gouvernement comme une fonction de l'État. Il est donc clair que le FPB est un agent de l'État.

Pour la suite, le gouvernement ne s'engage pas dans les mesures de mise en œuvre adoptées pour améliorer la situation au Bélarus. Il dit que c'est «une impasse».

Nous apprécions grandement les informations concernant les mesures prises par l'Envoyé spécial, saluons ses efforts et appelons à lever les obstacles posés sur son chemin par les autorités du Bélarus.

Nous saluons également les mesures prises par les gouvernements, conformément au principe de non-refoulement appliqué dans ces circonstances, pour atténuer les conséquences de la déportation forcée du Bélarus, de l'exil forcé et de la réglementation des passeports. Nous remercions également les syndicats, comme la Confédération allemande des syndicats, pour le travail accompli à cet égard.

Les réunions nationales tripartites devraient être accélérées pour examiner les relations avec le Bélarus. Nous saluons également les recommandations du Conseil des droits de l'homme de l'ONU, notamment l'adoption de mesures pour garantir un environnement sûr et favorable aux syndicalistes, entre autres, et l'abrogation des lois démantelant les syndicats indépendants. De même, nous nous félicitons que le Rapporteur spécial sur la situation des droits de l'homme au Bélarus, tout en saluant la libération des prisonniers, ait également souligné que nombre de personnes libérées, y compris des syndicalistes et des militants civils, avaient été condamnées sans procès équitable.

Nous devons tous redoubler d'efforts pour que l'emprisonnement des syndicalistes et les violations de la liberté d'association et du droit à la négociation collective prennent fin.

À l'heure où nous parlons, 20 de nos collègues sont toujours en prison parce que leur organisation syndicale a été qualifiée d'«extrémiste» en raison de leurs activités syndicales, y compris des revendications syndicales légitimes. Ces collègues sont soumis à des sanctions impliquant du travail forcé au titre de sanction pour l'expression d'opinions politiques ou d'opinions contraires au système politique, social ou économique établi.

Nous continuerons à demander leur libération et demanderons au gouvernement qu'il respecte les recommandations de la commission d'enquête.

Presidenta – Antes de dar la palabra al siguiente orador, quisiera recordarles a todos que está estrictamente prohibido filmar y tomar fotografías de otra persona que no sea miembro de la delegación, así como realizar publicaciones en redes sociales, incluso en la sala de transmisión que está en la sala 2 de este mismo edificio.

Paso ahora el uso de la palabra al Sr. Anatoly Nichkasov, quien habla en representación de los empleadores de Belarús.

Interpretation from Belarusian: **Employer member, Belarus (Mr NICHKASOV)** – Allow me to greet all of you on behalf of the Confederation of Employers of the Republic of Belarus. That is our association, our union. It brings together companies with different forms of ownerships, people from different sectors and different parts of the country within the Republic of Belarus. The development and adoption of the Law on Employers' Associations was actually a great example of successful social partnership in our country because it involved all relevant partners.

A general agreement was adopted for 2025–27 and this involved the Government, a number of pan-Belarusian employers' associations and trade unions. There was a lot of active discussion about this. There was a lot of negotiation. Compromises had to be reached. Some contradictions had to be ironed out.

Flexibility was found. It all worked very successfully and that shows that social partnership is developing well in the Republic of Belarus. Despite all the difficulties we faced, we have been able to work with workers' organizations, the Government, and other relevant stakeholders. We have been able to take measures focused on defending the interest of employers and workers, creating appropriate working conditions, and focusing on occupational safety and health at work, in particular. This is successful social partnership, and even at this difficult time of sanctions and restrictions, we have been able to enhance the economic security of our country to ensure sustainability and effectiveness within the real economy.

What does our Employers' Confederation do? We do a number of things. We undertake joint activities in creating new jobs, for instance, in ensuring ongoing vocational training provision, enhancing the skills and the certification of workers. Guaranteeing social protection for workers is pursued by our Government, and we have seen decisions taken, for instance, at the Pan-European People's Assembly, which reflect that. We also see this reflected in the Labour Code and in the Law on Employers' Associations, in the Tax Code, in the regional programmes on housing, health, education, and so on.

All of the measures that are being taken are producing positive results. In Belarus, workers and employers are working in a way that is stable, and we are demonstrating the sustainable growth of our production as well as export of goods and services. It is possible

for us to enjoy good industrial cooperation with many countries in different sectors of the real economy. This includes engineering, the agrifood industry, IT, biotechnology, electronics, energy, medicine, pharmaceuticals, and many other areas. One point that is worth noting is the fact that foreign business partners are showing interest in expanding cooperation with Belarusian companies on a number of innovative projects.

In saying that, we should note that industrialists and businesspeople in Belarus emphasize their willingness to renew cooperation with Western partners on projects that are of mutual interest, with mutual respect and mutual benefit.

We have seen that some business niches have been freed up and now representatives of friendly countries have stepped into them. However, we very much hope that, in the near future, the mutually beneficial relationships that we had with other businesses, relationships destroyed by sanctions, will be restored. Let me once again state that the decisions taken by the ILO focused on limiting cooperation with business in the real economy should be overturned.

We must recognize that sanctions pressure organized by a number of ILO Member States is focused on destabilizing joint activities of the social partners in Belarus, but it has failed. As time has shown, attempts to provoke problems with employment or with income for workers or indeed to undermine social guarantees and social obligations of the country have not been succeeded by the authors of anti-Belarusian resolutions and decisions taken at the Conference. We must recognize that success has been achieved in Belarus thanks to the effective joint work done by the Government, trade unions, including sectoral trade unions, and employers' associations. Our national social partnership will not be held hostage to political disagreement, neither internal nor external. At the Conference, we are open to joint work on the basis of mutual respect and taking into account national interests.

The employers of Belarus are responsible social partners. Once again, we see that a decision is proposed here on the so-called Belarusian case. Once again, we see that it is politicized. Once again, we see that it is calling for restrictions on cooperation with the Government of Belarus and the social partners. That being so, we have less interaction between employers' organizations and the ILO, and we see that, in fact, what this does at the end of the day is create the grounds for unfair competition.

We very much hope that the expert conclusions will not go beyond the mandate of this Organization and will be established on the basis of the real achievements of social partnership in the country and the real results. That is the position of the employers of Belarus, and we hope that it will be taken into account. We call for support and solidarity from the Conference and we believe that the commitment to the most active possible interaction with employers of all countries is the way forward for us all.

Presidenta – Pasamos del uso de la palabra al Sr. Yury Senko, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Belarús.

Interpretation from Belarusian: **Worker member, Belarus (Mr SENKO)** – The FPB includes in its ranks an absolute majority of workers in our country. For more than 35 years, we have represented and defended the interests of workers nationally and internationally, including in the ILO.

Trade union organizations within the FPB are active in enterprises in all economic sectors, both in the public and the private sector. We constantly monitor compliance with legislation in all working spaces. We have regular feedback from the 4 million members of

our organization. That being so, today we have full and reliable information about the situation in the social labour sphere in our country. We can state with full confidence that what is happening today in the ILO is sadly the dissemination of totally false information about our country, and we are deeply concerned about the fact that, on the basis of such distorted data, ILO bodies continue to take decisions that directly harm the rights of workers in Belarus and, in particular, insist that other States should review their relationship with Belarus.

Let me once again emphasize: such activities directly contradict the goals and objectives of the ILO and what it is supposed to be about. The ILO Constitution and other fundamental documents clearly determine that the main purpose of this Organization and indeed any relevant national and international policy is to ensure the rights of citizens in any state to work in conditions of economic sustainability and equal opportunities. Economic sanctions, the application of which is being encouraged by ILO decisions today, have a very negative effect on the basic socio-economic rights of people and hinders sustainable development. This has been repeatedly stated by the UN Special Rapporteur on the issue of the adverse impact of unilateral coercive measures. The Special Rapporteur drew particular attention to the situation in the ILO and talked about the unacceptable adoption of decisions that encourage sanctions.

The FPB has also repeatedly raised this issue. It is the task of trade unions in any state to defend the rights of workers, both within the country and internationally. We wish to emphasize that our position on the inadmissibility of the application of unilateral economic restrictions is now shared by trade unions in many countries. In autumn last year, we discussed this topic in Minsk, and we had an international conference that was attended by representatives of scores of countries, and they all supported a general appeal to the ILO to take realistic measures to put an end to this heinous practice.

Further, we wish to draw attention to another point. For many years, we have recently seen attempts being made to deprive workers in Belarus of the possibility to defend their interests within the ILO. Without collegial discussion involving members of the ILO, behind closed doors, a decision was taken on the non-admission of legitimate representatives of Belarusian workers to the meetings of ILO bodies wherein the so-called Belarusian case was being discussed. Despite the official requests, representatives of the FPB did not receive the opportunity even to attend meetings of the ILO Governing Body when there was discussion of the situation in Belarus. As a result, the conclusions of Belarus once again were constructed on the basis of totally false information coming from representatives of organizations that have no connection to the workers in Belarus, that act and are funded by other States, as has already been said.

Moreover, in violation of all ILO rules and procedures, Members of that Organization positioned themselves as representatives of Belarusian workers, although none of them were elected or put forward by the workers of Belarus. In essence, there are efforts to deprive the FPB, the genuine representative of workers of Belarus, of the possibility of participating in the work of the ILO. We understand that all these unfriendly actions, all these far-fetched allegations have a political hidden agenda and are focused on the idea of putting further pressure on Belarus, forcing our country to refrain from exercising the inalienable right of any State to self-determination. We wish to emphasize the fact that accusations against Belarus on non-compliance with the Conventions as well as attacks on the FPB are being made at a time when we have already achieved many of the goals that the ILO can only call on other countries to pursue. I will give you a few key examples.

Despite the enormous economic and political pressure, already today Belarus has achieved significant and impressive progress in the global rating on sustainable development. For instance, speaking of decent work and economic growth, today almost everyone in our country can enjoy the right to work. The level of unemployment in our country is minimal. It is only 2.5 per cent, according to the ILO's own methodology. That being so, every year we see a substantial growth in real income for the people of our country.

Furthermore, as recommended by the ILO, Belarus ensures full exercise of the right to basic social guarantees. Every citizen in Belarus can enjoy, free of charge, schooling and vocational training, full medical care, social support and pensions. We also have a fair distribution of income and a minimum level of inequality.

All of this shows the effective social partnership that we have in Belarus. The ILO calls upon all countries to build a full-fledged and respectful social dialogue and emphasizes that only when you have such a dialogue, only when you have such constructive cooperation, can you resolve the most significant issues for workers. That is precisely what happens in Belarus today with the interaction of the authorities, the trade unions, and employers' organizations. Our Federation is the most representative workers' organization. It participates in the development of all legislation on social and labour issues.

We have an independent position on each and every issue. Last year alone, we participated in the work on such important documents as the Labour Code, the Law on Labour Protection, as well as a number of others. And it was at the initiative of the FPB that the drafts of these laws included a number of standards that enhance guarantees of protection for workers. Furthermore, legislation of our country gives us the exclusive right to ensure compliance with the legislation on labour issues at all organizations. Only last year, thanks to the work done by our lawyers, we were able to identify 20,000 violations of labour legislation and to remedy them.

We were also able to deal with issues of unlawful dismissal. We were able also to deal with people who were being unfairly penalized or who were having some of their salaries withheld. In other words, we were taking practical steps to ensure that workers could enjoy their rights. As for the right to collective bargaining, we have organizations within our FPB system and we have actually been able to conclude more than 18,200 collective agreements with employers' organizations in different enterprises in all sectors and in all regions of the country, focusing on issues like wage levels, employment guarantees, and support in difficult life situations. All of this confirms the fact that Belarus consistently and in a focused manner is indeed complying with all of the provisions of the Declaration concerning the aims and purposes of the ILO and everything the ILO is supposed to uphold.

