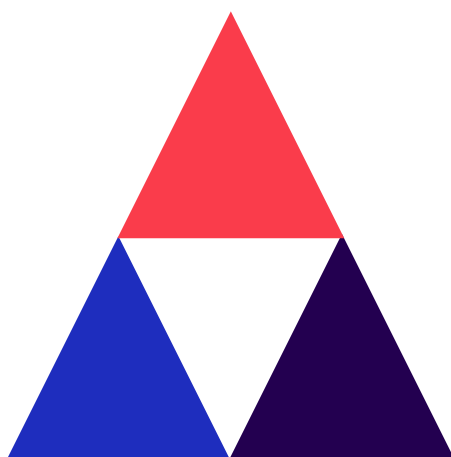


► Note on the proceedings

Technical meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector
(Geneva, 1–5 September 2025)



► Contents

	Page
Introduction	5
Consideration of the agenda items	6
I. Opening speeches.....	6
II. Statements from observer organizations.....	9
III. Point by point discussion	12
Discussion of point 1	12
Discussion of point 2	17
Discussion of point 3	25
Consideration and adoption of the draft conclusions and recommendations.....	30
Closure of the meeting.....	32
 Annexes	
I. List of short videos on selected current and emerging issues impacting the railways sector .	35
II. Conclusions and recommendations on decent work in the railways sector	36

► Introduction

The [Technical meeting on decent work in the railways sector](#) was held from 1 to 5 September 2025. At its 349th Session (October-November 2023), the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) approved ([GB.349/POL/3/Decision](#)) the holding of a technical meeting on decent work in the railways sector, and at its 352th Session, the Governing Body decided ([GB.352/POL/2/Decision](#)) the meeting should discuss current and emerging issues related to the realization of decent work in the railways sector, with an emphasis on safety and sustainability and with the aim of adopting conclusions, including recommendations for future action.

At its first sitting, the meeting adopted the timetable (TMDWRS/2025/2) and the points for discussion ([TMDWRS/2025/1](#)). The meeting held five plenary sittings, including three devoted to the discussion of the points for discussion.

In accordance with article 6 of the [Standing orders for technical meetings](#), the Chairperson of the meeting was Ms S.M. Janahi (Employer, Kingdom of Bahrain). At its first sitting, the meeting elected three Vice-Chairpersons as follows:

Government group

Vice-Chairperson: Mr A. A.T. Pednekar (India)

Assisted by: Mr T. Haq (Office)
Ms A. Cruz Ross (Office)

Employers' group

Vice-Chairperson: Ms M.A. Martens (Canada)

Assisted by: Mr L.R. Morales Vélez
Ms N. Privee Boudeguer
(International Organisation of Employers – IOE)

Workers' group

Vice-Chairperson: Mr A.J. Sosa (Argentina)

Spokesperson: Mr J. Kennedy (Canada)

Assisted by: Mr A. Praça (International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC))
Mr R. Subasinghe and Mr D. Akdogan
(International Transport Workers' Federation – ITF)

The Secretary-General of the meeting was Mr F. Hagemann (Director of the Sectoral Policies Department). The Deputy Secretary-General was Ms Y. Arai. The Executive Secretary was Ms A. Cruz Ross. Mr T. Haq (Head of the Transport and Maritime Sectors Unit) provided overall guidance and support during the meeting. The Coordinator of secretariat services was Ms M.M. Than Tun. The representative of the Office of the Legal Adviser was Mr T. Geckeler.

The meeting was attended by 125 participants ([TMDWRS/2025/5](#)), including 54 Government representatives and advisers (from 32 Member States), together with 10 Government observers (from 7 Member States), as well as 8 Employer and 24 Worker representatives and advisers and observers, and 4 observers from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and 10 international non-governmental organizations. Women represented 37 per cent of the participants.