Today, our country is in a situation where we have employment, fair and just distribution of income, and the development of collective bargaining work. We are ready for an open exchange of our experience, including through ILO, with others in order to further promote efforts to find the best solutions for the interests of workers everywhere. We therefore call upon the ILO to do a number of things:

- Firstly, ensure transparency and objectivity when considering the situation in Belarus today – the genuine results and the experience of FPB are being ignored and are almost never included in final documents, which misleads ILO participants.

- Secondly, we call for an assessment of the compliance with labour rights in the country and the results of the work done by trade unions to be analysed not on the basis of fiction but on the basis of real indicators that truly can influence the situation of workers in our country, looking at social coverage, employment, additional guarantees and so on.
- Thirdly, as the genuine and the most representative organization of workers in Belarus, we defend the interests of our workers and we call for the repeal of decisions that are focused on restricting interaction with our country and thereby are having an adverse effect on the rights of workers in Belarus to work and on the rights of sustainable enterprises.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Natalia Andreou Panayiotou, representante gubernamental de Chipre, quien habla en nombre de la Unión Europea.

European Union and its Member States, Cyprus (Ms ANDREOU PANAYIOTOU) – I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova, as well as Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

This year we commemorate the centenary of this Committee and of the Committee of Experts. Both Committees have been at the heart of the ILO supervisory system and have worked together to ensure that the ILO Member States comply with their commitment to give effect to the international labour standards that the governments, workers and employers have collectively adopted and applied at the national level in full sovereignty. It is, therefore, particularly regrettable that in this centenary year we are once again confronted with the persistent failure of the authorities of Belarus to comply with their obligations under the Conventions that they voluntarily ratified. Since the adoption of the article 33 resolution, Belarus has persistently disregarded the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and the subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies. This has been reflected in the latest findings of the Committee of Experts and the Committee on the Freedom of Association. The criminal prosecution continues with almost 850 individuals remaining in detention or imprisonment on politically motivated grounds, including many trade unionists.

A significant number of them are held in appalling and inhumane conditions that gravely endanger their physical and mental health, posing a direct threat to their lives. Many of those who have been released have not been exonerated, were forcibly deported from Belarus with their passports confiscated, and have been deprived of essential means of livelihood. Existing legislation effectively prevents them from obtaining new identity documents abroad, which further exacerbates their situation, including by making access to pensions and other rights impossible in practice. Persons allowed to stay in Belarus remain under strict surveillance and face restrictions that hinder their reintegration. This means that their punishment continues even after the release.

The dissolution of independent trade unions, including the BKDP, and the continued inability of their members to operate legally persist. Restrictions on civil liberties, including participation in peaceful assemblies and industrial action, continue to result in arrests, detention and other sanctions. Legislative measures continue to impose undue restrictions on democratic trade union activities, including access to funding, as well as restrictions preventing individuals associated with them from exercising certain professions. The above examples stand in direct contradiction to the Belarusian authorities' repeatedly stated claims of progress. We therefore call on the authorities to

take without further delay all necessary measures to fully implement the recommendations of the supervisory bodies and the Governing Body and to ensure that the national legislation and practice are brought into conformity with ILO fundamental Conventions.

While the recent releases of 250 political prisoners was a signal of willingness to take a step forward, we strongly urge the immediate and unconditional release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners with the full restoration of their civil and political rights and the dismissal of all charges. We urge the Belarusian authorities to refrain from further arbitrary arrests and to ensure the right to due process and a fair trial.

We call on Belarus to restore the legal functioning of independent trade unions, including the BKDP, to ensure that legitimate trade union activities are not designated as extremist activities and to ensure that workers can freely exercise their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

We strongly urge Belarus to engage constructively with the ILO. We reiterate our call to the authorities to accept without further delay the humanitarian and tripartite missions and to engage constructively with the ILO Special Envoy, including by granting him full and unhindered access necessary to carry out his mandate.

We also thank the ILO Special Envoy for Belarus for his continued efforts and for the oral update. We note with deep concern the conclusions of the Committee on Freedom of Association regarding the exclusion of independent trade unions from meaningful social dialogue as well as the strong dependence of the FPB on the authorities and the increasing state control and interference in its activities. We closely monitor the findings of the Credentials Committee and urge the authorities of Belarus to ensure that the delegates to the Conference are nominated in agreement with the most representative, genuine and independent workers' and employers' organizations.

We reiterate our call on the Belarusian regime to seize its involvement in Russia's brutal, illegal, unprovoked and unjustified full-scale invasion of Ukraine and to respect international law and international human rights obligations.

The EU and its Member States, in line with the article 33 resolution, call on all international organizations to discontinue any activities that could directly or indirectly justify the continued lack of action to address violations of trade union rights in Belarus.

We further stress the importance of ensuring coordinated and coherent engagement between the ILO and other UN bodies in support of the article 33 resolution. We reaffirm our strong support to the application of the article 33 resolution, and we will take measures in line with it as needed until tangible and verifiable progress is made. We will continue to fully support and reinforce the ILO supervisory system.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Rytis Paulauskas, representante gubernamental de Lituania, que habla en nombre de nueve países.

Government member, Lithuania (Mr PAULAUSKAS) – I am delivering this statement on behalf of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and my own country, Lithuania.

We align ourselves with the statement of the European Union and its Member States.

We thank the ILO Special Envoy for Belarus for his participation in the special sitting and an update presented.

It remains unacceptable that Belarus continues to disregard the recommendations of the 2004 Commission of Inquiry, the conclusions of the Committee, the observation of the Committee of Experts and the decisions of the Governing Body.

The Committee of Experts has again deplored the absence of progress, noted that the Belarusian authorities provided no new information on implementation measures and urged them to cooperate with the ILO Special Envoy.

Independent trade unions have been liquidated. The BKDP and affiliated organizations remain unable to function legally. More than 70 trade union and labour leaders and activists remain under criminal prosecution including in absentia trials of those in exile, while 19 are still imprisoned or detained. Meanwhile, the FPB is dependent on the authorities and treated by them as a State body. The elimination of independent trade unions and the excessive limitations on the right of strike have destroyed the social dialogue in the country.

Those imprisoned or detained have been held in appalling and inhumane conditions with serious consequences for the health and dignity. International scrutiny has highlighted the need for the independent doctors to visit detained trade unionists and for the ILO tripartite mission to be allowed into the country. Yet Belarus continues to refuse cooperation. UN experts have warned that the freedom of association is absent in Belarus and have called for the immediate release of the imprisoned trade union leaders and members.

We are equally alarmed by the treatment of those released from detention. The Special Envoy and others have mentioned Aliaksandr Yarashuk and Hennadz Fiadynich were unlawfully deported to Lithuania and had their passports and personal medication confiscated. The ILO Governing Body urged Belarus to return their passports and restore pension payments. Mr Senik, together with other political prisoners, was forcibly deported to Ukraine. He initially left the country with a valid passport. However, the document was subsequently invalidated by the Belarusian authorities effectively rendering it unusable. Such actions do not amount to justice or even to release. They amount to forced exile, punishment beyond prison walls, and an attempt to strip individuals of identity, livelihood and rights.

We note with concern Belarus' widening abuse of the so-called "extremism" legislation. Independent trade union activity has been targeted under this framework and the same logic is now being extended against civil society, human rights organizations and educational institutions. We note that the gender discriminatory practice in the labour market remain widespread including the concentration of women in lower paid sectors, recruitment based on the marital status and parenthood, as well as the lack of adequate legislation criminalizing sexual harassment in the workplace. Human Rights Watch has documented the growing use of vague extremism laws against the dissenting voices, including actors in exile.

In this regard, we condemn the decision of the Supreme Court of Belarus to designate the European Humanities University in Vilnius as an extremist organization as an assault on academic freedom and another step in the regime's campaign to silence critical thought. We stand in solidarity with the University, its faculty, students and alumni.

We unequivocally renew our demand that the Belarusian regime immediately end any and all complicity in Russia's brutal, illegal, unprovoked and wholly unjustified full-scale aggression against Ukraine, as well as in the deportation of Ukrainian children to Belarus

and fully adhere to its obligations under international law, including the unequivocal respect for fundamental rights.

The authorities of Belarus should understand that a return to business as usual is not possible while they continue to imprison trade unionists, eliminate independent labour organizations, persecute workers for exercising fundamental rights and reject engagement with the ILO. This pattern of conduct is persistent, intentional and incompatible with membership in good standing in the international labour community.

(interruption from Belarus)

Interpretation from Belarusian: **Government representative (Ms BELSKAYA)** – Madam Chairperson, I would ask you to draw the attention of the speakers in this discussion to the need to follow the generally accepted UN principles with regard to the language used in relation to the country considered.

My country should not be called a regime. Respectful language should be used in relation to all participants. Secondly, I would also request that attention be given to the fact that the delegation of the European Union and now the current speaking delegation are bringing into discussion elements which are not central to it.

We are talking now about political tension within the region, and I would ask that these matters be kept out of the discussion we are having as they are not pertinent to it.

Presidenta – Hemos tomado debida nota del punto de orden solicitado por la delegada de Belarús. Remarcamos la importancia del lenguaje apropiado, y solicitamos a los siguientes oradores que se mantengan dentro de lo que está establecido para la discusión de este tipo de casos de manera individual.

Volvemos a conceder la palabra al orador para que haga sus conclusiones finales de este mismo punto.

Government member, Lithuania (Mr PAULAUSKAS) – All the notions have been mentioned in the UN General Assembly resolutions with regard to the conflict in Ukraine. So, we are not really going beyond any traditional notions which have been known for the UN system. But I will continue.

We therefore call on the Belarusian authorities without further delay to fully implement the article 33 resolution. We call on all relevant international actors to ensure that their engagement does not directly or indirectly legitimize or facilitate the continued dismantling of freedom of association in Belarus. Until there is a tangible, verifiable and irreversible progress, pressure must be maintained and coordination strengthened across the ILO, the UN system and among Member States. Belarusian workers deserve real representation, collective bargaining and freedom, not repression disguised as law.

Presidenta - Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Elise Hansbury, que habla en representación del Gobierno del Canadá y un grupo de países.

Government member, Canada (Ms HANSBURY) – I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Governments of Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and my own country, Canada.

Once again, we must echo the Committee of Experts' deep regrets that no meaningful changes in law or practice have been reported by the authorities of Belarus, despite persistent calls from this Organization to fully implement the recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies, including the 2004 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. For more than two

decades, the authorities of Belarus have consistently failed to safeguard the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, demonstrating a persistent disregard for the ILO supervisory system and for the rights and dignity of Belarusian workers.

We remain gravely concerned by well documented and ongoing violations of human and labour rights, including the continued prosecution of workers and labour leaders for exercising their fundamental rights. We remain deeply concerned by reports pointing to the continued criminal prosecution of trade union leaders, many of whom remained imprisoned or subject to restriction of liberty, the use of the judicial system to repress independent trade unions' activities, including the increasing use of trial in absentia without fair trial guarantees and the imposition of severe criminal penalties, including lengthy terms of imprisonment for associating with independent trade unions. While we acknowledge the recent release of certain trade union leaders, including Mr Aliaksandr Yarashuk and Mr Hennadz Fiadynich, we are deeply concerned that such releases are not accompanied by exoneration or recognition of the human rights violation committed by the authorities of Belarus against them and, in some cases, are followed by deportation.

Notwithstanding this overwhelming evidence, the Belarusian authorities continue to deny any violations of the Conventions and assert that the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry have been implemented.

Once again, we urge the authorities of Belarus to fully comply with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and to immediately and unconditionally release all trade union leaders imprisoned for exercising their fundamental rights, seize all form of repression against workers and their representatives, accept an international humanitarian mission to ensure independent medical access to detained trade unionists, and accept an ILO tripartite mission to assess the situation on the ground.

We reaffirm our strong support for the resolution adopted by the Conference in 2023 under article 33 and encourage all ILO constituents to continue taking appropriate measures with a view to bringing Belarus in compliance with its obligations under the ILO Constitution and the Conventions.

We especially welcome the work of the ILO Special Envoy to Belarus and call on the authorities of Belarus to fully engage with him in a constructive and good faith manner. We also extend our thanks to the ILO Director-General and to the Office for their sustained effort to foster dialogue with the authorities of Belarus.

In this special year marking the centenary of this Committee, we reiterate our unwavering support for the ILO supervisory system. We urge Belarus to respect its expertise and integrity and to cooperate fully with the ILO to implement without any further delay all outstanding recommendations.

Presidenta - Pasamos la palabra ahora al Sr. Sirk Alkhatim Alamin AbdulGadir Mohammed, quien abra en representación de los trabajadores del Sudán.

Interpretation from Arabic: The Sudan Workers Trade Unions Federation is honoured to participate in this discussion, stemming from our steadfast commitment to the principles of social justice and respect for the fundamental role of the trade union movement in defending workers interests. We wish to emphasize that the FTUB represents the overwhelming majority of workers in the country, bringing together more than 90 percent of the Belarusian workforce. This makes it the legitimate and genuine representative of Belarusian workers. We commend the efforts undertaken by the FTUB in monitoring the implementation of labour legislation and occupational safety and health standards through its legal and technical inspection bodies.

During the past year, these bodies identified tens of thousands of violations in workplaces and worked to address and rectify them. We also welcome the recent initiatives launched by the FTUB, including a free trade union hotline service that receives workers' complaints and inquiries on a daily basis. This initiative strengthens direct communication with workers and contributes to the prompt resolution of their concerns. The FTUB continues to enhance workers' welfare and protection through collective bargaining. Trade union organizations have concluded more than 18,200 collective agreements with employers.

However, despite the tangible evidence demonstrating the protection of workers' rights and the independence and effectiveness of the FTUB, the ILO continues to accuse Belarus of non-compliance with Conventions No. 87 and No. 98. We believe it is essential to give due consideration to the information and data provided by the FTUB, as it is the organization closest to workplace realities and best positioned to express the aspirations and needs of Belarusian workers. We stress the importance of listening to the Belarusian workers' representatives participating in the national delegation to the Conference and giving their views and assessments the consideration they deserve when examining any decisions or recommendations affecting the interests of workers in Belarus.

We believe that the ILO should take seriously the information provided by the FTUB regarding the situation of workers and the socio-economic development of the country. The Federation represents the majority of workers across all regions and sectors of the Belarusian economy. It has a membership of more than four million trade union members. We call upon the Committee to adhere to the principles of neutrality, integrity, and objectivity in making decisions that serve exclusively the interests of Belarusian workers. We hope that the ILO will remain mindful of the negative impact that restrictive measures may have on ordinary workers.

We advocate dialogue, technical cooperation, and institutional capacity-building as the most effective means of promoting compliance with international labour standards and advancing the common objectives of the ILO. In conclusion, we express solidarity with the workers of Belarus and their national trade union centre and reaffirm our support for their right to have their voices heard within the ILO, in a manner that serves workers' interests and promotes the values of social justice and decent work to which we all aspire.

Presidenta - Les quiero rogar a todos, por favor, que respeten el tiempo concedido, de lo contrario siempre vamos a tener este tipo de inconvenientes.

Pasamos entonces la palabra al Sr. Thiphasone Soukhathammavong, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de la República Democrática Popular Lao.

Government member, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Mr SOUKHATHAMMAVONG) – At the outset, my delegation takes note of the Report of the Committee and sincerely thanks the Belarusian delegation for comprehensive updates on the labour situation and the current ILO-related cooperation and work in Belarus. The Lao PDR commends Belarus for its continued efforts and progress made in the social and labour sphere, including in fulfilling its obligations under the ILO Conventions and mechanisms through implementation of decisions and recommendations adopted by the Governing Body and this Committee, among others. This includes, one, successful cooperation of the tripartite social partnership (the Government, trade unions and employers) in the design and implementation of national socio-economic policies. Two, the active participation of trade unions and employers in legislative process on the labour and social issues. Three, the national trade union and the employers' association are parties to the general agreement for 2025–27 with the Government regarding to the social and labour spheres at a national level.

We firmly believe that unilateral coercive measures, sanctions and isolation against any ILO Member State do not constitute constructive or effective approaches.

Let me conclude by calling for prevention of using ILO mechanisms to put politically motivated pressure on sovereign States. We call for the resumption of constructive dialogues, engagement and cooperation with the social partners in Belarus while strictly upholding the mandate of the ILO.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Jiaheng Zheng, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de China.

Interpretation from Chinese: **Worker member, China (Mr ZHENG)** – We have taken note of the statements made by all parties. Our position on case examinations in the Committee has been consistent.

Sanctions are not a goal. Truly safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of workers is our shared objective. To this end, we call for all concerns to be duly addressed for a strengthened consultation and dialogue and for efforts to promote an early resolution of the Belarusian case.

Presidenta – Pasamos ahora la palabra al Sr. Yusif MADATOV, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de Azerbaiyán.

Government member, Azerbaijan (Mr MADATOV) – Azerbaijan welcomes the information provided by the Government of Belarus, which demonstrates the progress made in promoting social dialogue. We commend the efforts of the Belarusian Government for creating the necessary conditions to ensure effective function of social partnership system in the country.

We recognize Belarus' commitment to uphold international labour standards and to cooperate with the ILO within the framework of its mandate. Azerbaijan firmly believes that the promotion of labour rights should involve constructive dialogue and full conformity with the principle of national sovereignty.

Presidenta – Pasamos la palabra ahora a la Sra. Jocelyne DUBOIS, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores del Canadá.

Worker member, Canada (Ms DUBOIS) – I speak on behalf of workers from Canada and Switzerland. The findings of the ILO Commission of Inquiry, the supervisory bodies and the application of article 33 of the ILO Constitution regarding labour rights violations in Belarus are consistently reinforced by the wider UN human rights system. International consensus regarding the situation in Belarus is evident in the recommendations made during successive cycles of the Universal Periodic Review as well as in the work of UN treaty bodies, Special Procedures, and the Group of Independent Experts on Belarus. These bodies have documented and raised alarm on extensive human and labour rights violations, including the persecution of individuals exercising freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly, the liquidation of independent trade unions, arbitrary arrests and detention of trade union leaders and activists, forced labour, torture and reprisals against persons cooperating with international organizations and human rights mechanisms.

In 2026, across the fourth Universal Periodic Review cycle, a large number of UN Member States recommended that Belarus restore freedom of association and freedom of assembly and end persecution of trade unionists, human rights defenders and civil society activists.

In 2025, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its review of Belarus, addressed not only issues of gender equality but also issues directly linked to freedom of association, noting that the destruction of independent worker representation deprives women workers from effective mechanisms to challenge discrimination, harassment, unequal pay and other violations.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus concluded that the repression of independent trade unions forms part of a broader strategy aimed at preventing workers from exercising their rights and emphasized that state-backed trade unions cannot be regarded as genuinely independent workers' organizations.

The work of the Group of the Independent Experts on the human rights situation in Belarus provides important confirmation of the findings long documented by independent trade unions and recognized by the ILO supervisory bodies.

In a joint statement by a group of UN Special Procedures mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, the Special Rapporteur on Belarus, the Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights, and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, expressed alarm at the continuing violations of freedom of association in labour relations in Belarus and explicitly called for the release of all imprisoned trade union leaders and members. They urged the Belarusian authorities to revoke legislation and administrative measures preventing independent trade unions from operating and to cooperate fully with the ILO and its supervisory bodies.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Gholamhossein Hosseininia, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de la República Islámica de Irán.

Government member, Islamic Republic of Iran (Mr HOSSEININIA) – The Islamic Republic of Iran takes this opportunity to express its views on the situation in Belarus. While respecting the Organization's supervisory processes, we believe that the primary propose of these mechanisms should be to support workers and improve labour standards through cooperation and constructive dialogue. Belarus has been a member of this Organization for nearly seven decades, has ratified 51 Conventions and has implemented 10 out of 12 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. These actions demonstrate the country's capacity to engage with the Organization's mechanisms.

The Belarusian Government's strengthened positive approach toward cooperation with the ILO and social partners in addressing outstanding issues is worthy of recognition and deserves to be appropriately welcomed.

The Islamic Republic of Iran calls on the ILO to strengthen its technical cooperation with Belarus for better implementation of the Conventions, thereby creating the conditions for genuine progress in protecting workers' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining. We also emphasize the importance of maintaining space for dialogue and avoiding approaches that may hinder constructive cooperation.

We have always held the conviction that the ILO is free from politicization and the application of double standards, and we hope that the Organization will reinforce this belief by continuing to operate with transparency. We call on all members to work toward fostering genuine, fair and non-discriminatory dialogue in order to achieve world peace through social justice which is the very cornerstone of this Organization.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Yury Varlamov, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Alemania.

Worker member, Germany (Mr VARLAMOV) – I will speak on behalf of the German Trade Union Federation. Trade union work and activities are considered extremist and therefore criminal in Belarus. This means the detainment, exile or both, for those carrying out trade union activities such as Aliaksandr Yarashuk and Gennadiy Fedynich. Decree No. 278 created new hurdles for those in exile, depriving those who are abroad of getting new passports.

For trade unionists such as Maksim Senik, an expired or annulled passport means statelessness or detainment. They are losing legal protection and the possibility to work or travel. In the resolution under article 33 on Belarus, Member States of the ILO are called on to respect the principle of non-refoulement with regard to Belarusian trade unionists. Only if host countries issue documents to replace passports that enable those outside the country to live lives and travel can the strategy of the Lukashenko's regime to weaken civil society be defeated. Annulment of passports is not just a migration law question. It's a clear violation of the Convention and discrimination against trade unionists. The guarantee of a clear legal status for exiled trade unionists is essential in order to take the principle of non-refoulement into account in practice.

So, we call particularly on EU Governments to establish passport replacement papers for exiled trade unionists. At the same time, the possibility for trade unions in Belarus to travel outside the country needs to be provided. In particular humanitarian visas should be provided.

The process for application in the home country or a safe third country, a fast examination and a safe entry into the host country after a positive decision involves a calculatable risk for those affected. So, we call on Governments, in particular those in the European Union, to put together programmes for humanitarian visas and assure swift procedures. Independent trade unionists in the democratic forces in Belarus need protection and support from democratic societies in order to be able to continue their work. Governments in the European Union should show through these actions that they care about freedom of association and democratic values beyond their borders.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Muhammed Hamad Mohammed Ahmed, quien habla en representación del Gobierno del Sudán.

Interprétation de l'arabe: **Membre gouvernemental, Soudan (M. AHMED)** – Nous prenons la parole dans le cadre de l'application par le Bélarus des deux conventions, ainsi que des recommandations de la commission d'enquête.

Nous aimerions affirmer la nécessité de respecter les principes et de ne pas politiser l'Organisation. À cet égard, nous aimerions faire part de notre inquiétude liée à la création de nouveaux mécanismes de contrôle basés sur des positions politiques, ainsi que la proposition actuelle visant à créer un nouveau mécanisme, ce qui va à l'encontre des droits des travailleurs. Nous appelons au dialogue bilatéral régional et aux mécanismes techniques reconnus, et à ne pas adopter de nouveaux mécanismes qui vont à l'encontre de la souveraineté et n'ont rien à voir avec le mandat de l'Organisation.

Nous affirmons que toute politique de deux poids deux mesures ne trouvera pas la solution nécessaire, notamment dans le cadre des circonstances mondiales économiques actuelles. Nous avons besoin d'une solidarité et de rester dans le cadre du mandat de l'OIT.

Cela dit, nous appelons à respecter la souveraineté, le dialogue. Nous appelons au respect du cadre technique de l'OIT, loin de toute instrumentalisation de l'Organisation ou loin de toute création de conflits qui n'ont rien à voir avec son mandat.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Monica Ceremigna, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Italia.

Worker member, Italy (Ms CEREMIGNA) – I speak on behalf of the Italian workers. We wish to draw the Committee's attention to the alarming situation of women trade unionists imprisoned in Belarus for exercising fundamental rights protected by ILO Conventions, including freedom of association and the right of workers to organize. According to the human rights organization "VIASNA", there are currently hundreds of political prisoners in Belarus including more than 100 women, and among them are at least three trade union activists and leaders, Hanna Karneyenka, Volha Brytsikava and Hanna Ablab.

These women have been deprived of their liberty for their legitimate trade union activities, their peaceful civic engagement and their defense of workers' rights. Their cases illustrate the continuing repression faced by independent trade unions in Belarus since 2020 and the systematic dismantling of freedom of association in the country. Hanna Karneyenka, a member of the Free Trade Union of Metal Workers (SPM), was sentenced to five years of imprisonment. Volha Brytsikava, a leader of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union at the Naftan refinery, was sentenced to six years after openly opposing the war in Ukraine and defending trade union rights. Hanna Ablab, a member of the workers' initiative, Rabochy Rukh, and mother of three children, received an 11-year sentence on politically motivated charges.

These women are being held in penal colonies under harsh conditions with restricted access to healthcare, family contacts and basic necessities. Like other prisoners they are compelled to perform labour under conditions that raise serious concern regarding compliance with international labour standards including the prohibition of forced labour. The imprisonment of trade unionists for carrying out legitimate union activities is incompatible with the principles and rights enshrined in the ILO Constitution and the fundamental Conventions ratified by Belarus. This situation creates a climate of fear and intimidation that prevents workers from freely exercising their rights and undermines genuine social dialogue. The Italian trade unions, therefore, urge the Government of Belarus to immediately and unconditionally release all trade unionists detained for exercising their fundamental rights, cease all acts of harassment, intimidation and criminal prosecution against independent trade unions and their members, restore full respect for freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, ensure that all workers can organize and engage in trade union activities without fear of retaliation, cooperate fully with the ILO supervisory mechanism, completely recognize the mandate of the Special Envoy and implement without delay the recommendation of this Committee and other ILO bodies.

The cases of Hanna Karneyenka, Volha Brytsikava and Hanna Ablab remind us that freedom of association cannot exist where trade unionists are imprisoned for defending workers' rights. We express our solidarity with them and with all workers in Belarus who continue to strive for dignity, justice and freedom.

Presidenta – Pasamos la palabra a la Sra. Xiaohang Bai, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de China.

Interpretation from Chinese: **Government member, China (Ms BAI)** – We thank the representative of the Government of Belarus for the detailed information provided. China knows that the Government of Belarus has taken practical measures to safeguard trade union rights and has gradually established a comprehensive legal framework to guarantee citizens' freedom of association. Trade unions in Belarus are able to be established freely and to carry out lawful activities aimed at protecting the rights and interests of workers.

Trade unions and industrial federations in Belarus reportedly have around 4 million members covering all sectors and regions of the country, and the legitimate trade union rights of citizens are respected. At the same time, the Government of Belarus attaches importance to the role and status of the ILO and fulfils its obligations under ratified Conventions. China's position on this case has always been consistent and clear. As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the ILO should fully respect the basic principles of international law and international relations established in the Charter of the United Nations, including sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs. Article 33 of the ILO Constitution represents the most serious supervisory and enforcement mechanisms and presupposes a refusal by a Member State to implement the recommendations of a Commission of Inquiry. We should ensure the uniform and equal application of international law, including the Constitution of the ILO and should not expand interpretations arbitrarily or misuse such mechanisms. In conclusion, China calls on this Committee and the tripartite constituents of the ILO to fully respect the sovereignty of Belarus and assess its social situation and compliance in a comprehensive, objective and impartial manner.

We encourage all parties to listen carefully to the views of the Government of Belarus and we expect the ILO Office to continue playing a constructive role in safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of workers and employers in Belarus and in promoting the country's economic and social development.

Presidenta – Pasamos la palabra al Sr. Davji Ouma ATELLAH, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Kenya.

Worker member, Kenya (Mr ATELLAH) – Chairperson and members of the Committee, I stand before you today on behalf of Kenyan workers and Public Service International affiliates in Africa and Arab countries. I speak to voice our profound condemnation of the systemic destruction of independent trade unions and basic human rights in Belarus. Since 2020, the Belarusian regime has carried out a considerable campaign of terror against its own workforce. Hundreds of activists have been arbitrarily arrested.

Today, out of hundreds of political prisoners, at least 20 of our trade union comrades remain behind bars. They have been absurdly labelled by the State as extremists and terrorists simply for defending the fundamental rights of workers. As a medical professional, I must draw the Committee's urgent attention to the harrowing case of Dr Ruslan Badamshyn. He is a prominent neurologist, a brilliant specialist and a man who dedicated his career to sharing his vast knowledge and mentoring young doctors. In a rational society, common sense dictates that highly skilled medical professionals are protected.

Society needs them to heal the sick and save lives. Yet by imprisoning Dr Badamshyn, the Belarusian State has chosen State repression over public health. They have chosen to leave patients without their doctors. They have left the entire system completely deprived

of scarce vital expertise. Dr Badamshyn's unwavering commitment made him the target of relentless escalating judicial vendetta.

First, he faced administrative harassment, being detained at least five times. The State was not satisfied. The regime then escalated the pressure sentencing him to three years of house arrest. Again, the State was not satisfied. In June 2025, he was rearrested under weaponized anti-extreme laws.

Again, the State was not satisfied. In early 2026, the court handed down a devastating sentence, two and a half years of imprisonment in a harsh, general-regime penal colony. To seal his fate, the regime officially branded this dedicated doctor as both an extremist and a terrorist. His ordeal represents a terrifying pattern of repeated criminal prosecution. In Belarus, serving your term is no longer enough.

The State continuously manufactured new overlapping charges to ensure independent voices remain silenced behind stone walls forever. Furthermore, over 50 leaders who have completed their sentences continue to live in suffocating, repressive State restrictions that strip them of their livelihood, their dignity and their citizenship. The ILO cannot and must not allow this blatant violation to continue with impunity. We call upon the Committee to take a definitive stand and demand the immediate and unconditional release of Dr Ruslan Badamshyn and all imprisoned unionists in Belarus, an immediate end to the judicial harassment, repeated prosecution and weaponized designations, that the Belarusian authorities fully restore the rights of independent trade unions. Dr Badamshyn knew the immense risk of standing up to tyranny. Yet he refused to alter his conviction. And he was ready to die for the trade unions to survive in Belarus. We must match his courage with our collective action today.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Mads Emil Juul Erritso Buur HEISEL, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Dinamarca.

Worker member, Denmark (Mr HEISEL) – I will be speaking on behalf of the Nordic Workers. Last year of this Committee, I spoke about the imprisonment of trade unionists in Belarus for performing legitimate trade union activity. Independent trade union activity, that is. While many of our brothers and sisters are still imprisoned, article 33 and political momentum has led to some trade unionists being freed from prison. Being free does not, however, mean regaining freedom in any meaningful sense of the word, not in Belarus at the very least.

Independent trade unionists remain branded by the State as extremists with devastating consequences for their daily lives, their livelihoods and their families. With this stigma branded upon them by the State, the free trade unionists are barred from most work. For example, they cannot perform educational activities, cannot work with children, cannot publish material, cannot hold office, cannot take most jobs in banks, cannot be auditors, nor can they interpret or even be tour guides. Furthermore, it is impossible for these free trade unionists to find employment at any State-owned enterprise. Of course, it is not much different in the private companies either. They will not hire them due to being afraid of State repercussions.

This should be stated plainly for what it is. First, the State destroyed independent trade unions and criminalized independent trade unionism. Then, it imprisoned trade unionists for exercising fundamental rights. And now, it continues to deliberately persecute them through stigma, exclusion and fear. This is against any ethical, moral, just and international standard.

These practices are wholly incompatible with the freedom of association, with the right to organize and with the most basic principles of human dignity. These actions are deliberate

instruments of repression designed to eradicate independent trade unionism and to warn every worker in Belarus of the price of acting independently. This is beyond critique and continued international pressure is not only justified, it should be mandatory as is the application of article 33. Any suggestion that the situation in Belarus can be managed through half measures would be profoundly mistaken. Our message to Belarus and the Government is clear.

All imprisoned trade unions must be released and charges dropped. Independent trade union activity must cease to be treated as a crime. This is the very least our brothers and sisters in Belarus deserve. As a final note, the delegates of Belarus speak of facts and truths, yet at the very same time they have denied access to and dialogue with the Special Envoy of the ILO. If truths and facts need to be hidden from a neutral observer who can assess the objective truth, then maybe there is a reason that Belarus' truth is different from the rest of the world's truth.

Presidenta – Pasamos la palabra al Sr. Saad MUHAMMAD, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores del Pakistán.

Worker member, Pakistan (Mr MUHAMMAD) – I am speaking on behalf of the trade unions from the Asia-Pacific region. We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing and serious violation of freedom of association in Belarus and we express our full solidarity with Belarusian workers and independent trade unions. Convention No. 87 is one of the ILO's fundamental Conventions. It guarantees workers the right to establish and join organizations of their own choosing and to carry out trade union activities free from any interference by the authorities.

However, the situation in Belarus demonstrates a systematic failure to comply with these obligations. Following the liquidation of independent trade unions, there are no longer any genuine workers' organizations in Belarus capable of independently representing and defending workers' interests. Workers have effectively been deprived of their right to establish organization of their own choosing or to join independent unions without fear of retaliation. Today, at least 20 trade union leaders and activists remain imprisoned. In addition, 54 representatives of the independent trade union movement have been designated as so-called "extremists", while 11 have been placed on the authorities' list of terrorists.

These measures have been imposed on individuals whose only offence was engaging in legitimate trade union activities and defending workers' rights. In this context, statements by the so-called "Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus" regarding successful social dialogue, the number of collective agreements concluded or the effective representation of workers cannot be regarded as evidence of compliance with the Convention. There can be no genuine social dialogue where independent trade unions have been dismantled. Collective agreements cannot serve as proof of freedom of association while trade union leaders remain behind bars. It is impossible to speak of freedom of association when workers are denied the right to establish and join independent organizations of their own choosing.

The Asia-Pacific region knows well that sustainable development, social stability and inclusive economic growth are impossible without free and independent trade unions. For this reason, we view the situation in Belarus as a serious challenge to the international system of labour standards. We call on the Government of Belarus to implement without further delay the recommendation of the ILO supervisory bodies to: release all imprisoned trade union leaders and activists, end the persecution of the independent trade union

movement, restore the conditions necessary for the free functioning of trade unions and ensure full compliance with the Convention. Belarusian workers deserve the same rights as workers everywhere, the right to organize freely, to be represented by organizations of their own choosing and to defend their interests without fear of intimidation, persecution or imprisonment.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Yoliangel Rivas Orta, quien habla en representación de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela.

Miembro gubernamental, República Bolivariana de Venezuela (Sra. RIVAS ORTA) – La República Bolivariana de Venezuela refirma su firme compromiso con los principios del diálogo social, el tripartismo y la cooperación internacional genuina que constituyen pilares fundamentales del mandato de esta Organización. En este contexto, Venezuela toma nota de la disposición manifestada por el Gobierno de la República de Belarús, para continuar manteniendo el diálogo con la OIT y con los interlocutores sociales nacionales, en relación con la aplicación de los Convenios.

Se considera esencial que los mecanismos de supervisión de la Organización se conduzcan de manera objetiva, imparcial, transparente y no selectiva, evitando cualquier forma de instrumentalización política, que pueda desvirtuar el espíritu de cooperación, asistencia técnica y diálogo constructivo que debe prevalecer en el seno de esta Organización.

Asimismo, Venezuela reconoce la importancia de preservar los principios de soberanía, no injerencia en los asuntos internos y respeto a las particularidades nacionales, así como el derecho soberano de los Estados a desarrollar sus políticas sociales y laborales, de conformidad con sus realidades, prioridades y marcos jurídicos nacionales, en consonancia con sus obligaciones internacionales.

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela reitera que las soluciones sostenibles y duraderas solo pueden construirse sobre la base del respeto mutuo, el diálogo constructivo y la cooperación técnica despolitizada, con la participación plena y efectiva de los Gobiernos y de los interlocutores sociales legítimamente constituidos. En tal sentido, consideramos fundamental privilegiar el entendimiento entre las partes, el fortalecimiento de capacidades y el acompañamiento técnico, por encima de enfoques confrontacionales o medidas que puedan profundizar divisiones.

Finalmente, Venezuela expresa su disposición a continuar apoyando iniciativas orientadas a fortalecer el diálogo social, la promoción y protección de los derechos de los trabajadores, así como la preservación del carácter inclusivo, equilibrado y no politizado, de la OIT.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Azat Matenov, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de Kazajstán.

Government member, Kazakhstan (Mr MATENOV) – Kazakhstan recognizes the long-standing engagement of Belarus with the ILO and its stated commitment to uphold social and labour standards, including efforts to strengthen a tripartite partnership system. We further note the implementation provided by the Government of Belarus on measures undertaken to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, as well as its openness to dialogue with social partners and the ILO, evidenced by past cooperation with ILO missions and technical projects. Regarding the conclusions by ILO supervisory bodies on the importance of full implementation of the Conventions, we believe it is key to enhance constructive engagement between the Government and the ILO to address these matters collaboratively. We also encourage sustained efforts to align national legislation and practice with

international labour standards and highlight the importance of inclusive and meaningful dialogue among all stakeholders.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Tristan Chevalier quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Francia.

Membre travailleur, France (M. CHEVALIER) – Le démantèlement des syndicats indépendants au Bélarus n’a pas seulement privé des milliers de travailleuses et de travailleurs de leur droit fondamental à s’organiser. Il a profondément dégradé l’ensemble des relations de travail dans le pays.

Lorsque les syndicats indépendants sont dissous, lorsque les syndicalistes indépendants sont réduits au silence, emprisonnés ou contraints à l’exil, il ne reste plus aucun contre-pouvoir capable de défendre les droits des travailleurs. L’arbitraire s’installe et la coercition devient la règle. Aujourd’hui, au Bélarus, tout le système des relations professionnelles est à la dérive.

- Des personnes considérées comme « aptes au travail » mais jugées insuffisamment actives sont visées par les sanctions financières. Au lieu de s’attaquer aux causes économiques et sociales du chômage et de l’exclusion, les pouvoirs publics choisissent de punir les individus.
- Les centres dits de « traitement par le travail » (LTP) constituent une autre source majeure de préoccupation. Placés sous l’autorité du ministère de l’Intérieur et non du ministère de la Santé, ces établissements fonctionnent comme des institutions de détention fermées. L’objectif affiché de réhabilitation s’efface derrière l’obligation de travailler dans des conditions précaires, sans aucun contrat de travail et sous contrainte.
- La situation des personnes handicapées vivant dans des institutions spécialisées soulève également de graves interrogations. Des milliers de résidents participent à des activités productives présentées comme de la « thérapie par le travail » ou de la « réadaptation ». Pourtant, ces activités prennent souvent la forme de travaux agricoles, d’entretien, de menuiserie ou de services domestiques réalisés dans des établissements fermés, sans contrat de travail, sans protection syndicale, sans garanties salariales.
- Les personnes condamnées pour avoir exercé pacifiquement leurs libertés d’expression et d’association sont soumises à un régime discriminatoire dans les établissements pénitentiaires. Elles sont contraintes de porter une étiquette jaune permettant de les distinguer des autres détenus. Elles sont affectées aux travaux les plus pénibles, les plus dégradants et les moins rémunérés. Ainsi, des personnes emprisonnées pour avoir exercé des droits fondamentaux subissent une double peine: la privation de liberté et des conditions de travail aggravées.

Face à cette situation, notre message demeure inchangé.

Année après année, réunis ici dans l’enceinte de l’OIT, nous n’avons cessé d’affirmer que seul le respect des libertés syndicales peut garantir les travailleuses et les travailleurs contre l’arbitraire et l’exploitation.

Les libertés syndicales sont la clé de voûte de tout système de relations professionnelles visant à garantir la justice et la dignité. Là où elles sont respectées, les abus peuvent être dénoncés. Là où elles sont détruites, toutes les autres protections finissent par s’effondrer.

Presidenta - Pasamos la palabra a la Sra. Zuhura Abdallah Yunus, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de la República Unida de Tanzania.

Government member, United Republic of Tanzania (Ms YUNUS) – The United Republic of Tanzania welcomes the information submitted by the Government of Belarus on requesting

the ILO bodies to accept and give due consideration to Belarus' version of the facts regarding the allegations of violations of the Conventions and the implementation of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendation. We take note of the information provided regarding the implementation of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendations and engagement with ILO supervisory mechanisms. The call by the Government of Belarus on all ILO tripartite constituents and the Committee to pay due attention to the information submitted is worthy of consideration and given the weight it deserves. The United Republic of Tanzania believes that constructive dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation remain the most effective means of addressing concerns related to implementation of international labour standards. We encourage objective and balanced discussions that give due consideration to the information submitted by Belarus.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores del Brasil.

Miembro trabajador, Brasil (Sr. RODRIGUES) – Señora Presidenta, delegados y delegadas, hablo en nombre de la Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) y de las demás centrales sindicales brasileñas para expresar nuestra preocupación ante las graves violaciones imputadas a Belarús en lo que respecta a la aplicación de los Convenios núms. 87 y 98, y al cumplimiento de las obligaciones de rendir cuentas ante el sistema de control de normas.

Es inaceptable, que incluso tras innumerables alertas y recomendaciones, el Gobierno siga incumpliendo las obligaciones fundamentales de la libertad sindical, así como la presentación de informaciones de manera oportuna y transparente. La libertad sindical es un derecho esencial para la defensa de los intereses de la clase trabajadora y la concepción de mejores condiciones de vida. La información recopilada a lo largo de los años indica, sin embargo, que los trabajadores y trabajadoras sufren represalias, ataques y restricciones a su organización colectiva, además de la ausencia de un diálogo social efectivo. Esta situación compromete gravemente el ejercicio de los derechos fundamentales y la justicia social, pilares indispensables para la paz y el desarrollo sostenible.

Los Convenios núms. 87 y 98, no son solo un conjunto de normas, sino la garantía de la autonomía, independencia de las organizaciones de trabajadores y de empleadores, un espacio que permite la defensa colectiva, la negociación y la búsqueda de la justicia social. Es mediante el cumplimiento riguroso de estas normas, supervisado por el sistema de control de la OIT, que es posible el verdadero progreso social.

Destacamos, en ese sentido, que el sistema de control de normas es una herramienta crucial para garantizar la aplicación efectiva de las normas internacionales del trabajo. Su funcionamiento depende del compromiso firme e íntegro de los Gobiernos de respetar y aplicar las recomendaciones, lo que incluye la labor del enviado especial de la OIT.

Conviene destacar el papel fundamental del enviado especial de la OIT que actúa como puente entre el Gobierno, los interlocutores sociales y la Organización, facilitando el diálogo social y la cooperación necesaria para superar los desafíos y avanzar en la implementación de las normas internacionales. Por ello, hacemos un llamamiento urgente para que el Gobierno de Belarús se comprometa con los procedimientos establecidos, abriéndose a un diálogo social constructivo y que solo así, será posible promover avances reales y duraderos para la población trabajadora.

Creemos, firmemente, que solo con un diálogo social abierto, respetuoso y constructivo, será posible avanzar en la superación de los desafíos actuales y restablecer el pleno respeto de los derechos fundamentales de la clase trabajadora. La OIT debe reafirmar su papel como

guardiana de los derechos fundamentales y como espacio de búsqueda de soluciones que promuevan el trabajo decente para todos.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Clemence Zondile Vusani, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de Zimbabwe.

Government member, Zimbabwe (Mr VUSANI) – The Government of Zimbabwe takes note of the report provided by the Republic of Belarus and has followed past and present discussions very closely. We acknowledge the recent affirmation by the Republic of Belarus of its dedication to uphold fundamental principles and rights at work. This commitment is not merely a statement but a call for constructive dialogue that respects the realities and sovereign interests of the Republic of Belarus. The Government of Belarus has expressed its willingness to engage with the Office to foster a more inclusive approach and implementation of the international labour standards.

This presents an opportunity for all stakeholders to come together and find common ground. However, this dialogue must be rooted in mutual respect and understanding of Belarus' national context. The challenges they face require all partners including the ILO supervisory bodies to take a balanced approach to overcome. Consideration of realities on the ground must be met. We therefore encourage the Government of Belarus and the social partners to engage in constructive social dialogue and at the same time urge the ILO supervisory bodies to remain steadfast in their commitment to objectivity and neutrality while remaining alive to geopolitics at play.

It is imperative that the ILO should continue to assist the Republic of Belarus and its social partners in their journey towards strengthening freedom of association. In conclusion, the Government of Zimbabwe reiterates that fundamental principles and rights at work are important. Hence, a collaborative approach that upholds the labour rights reinforces the fundamental principles of social justice and retains the sovereignty of the Member States becomes imperative. We therefore call upon this Committee in its concluding observations and recommendations to emphasize on engagement and the ILO technical assistance to Belarus' tripartite partners on a pragmatic, nonpartisan and nonpolitical basis to allow implementation of outstanding recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.

Presidenta – Pasamos del uso de la palabra al Sr. Yury Ravavoi, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Polonia.

Worker member, Poland (Mr RAVAVOI) – I speak on behalf of Polish workers unionized in the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union (NSZZ) "Solidarnosc". I don't stand here as an observer. I speak as someone who has personally experienced what happens when workers attempt to exercise their right to organize independently in Belarus. Before joining Solidarnosc, I spent seven years as an operator at the nitrogen fertilizer chemical plant, one of the largest industrial enterprises in Belarus, employing around 10,000 workers. In 2020, I became the target of a fabricated criminal prosecution.

Following an attempted arrest, I escaped to Poland. The Polish authorities examined my case and recognized the charges as purely political, then granted me refugee status. In this regard, we call on the international community and all Member States to strictly respect the principle of non-refoulement for trade union leaders and activists in accordance with the 2023 ILO resolution on Belarus. I was able to rebuild my life, but many of my former colleagues were not so fortunate. Today, the trade unions in Belarus no longer exist.

They have been falsely liquidated. Their activists have been jailed, forced into exile or silenced. At the same time, the State-controlled FPB continues to present itself as a

representative of Belarusian workers. However, public records prove that the leadership of the FPB and its sectoral unions is increasingly drawn from former senior of the State's repressive apparatus. This is a direct incorporation of State control into trade union structures.

The lieutenant colonel who is sitting in this very room today as part of Belarusian workers' delegation headed one of the district prosecutor's office. He was dismissed by the prosecutor general for indifference to human misery. Despite this disgraceful record, he later transitioned into the Grodno Regional Police Department, rising to the rank of a police lieutenant colonel. By January 2022, this former law enforcement officer was installed as a top manager and the head of the legal department at my former chemical plant where he joined one of eight management-run information and propaganda groups tasked with enforcing ideological control over workers. A few months after the lieutenant colonel arrived, the Chairman of our independent trade union, Andrei Khanevich, was detained and sentenced to five years in prison simply for giving an interview about the plant's problems.

The union office was bugged, and our organization was immediately liquidated. As a result, we arrived at a deeply troubling reality. The very individuals who enforce State repression over Belarusian workers are presented internationally as their representatives. This situation is not merely an internal Belarusian matter. It is a direct assault on the integrity of this Organization.

By accepting these "representatives", we compromise its credibility and erode the essential principles of association that we all want to uphold.

Presidenta - Ahora para mí es un honor dar la palabra a quien fuera Presidente de la Comisión el año pasado, el Sr. Belgacem Tabai, representante gubernamental de Argelia.

Membre gouvernemental, Algérie (M. TABAI) – Nous avons écouté avec attention la déclaration du gouvernement indiquant qu'il accorde toute l'attention voulue aux observations et recommandations des organes de contrôle de l'OIT.

La délégation algérienne salue les mesures significatives que le gouvernement a prises, notamment en tenant compte des recommandations de la commission d'enquête instituée en vertu de l'article 26 de la Constitution de l'OIT.

L'Algérie encourage le gouvernement à poursuivre ses efforts et à collaborer avec le Bureau en vue de mettre en œuvres les recommandations de la commission d'enquête.

L'Algérie prône vivement le maintien d'un dialogue ouvert entre le Bélarus et les organes compétents de l'OIT afin d'aboutir à une compréhension mutuelle des préoccupations exprimées, dans un esprit de collaboration et de respect mutuel.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Tjalling Postma, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de los Países Bajos.

Worker member, Kingdom of the Netherlands (Mr POSTMA) – Workplaces in Belarus have become prime locations for arrests. Detentions occur daily at workplaces across the country whether in state-owned, private or foreign owned companies. Employees may be arrested by special units of armed officers and treated as criminals for activities such as subscribing to independent news channels, liking a social media post appearing in photographs from the 2020 protests, donating to civil society initiatives, supporting human rights defenders or standing by families of political prisoners. Pressure and intimidations are widespread in workplaces throughout the country.

Ideological departments operate in all state-owned enterprises to monitor employees' loyalty to the state. These structures are integrated into company management and human

resource department. Short-term employment contracts which have been widely used in Belarus for nearly 20 years continue to serve as an instrument for keeping employees in constant fear of losing their jobs. At a well-known state enterprise in Grodno lie detector tests are reportedly used systematically in this context, both during the recruitment process and when employment contracts are renewed. It remains unclear whether representatives of state-controlled trade unions are subjected to the same treatment.

There is also evidence that polygraph testing is used at other state-owned enterprises. In addition, job applicants are required to provide a reference from their previous employer with perceived loyalty playing a significant role in hiring decisions. At the same time, unofficial blacklists of these loyal citizens reportedly exist preventing certain individuals from obtaining employment.

What once was associated only with state-owned enterprises has now become legally permissible for private businesses as well. Private companies with more than 600 employees are required by the state to employ ideological managers who are appointed by local authorities. Given that commercial activities of European Union companies continue to take place in Belarus, the existence of such ideological control mechanisms requires careful consideration within the framework of corporate due diligence obligations. From what we know, we can conclude that the climate of Belarusian labour relations is hostile to both employees and businesses.

The absence of freedom of association creates this atmosphere. We call on the Government to engage in genuine communication with the ILO through the Special Envoy to fulfil its recommendations and to stop repression in Belarus.

Presidenta – Me disculpo por haberlo interrumpido. Pasa ahora el uso de la palabra al Sr. Mohamed Ali Emhemed Rwaiha, quien habla en representación de los trabajadores de Libia.

Interpretation from Arabic: **Worker member, Libya (Mr RWAIHA)** – I have the honour to participate in this discussion and the delegation of the Libyan Workers Union would like to express its appreciation for the important role played by the ILO in promoting social justice and consolidating the principles of decent work in the world. The organization has been and will remain a platform for dialogue and cooperation between Governments, Employers and Workers contributing to the protection of rights and also strengthening stability and development. With regard to ongoing discussion over Belarus, we consider that we have to give due attention to what the Government is saying and to take into account the views of trade unions that represent workers on the ground. In this context, we would like to say that the union represent the union of Belarus represent millions of workers and we have to commend its efforts to defend their economic and social interests.

We also value all initiatives and efforts aimed at reinforcing the welfare of workers and achieving their professional and social stability. Wherever they are, workers need to be heard and their aspirations and interests need to be taken into account. The Libyan workers' delegation affirms its support for all the efforts aimed at strengthening dialogue and cooperation based on the principle upon which the ILO has been founded. We would like to express our solidarity with workers of Belarus and we appreciate what they are doing in serving their country, economy and society and look forward to these discussions leading to strengthening trust and achieving more prosperity and progress for all workers.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Selbi Muhammedova, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de Turkmenistán.

Government member, Turkmenistan (Ms MUHAMMEDOVA) – Turkmenistan welcomes the distinguished delegation of the Republic of Belarus and expresses appreciation for the information provided on the issues under consideration by the Committee. In the practice of the ILO, particular importance is attached to the constructive engagement between Governments and the supervisory bodies, including technical dialogue, the exchange of information, and the gradual advance on issues of concern. Such an approach helps to ensure more sustainable and long-term results. In this context, Turkmenistan notes the importance of continuing engagement between the Government of Belarus and the relevant ILO mechanisms on the issues under consideration in accordance with the principles of dialogue and cooperation.

We are convinced that consistent and constructive engagement among all stakeholders remains a key condition for further progress.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Aung Khaing Zar, representante de los trabajadores de Myanmar, quien hablará por intermedio de la Confederación Sindical Internacional (CSI).

Observer, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) (Ms KHAING ZAR) – I speak on behalf of the workers of Myanmar and the Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar (CTUM). We express our solidarity with the independent trade union movement of Belarus and with all trade unionists who continue to defend workers' rights despite repression, imprisonment and exile. Workers in Belarus and Myanmar face many of the same challenges. Both countries are subject to article 33 measures due to persistent and serious violations of fundamental labour rights. Workers continued to face repression while independent trade unions remain denied their fundamental rights.

In Belarus, independent trade unions have been dissolved. Their leaders imprisoned and activists forced into exile. In Myanmar, since the military coup of 2021, trade union leaders and members have faced arrest, imprisonment, violence, false displacement, exile and revocation of citizenship. These are not isolated incidents. They reflect a broader pattern in which the authority of Belarus and the Myanmar military authorities pursue similar policies of suppressing independent trade unions, silencing independent worker voices in promoting substitute organizations that do not represent workers' free choice.

Workers in Myanmar understand that when independent trade unions are dismantled there can be no genuine social dialogue, no meaningful collective bargaining and no respect for freedom of association. We are also concerned by the growing cooperation between the authority of Belarus and the Myanmar military authorities at a time when both remain subject to serious criticism by the ILO for violation of worker rights and freedom of association. The international community must not allow such repression to become normalized. We therefore call on the Government of Belarus to release imprisoned trade unionists, restore freedom of association and fully implement the recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies. Finally, we call on Governments, employers' and workers' organizations to move beyond expressions of concern and ensure the effective implementation of article 33 measures and ILO Recommendations.

Workers in Belarus and Myanmar deserve freedom, justice, dignity and the right to organize without fear.

Presidenta - Pasamos el uso de la palabra a la Sra. Asmaa Sedik, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de Egipto.

Interpretation from Arabic: **Government member, Egypt (Ms SEDIK)** – The Arab Republic of Egypt expresses its appreciation for the efforts made by the Committee of Experts in preparing the annual report submitted to the Committee. We thank the secretariat for the excellent preparation of this session.

The delegation of Egypt took note of the information provided by the Government of Belarus as well as the observations and recommendations of the Committee of Experts and the Committee on Freedom of Association. We took also note of the decisions of the Governing Body and the Conference and what the Government of Belarus said in terms of the implementation of those decisions and the implementation of the recommendations by the Committee of Inquiry. The delegation of Egypt would like to reaffirm its position on the importance of supporting efforts aimed at strengthening compliance with international labour standards. The organization should continue to play its leading role in supporting national efforts to promote the application of international labour standards and also to promote the technical assistance provided to Member States and respond to the challenges that the States may face in relation to the implementation of those standards. In line with the above, Egypt considers it's important to continue the constructive dialogue between the Government of Belarus and the ILO as the best way to implement the recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry and ensure compliance with the international labour standards and the obligations arising from the Convention.

Presidenta - Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Nazar Khan Shah, quien habla en representación del Gobierno del Pakistán.

Government member, Pakistan (Mr KHAN) – Pakistan acknowledges the continued engagement of Belarus with the ILO and takes note of the measures undertaken to implement the recommendations of the supervisory mechanism. We believe that constructive dialogue, cooperation and technical engagement remain the most effective means to address outstanding issues related to international labour standards. Pakistan further encourages continued engagement within the supervisory framework of the ILO and considers dialogue-based approaches preferable to measures under article 33 of the ILO Constitution. Pakistan also underscores the importance of respecting the principles of national sovereignty and mutual cooperation in resolving differences.

Presidenta - Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Anton Markovskii, quien habla en representación del Gobierno de la Federación de Rusia.

Interpretation from Russian: **Government member, Russian Federation (Mr MARKOVSKII)** – We have listened closely to the statements of the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Belarus and have also looked closely at its written submissions.

We fully share the points made with regard to this special sitting and the relation to the Belarusian case as part of the ILO's work in its supervisory bodies and governing bodies. Traditionally, the Republic of Belarus has been committed to workers' rights, providing social support to workers and their families and strengthening social dialogue. The indicators that reflect this are well known. There is effective social partnership in the country based on the core standards of the ILO. Regular negotiations take place between all social partners.

Representatives of the trade union movements and also the associations of employers take active part in the legislative process which allows them to directly influence the formation of policy in the social and labour sphere. In this context, we can only express deep regret and disappointment with the anti-Belarusian campaign taking place in the ILO. The Government has implemented all of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry of 2004, excluding

the politicized ones on the release of the so-called trade union activists and the revocation of a number of laws relating to carrying out mass events and foreign financing. We will not tire of speaking that these recommendations are inappropriate. Firstly, they go beyond the mandate of the ILO.

Secondly, they clearly bear the hallmark of interference in domestic affairs of a sovereign State, Belarus, for the benefit of barely concealed interests of a narrow group of outside interests and foreign States. We will also not tire of stating that individuals whose release or restitution of rights is so actively sought by the supervisory bodies have been sentenced on the basis not of their trade union activities, but rather they were convicted for common criminal acts in full accordance with the law of the Republic of Belarus, as the committed acts had nothing to do with the protection of workers' rights but were externally controlled by political activism. Belonging to political activist groups, which for some reason in the ILO documents are referred to as trade union figures, does not release them from criminal responsibility. The ulterior political motives taking place here are clear in vilifying Belarus. Under such conditions, we could not accept any anti-Belarusian measures which might have already been proposed or might arise from today's session.

We would once again have to support a motion to put to vote any such conclusions coming out of the Committee in its discussion of the case of Belarus.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Kemal Ozkan, quien habla en representación de IndustriALL.

Observer, IndustriALL Global Union (Mr ÖZKAN) – I take the floor on behalf of the IndustriALL Global Union representing more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors throughout the world. Today we have listened to the three representatives of the official delegation of Belarus and they describe the situation as perfect. This is not representing the reality. The reality is that the Belarusian workers are voiceless and the workers' leaders, trade union activists are in prison right now in the conditions that endanger their lives.

Let me name some of them. Vatslau Areshka, 71 years old newspaper editor of our affiliate, trade union rep in prison since April 2022 sentenced to eight years for publishing information about workers' rights. In detention his eyesight has deteriorated to near total blindness. He cannot read. He cannot write. He navigates his cell by touch and has repeatedly fallen, sustaining injuries that go untreated. This is not an allegation. This is a documented fact, reality. He is not alone. Andrei Khanevich, Chairperson of the Belarussian Independent Trade Union (BNP) at the chemical factory in Grodno. Volha Brytsikava, BNP Chairperson at oil processing plant in Novopolotsk. Hanna Karneenka, member of the SPM at Minsk mechanical plant. Nineteen trade unionists remain behind bars. Over 50 remain under criminal prosecution. What are their crimes?

Publishing union news, organizing workers, defending workers' rights? Exercising their rights guaranteed by the Conventions? The Government of Belarus has criminalized making contact with independent unions. And the Government has forcibly dissolved all industrial affiliates – the Radio and Electronics Industry Workers' Union (REP), BNP, SPM – leaving workers without representation and forcing them to the mercy of the State. The Government has confiscated the passports of released leaders Aliaksandr Yarashuk and Hennadz Fiadynich and they have refused to accept the ILO Special Envoy.

We believe that the case is very much clear. We expect and call on the Committee to draw the necessary conclusions about the continued non-compliance of the Government of Belarus

and to ensure the principle of near fulfilment is respected for Belarusian trade unionists in exile. The path forward is clear. The Committee has shown the way. Now it is for the Government of Belarus to act, to release the workers, to cooperate and to comply with recommendations.

Presidenta – Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Kirill Buketov, quien habla en representación de la Organización Sindical Mundial Alimentaria Agrícola Hotelera y Más.

Observer, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) Public Services International (PSI), Building and Woodworkers' International (BWI) (Mr BUKETOV) – I am speaking on behalf of three global unions, the IUF, PSI and BWI. This Committee has been working for 100 years and for a quarter of that century it has been dealing with the case of Belarus. This is indeed a remarkable achievement of the Government, one that will go down in history alongside an unprecedented number of trade union activists in prison and the cruelty with which they have been treated. What began as interference in trade union affairs has escalated into systematic repression, including mass arrests and the complete dismantling of independent trade unions.

Their offices have been raided and their leaders, including Aliaksandr Yarashuk, a member of the Governing Body, were arrested and subjected to ill treatment and torture. Many of them remain in prison today and are kept under inhuman conditions. Over these years the ILO has offered the Government of Belarus numerous opportunities and pathways to return to compliance with the rule of law in the field of labour rights. These efforts have been ignored or rejected. Arrests have continued while intimidation and repression have become systematic.

These reprisals have affected not only those who remained in the country but also those who sought to engage with the international community and the ILO. The United Nations Secretary-General submitted to the UN Human Rights Council his report on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights. The report referred to the case of Maksim Pazniakou, one of the leaders of the BKDP, who was charged in absentia for public calls for actions allegedly harmful to national security. According to information of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the legal proceedings against Maksim Pazniakou, as well as ongoing harassment of his relatives in Belarus appear to be directly linked to his cooperation with the ILO. State officials reportedly visited his 75-year-old mother causing her significant emotional distress.

In its response reflected in the report, the Government of Belarus stated that this criminal prosecution related to the alleged cooperation of Maksim with an extremist group and to his interaction with the United Nations, and in particular with the ILO. The Government further noted that the questioning of relatives was a standard investigative practice. We know indeed this is a well-established practice in Belarus, to visit relatives of those who are attending international meetings. This case speaks for itself. The Government of Belarus is demonstrating not merely a disregard for the ILO but a deliberate attempt to undermine the Organization by threatening and intimidating those people who engage with its mechanisms.

Such actions constitute an attack on the very functioning of the UN. They also place the credibility and authority of the ILO at stake. We deeply regret the unchanged position of the Belarusian Government. We call upon the ILO to continue strengthening enforcement measures under article 33. Once again, we call on the Government of Belarus to immediately and unconditionally release all detained trade unionists.

Finally, we request the ILO to provide the Special Envoy with all necessary assistance and adequate human, technical and financial resources to enable the effective fulfilment of the mandate.

Presidenta – Vamos a dar uso de la palabra al último orador de esta mañana, el Sr. Aliaksandr Yarashuk, quien habla en representación de la Confederación Sindical Internacional.

Interpretation from Russian: **Observer, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) (Mr YARASHUK)** – Distinguished colleagues, I wish to express gratitude to all those who fought for my release. Thanks to you it was possible. Huge thanks to you. I think it is not necessary to talk about the legality of my detention, the torture and violence.

We have been continually insisting on the release of all of our friends who have been detained and are still detained, including Vatslau Areshka who lost his sight. Nobody should be prosecuted for trade union activity. Nobody should be imprisoned for this or proclaimed an extremist. Nobody should be imprisoned for protesting against the war. Nobody should be subjected to forced deportation with stripping of their civil rights.

I call upon workers to bear in mind that in Belarus, both workers and business have been stripped of their freedom of association, with companies obliged to set up state trade unions and are obliged to include on their payroll those who are pushing ideology. This cannot be considered normal. I call upon Governments not to follow the example of the Belarusian authorities who are turning workers into people without rights. If you go down that road, your statements on decent work will be empty words. Like the Belarusian authorities, you will not be able to make your country a prosperous one, nor will workers' lives be decent.

Returning to this august house, I am filled with resolve to continue the fight to return the rights stripped of Belarusian workers. First and foremost, the right to freedom of association, bearing in mind that the actions of the Belarusian Government as part of the violation of international law pose a threat to the ILO itself, and yet the effective operation of the ILO is more important than ever before. We, governments, workers and employers can preserve the ability to achieve social dialogue, reach agreement and social partnership. We need to respect international labour standards, taking a hard line against actions of governments which, like those of Belarus, seek to turn the world of labour, social dialogue and social partnership into a world where lawlessness, violence and tyranny reign.

Presidenta – Muchas gracias a todos los oradores. Quisiera mencionar que teniendo en cuenta la hora vamos a hacer el corte para el almuerzo y volvemos a las 15 horas. Buen provecho a todos.

Se levantó la sesión a las 13.15 horas.

The sitting closed at 1.15 a.m.

La séance est levée à 13 h 15.

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Decimocuarta sesión, 6 de junio de 2026, 15.08 horas
Fourteenth sitting, 6 June 2026, 15.08 p.m.
Quatorzième séance, 6 juin 2026, 15 h 08

Presidenta: Sra. López
Chairperson: Ms López
Présidente: M^{me} López

Sesión especial – Belarús (cont.)
Special sitting – Belarus (cont.)
Séance spéciale – Belarús (suite)

Presidenta – Señoras y señores buenas tardes a todos.

Tenemos un anuncio antes de continuar con nuestras labores. Les deseo informar que los proyectos de PV *verbatim* relativos a la discusión del caso de Libia sobre el Convenio núm. 105 y del caso de Nigeria sobre el Convenio núm. 98 están disponibles en la página web de nuestra Comisión.

Los miembros de la Comisión pueden presentar enmiendas a sus propias intervenciones en estos proyectos de PV *verbatim* ante la secretaría de la Comisión hasta el lunes 8 de junio a las 10 horas. Les invito a leer el anexo III del documento D.1 sobre el procedimiento de enmienda a los proyectos de actas literales.

Me gustaría también informarles que el plazo para la presentación de enmienda de los PV *verbatim* relativos a los casos de la Argentina sobre los Convenios núms. 81, 129 y 150 y del caso de Yemen sobre el Convenio núm. 87 se terminó. Por lo tanto los PV se adoptan con las respectivas enmiendas.

Ahora vamos a continuar con la discusión del caso Belarús. Invito al representante gubernamental de Belarús, el Sr. Aleh Takun, Viceministro de Trabajo y Protección Social a que formule sus conclusiones.

Interpretation from Belarusian: Government representative (Mr TAKUN) – Dear Madam Chairperson, thank you for the opportunity to speak following the discussion. On behalf of the Government, I thank everyone who understands the true reasons behind the anti-Belarusian campaign and supports Belarus. We greatly appreciate it. Your support shows that there are forces that oppose the politicization of the ILO and its involvement in pressuring countries for far-fetched reasons. We believe that the more ILO Members understand the groundlessness of anti-Belarusian decisions, the greater the chance the ILO will ultimately avoid becoming a platform for settling geopolitical scores.

Despite clarifications about the actual state of affairs in the country, the opponents of Belarus are not changing their rhetoric. They persistently repeat false claims about the suppression of the trade union movement and the failure to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. At the same time, they are not concerned by the fact that the demands are not based on the real situation, do not directly follow from the Conventions and go beyond the mandate of the ILO. We have repeatedly stated that we understand the goals of pressure and the promotion of unjust decisions within the ILO. These are elements of a hybrid war aimed at supporting destructive forces, changing the Government and our foreign policy priorities.

Those who support the resolution on Belarus do not care about the future of the country and its people. The topic of protecting trade union rights has been chosen as a tool for manipulation and discrediting the Belarusian State. This is precisely why they do not want to hear us. This is precisely why false narratives about Belarus continue to be circulated. Unfortunately, our opponents find it difficult to admit that their efforts are not producing the expected results.

How else can one explain their desire to maintain a confrontation that in fact has a negative impact on themselves and the system of international relations? Do the initiators of the campaign against Belarus really not understand the consequences of their short-sighted policies? Firstly, the use of the ILO for political and economic pressure undermines the authority and foundations of the organization that was created for dialogue and cooperation. The ILO can no longer be considered a neutral international body. It is used as a tool to punish undesirable countries and its decisions are part of the sanctions policy.

Secondly, the unilateral coercive measures against Belarus which western countries report adopting have led to a boomerang effect. The sanctions have had a negative effect on the economies of the countries that supply them. They face disruption of supply chains, interruptions in the supply of raw materials, rising prices for food and fertilizers and losses on the part of investors and businesses. All of this has affected income and standard of living of their population. Is this really the result that we are aiming for?

Is there logic and common sense in such actions? These questions must be answered by the governments of countries that have prioritized pressure on Belarus over cooperation in the interests of their own people. We also do not quite understand the position of the Employers' group. Why did employers in a number of countries initially allow themselves to be misled and support a clearly unfair resolution on Belarus? Why did they do that?

Logically they ought to be interested in stability in supplying and protecting supply chains. Since the breakdown of economic ties can lead to financial damage, loss of market share, business closures, et cetera, in speeches of representatives of the Employers' group, sound voices are occasionally heard that call for example for adherence to the ILO mandate. However, this is not enough to restore a healthy balance of power within the organization and counter its politicization which harms the interests of all parties. Of course, the Government of Belarus has the most questions for the group of Workers. I am sure that there is no consensus within the group on Belarus but the group's position is determined by forces in solidarity with the authorities of western countries and aggressively promoting politicized approaches in the ILO.

I am addressing them specifically. Why do you not want to face the truth? Why at the expense of your own mission protecting the interests of workers are you pursuing the plans and ambitions of a small group of individuals opposed to Belarus and consequently its people? Neither the BKDP nor the trade unions, much were part of it, exist anymore. We have talked about this many times.

The opponents of Belarus continue nonetheless to try to pass off their illegal actions as trade union work. However, these aims at harming national security have nothing to do with protecting the labour and socio-economic rights of workers. It is not surprising that our citizens preferred membership in real trade unions which understand that sanctions harm the interests of workers and advocate exclusively for peaceful and constructive dialogue with the Government. This is precisely why today no one stands behind the former leaders of the BKDP. Let me emphasize once again this group of people does not represent Belarusian workers in the ILO but exclusively themselves and their false ideas about the situation in the country.

The Government of Belarus calls on everyone to accept this fact. There are 15 independent sectoral trade unions operating in Belarus. Trade union membership covers more than 90 per cent of the economically active population and this is a real membership confirmed by written statements from workers and voluntary payments of membership fees. To consolidate their efforts, trade unions created a national trade union centre – the FPB, which serves as an equal partner in the social partnership system. So social dialogue exists in Belarus and it meets high standards.

All issues are resolved by the parties in a civilized manner during consultations and negotiations at the sites of councils for labour and social issues. There are 339 such councils in total in the country. The results of negotiations are enshrined in tariff agreements and collective bargaining agreements concluded at enterprises. There are more than 18,000 collective bargaining agreements in force. Trade unions and employers participate in the development of legislation and policy documents and act as partners with the state in the implementation of labour and socio-economic policies.

Not every country in the ILO can boast of such interaction with the social partners. This confirms the absurdity of accusations of suppression of the trade union movement and persecution of citizens for trade union work. If anything really harms workers' interests it is the sanctions that western countries mention in their reports on the implementation of the resolution on Belarus as well as the non-recognition of the FPB and blocking its participation in ILO events. Does not the Workers' group which advocates for putting pressure on Belarus understand that they have gone too far? An absurd situation has arisen while advocating for workers' rights you are supporting pressure and sanctions.

However, such methods do not meet the interests of workers as they are aimed at reducing jobs, increasing unemployment, falling incomes and cutting social programmes. Are you sure Belarusian workers are grateful for such solidarity and support? We know for sure that they are not. The Government of Belarus calls on everyone to objectively assess the situation and begin working on the mistakes made. Pressure on Belarus is a tool in the hands of political swindlers who do not care about the fate of the country or the well-being of its citizens.

The so-called Belarusian case and the subsequent decisions of the ILO bodies were not done on an objective basis. The so-called Belarusian case is built on distortion of facts, false accusations and a desire to legitimize pressure on the country through the ILO. The claims made against us go beyond the mandate of the Organization. In this context, there is no point in implementing ultimatum demands that are based on false assessments and do not correspond to the real situation.

We affirm at the same time the commitment of Belarus to the ILO goals and principles, our focus on dialogue and the restoration of full-fledged cooperation. But there is a mandatory condition. It includes taking into account the realities and sovereign interests of Belarus, rejecting politicization and interference in the country's internal affairs and reversing the unfair politically motivated decisions. Any recommendations and conclusions of the ILO bodies regarding Belarus must be based on reliable facts consistent with the organization's competence and the interests of Belarusian citizens. If the Committee's draft conclusions on Belarus once again fall far short of constructive approaches and objective assessments, its adoption could become another mistake. I urge everyone to avoid this mistake.

Presidenta – Muchas gracias, Sr. Tagun por su participación en las labores de la Comisión y por la información suministrada. Ahora es el turno de palabra de los dos portavoces, invito a la Vicepresidenta trabajadora, Sra. Anne Vermorgen, a que haga uso de la palabra.

Membres travailleurs – Nous remercions le gouvernement du Bélarus pour son intervention et tous ceux qui ont pris la parole.

Cette discussion a une fois de plus confirmé ce que la commission d'experts, le Comité de la liberté syndicale, le Conseil d'administration, la commission d'enquête et ce comité ont conclu à maintes reprises: le Bélarus continue à gravement porter atteinte aux conventions.

Plus de vingt ans après la commission d'enquête, le problème fondamental reste inchangé. Les syndicats indépendants continuent d'être démantelés, leurs dirigeants et membres continuent de faire face à la répression, et les travailleurs se voient toujours refuser le droit de s'organiser librement et de défendre leurs intérêts, y compris leurs intérêts politiques et économiques, indépendamment du gouvernement.

Le gouvernement a soutenu avoir mis en œuvre la plupart des recommandations de la commission d'enquête. Cependant, la réalité est que les recommandations qui n'ont toujours pas été mises en œuvre concernent des éléments fondamentaux de la liberté d'association et du droit à la négociation collective. Les restrictions sur les activités syndicales, les restrictions à l'accès aux ressources et les restrictions à la capacité des organisations à agir librement et de manière indépendante sont au cœur de la convention.

Nous avons également entendu des informations profondément préoccupantes concernant les syndicalistes emprisonnés, le harcèlement continu des syndicalistes indépendants, l'exil forcé, les restrictions sur les documents de voyage, la retenue de pensions et le climat de peur persistant qui empêche les travailleurs d'exercer leurs droits.

Notre groupe reste particulièrement préoccupé par le fait que le gouvernement continue de refuser à s'engager sérieusement dans la mise en œuvre des mesures de l'OIT adoptées en vertu de la résolution adoptée sur la base de l'article 33.

Nous regrettons le manque de coopération avec l'Envoyé spécial de l'OIT et le refus persistant de s'engager dans un processus constructif visant à trouver des solutions.

Le gouvernement du Bélarus affirme d'un côté qu'il s'agit d'un processus sans issue et qu'il n'est ni politiquement ni pratiquement opportun d'accepter les actions proposées pour faire face à la situation. De l'autre côté, il réaffirme dans le même temps son engagement envers les principes fondamentaux et le droit au travail et sa volonté d'engager un dialogue constructif avec le Bureau et les organes de l'OIT.

Nous devons souligner que le système de l'OIT visant à identifier les lacunes des États Membres et à déployer les outils nécessaires pour aider à améliorer la situation conformément aux obligations assumées n'est pas isolé du Bureau et des autres organes de l'OIT. Il s'agit d'un ensemble intégré.

À cet égard, il est profondément préoccupant que le gouvernement continue de faire preuve d'un mépris persistant à l'égard de l'accompagnement, des conclusions et des recommandations de la commission d'enquête, des organes de surveillance et du Conseil d'administration, et refuse de les accepter et de les mettre en œuvre.

Aucun effort n'est fait pour répondre aux préoccupations concernant l'application de sanctions pénales contre les syndicalistes engagés dans des activités syndicales légitimes et le harcèlement judiciaire des membres de syndicats, y compris les arrestations, les poursuites et les emprisonnements. Il n'existe aucune mesure plus forte pour soumettre un État au fardeau d'un examen minutieux lorsqu'il restreint des activités légitimes visant à défendre les droits syndicaux. L'état de droit et l'indépendance de la justice s'érodent.

La répression continue contre les syndicats indépendants, et l'emprisonnement des syndicalistes doivent cesser.

Nous déplorons profondément le climat de violence d'État, d'intimidation et de peur au Bélarus, qui ne favorise pas la libre pratique des libertés civiles. Les syndicalistes sont emprisonnés et soumis au travail forcé comme punition pour l'expression de vues politiques et d'opinions contraires au système politique, social ou économique établi.

Comme l'ont confirmé les organes de surveillance, de sérieux doutes subsistent quant à l'indépendance de la FPB. Nous regrettons que, même dans cette salle, le FPB agisse comme un agent du gouvernement. L'année dernière, nous avons dû nous plaindre parce qu'ils ont filmé les intervenants. Cette année, nous avons été témoins de nombreuses communications visant à attaquer nos collègues du BKDP.

Le groupe des travailleurs souhaite réagir à des déclarations formulées par le représentant du gouvernement du Bélarus. Nous nous opposons formellement et fermement à ce que des intervenants de notre groupe et que des syndicalistes de manière générale soient ici qualifiés de criminels par le gouvernement du Bélarus. Nous attendons que de telles déclarations ne puissent plus se reproduire au sein de notre institution.

L'OIT devrait sérieusement envisager d'instaurer un mécanisme, une réunion de coordination ouverte à la participation des gouvernements et des partenaires sociaux, intégrée ou ajoutée au groupe de travail, sous l'égide de l'OIT mais avec le soutien d'une coalition d'États Membres, pour coordonner les agences de l'ONU impliquées dans la mise en œuvre effective de la résolution. Nous devrions envisager l'organisation d'un tel événement avant la réunion du Conseil d'administration de novembre.

Le gouvernement doit immédiatement libérer les syndicalistes emprisonnés, abandonner toutes les charges et annuler toute condamnation portée contre eux liée à leurs activités syndicales légitimes.

Le gouvernement doit accepter avec la plus grande urgence:

- une mission humanitaire internationale pour garantir que des médecins indépendants peuvent rendre visite à tous les syndicalistes emprisonnés afin d'évaluer leur état de santé et d'offrir une assistance médicale, si nécessaire; et
- une mission tripartite de l'OIT pour évaluer la situation et rendre visite aux syndicalistes actuellement en prison ou en détention.

Nous remercions les gouvernements qui appliquent le principe de non-refoulement afin de garantir que les syndicalistes forcés à l'exil dans leurs pays ne sont pas renvoyés au Bélarus, où ils pourraient être soumis à des persécutions, des arrestations arbitraires et de la torture. Nous appelons tous les gouvernements à respecter également ces principes et à aider les citoyens bélarussiens résidant dans leur pays qui ne possèdent pas de documents de voyage valides en raison de leur incapacité à recevoir des services consulaires en facilitant la délivrance de visas touristiques aux citoyens bélarussiens persécutés pour leurs activités syndicales et à leurs proches, selon le cas.

Nous demandons que ces discussions et les conclusions de la séance extraordinaire soient placées dans une partie distincte du rapport de notre commission.

Presidenta - Pasamos el uso de la palabra al Sr. Kaizer Moyane, Vicepresidente empleador, para que haga uso de sus conclusiones finales.

Employer members – Chairperson, thank you once again for giving me the floor. As a group, the Employers we have listened carefully to all the interventions and we would like to thank all the speakers that took the floor and including the Government of Belarus for the information that they have given us here today. We have taken full note of that. For us, the interest is in compliance with ratified Conventions. We reiterate that Conventions Nos 87 and 98, which are fundamental Conventions, should be given special consideration by governments just as it is – or they are by workers and employers.

The Employers' group once again strongly urges compliance with ratified Conventions but especially 87 and 98 in this case. We urge the Government to start engaging in a constructive dialogue with the ILO to improve the situation as regards freedom of association and the right to organize. This in our view is the best way to dispel the view that this case has nothing to do with the Conventions or worker issues but it is political. So in conclusion, we recommend the Government to consider collaborating with the Special Envoy, take concrete measures to implement the remaining recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, subsequent recommendations of the supervisory bodies and the decisions of the Governing Body, provide information on the allegations that two trade unionists were unlawfully deported and that more than 70 trade union and trade union leaders and activists remain under criminal prosecution and 21 trade union leaders and activists are still imprisoned or detained.

And finally, take measures to align all legal provisions in Belarus with the Government's international obligations regarding freedom of association.

Presidenta - Damos por concluida esta discusión. Agradezco la participación del representante gubernamental de Belarús y de todos los oradores que participaron en la discusión, así como al enviado especial.

Las conclusiones de este caso serán adoptadas por la Comisión en la mañana del jueves 11 de junio.

Se interrumpe la sesión a las 15.30 horas.

The sitting was suspended at 3.30 p.m.

La séance est suspendue à 15 h 30.