► Consideration of the agenda items

I. Opening speeches

1. The Chairperson opened and welcomed participants to the Technical Meeting on Decent Work in the Railways Sector, emphasizing the importance of consensus and collaboration to ensure effective outcomes, including recommendations for future action. There was a unique opportunity to share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned relating to current and emerging issues with an impact on the realization of decent work in an industry that played a key role in mobility. While the railways had historically played a dominant role in shaping the economic, political and social landscape, their role had been overshadowed by road transport. The sector had experienced significant transformation in recent decades, driven by increased demand, competition, new technologies, innovation and new approaches to the organization of work. She stressed the need to maintain the sector's excellent safety record despite current financial and economic challenges and underlined the importance of governance frameworks that ensured decent employment opportunities and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. It was also essential to create enabling environments to attract investment in infrastructure, rolling stock, and technology, so that the sector could remain a source of quality jobs. The meeting offered a unique opportunity to identify ways forward through social dialogue. She invited constituents to share their knowledge and expertise to promote decent work and just transitions driven by innovation and environmental goals.
2. The Secretary-General welcomed participants, including representatives of Governments and international organizations attending an ILO meeting for the first time. The meeting was timely, given the central role of railways in sustainable transport and their contribution to climate targets. Yet, decent work issues in railways were not new to the ILO, as it was in 1939 the ILO had first considered the reduction of working hours in the sector. Other railway-specific meetings had been held in 1966, 1980, and 1994. He pointed out that the current meeting took place during a period of transformation in the industry, and emphasized the strategic importance of railways to economic development and their role in passenger and freight transport. While the sector faced growing competition from other modes of transport, it remained one of the safest and was committed to maintaining that record and ensuring safe and healthy working conditions. The industry was also engaged in a just transition towards environmental targets, requiring retraining and measures to address skills gaps. But rail workers were exposed to hazards such as fatigue, stress, noise, vibration, air pollution, fuels, heat stress, violence, harassment and inadequate sanitation. The meeting would provide an opportunity to review the sector through the lens of social justice and the Decent Work Agenda, underpinned by international labour standards, ILO declarations and tools, and social dialogue. He recalled that the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport, which would begin in 2026, recognized transport as a key enabler of sustainable development and critical to addressing global challenges such as climate change, health, well-being, and inclusive, resilient infrastructure.
3. The Executive Secretary of the meeting provided an overview of the Report for discussion ([TMDWRS/2025](#)) which had been prepared as a basis for discussions by the Office. In an effort to "Deliver as One", the report had benefited from the input from various intergovernmental bodies, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and two rail treaty-based bodies: the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) and the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD). In the first part, the report reviewed trends and developments in the sector and highlighted relevant international issues and

governance frameworks, including sections on the industry's composition, structure, and employment. In the second part, the report focused on the "current and emerging issues related to the realization of decent work in the railways sector, with an emphasis on safety and sustainability". In the third part, the report outlined labour aspects and practices in terms of realizing decent work to revitalize and make railways more sustainable. These included rights and enabling environments, human capital investments and safety investments.

4. The Employer Vice-Chairperson said that the report provided a useful overview of the sector, including governance and labour management structures. However, she regretted gaps in data on productivity, competitiveness and economic impact, which limited the report's usefulness for guiding policy and investment. She also expressed concerns regarding the limited balance of perspectives, noting that some examples, such as the Hatfield derailment, relied only on workers' reports and journalistic sources, rather than citing directly from official investigation reports, and that certain statements, including those on stress levels, lacked adequate supporting data. She also recommended that the Office notify participants when informal documents were issued so they could be properly considered.
5. Citing its contribution to the industrial revolution, she emphasized the rail sector's historic role in shaping economies and societies as it continued to generate jobs, enhance competitiveness, and support sustainable development. Rail transport was also energy efficient and played a role in reducing carbon emissions. She noted its contributions to safety, mobility, and equity, while recognizing persistent challenges, including high capital investment requirements, regulatory burdens, limited competition, financing gaps, and rigid public frameworks. She added that greener technologies, digitalization and decarbonization were reshaping the sector, creating opportunities while also raising concerns about workers' skills and adaptation strategies.
6. Employers acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that the sectoral transformation process was efficient, innovative, and fair. Enabling environments must be created that promoted competition, investment, innovation and sustainable enterprises, through effective social dialogue. It was also vital to invest in skills, promote gender equality and the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and embrace greener technologies. She looked forward to constructive, tripartite engagement and urged the Office to propose tentative conclusions and practical recommendations based on consensus, diversity of contexts, and sound analysis, to ensure that rail continued to serve as a cornerstone of sustainable and inclusive development.
7. The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the comprehensive report, expressing confidence that constructive collaboration would lead to consensus-based, forward-looking conclusions. All railway workers were essential to safe and sustainable services, and deserved respect and decent work. Railway workers included a wide family of roles, including machinists (drivers/engineers), signallers, maintenance workers, station staff, ticket collectors, on board crews and cleaners. Safety was the top priority in the sector: a single accident was one too many. Recent derailments and collisions in different regions illustrated that fatigue, inadequate staffing and deferred maintenance cost lives. Railway workers faced not only accident risks, but exposure to chemical hazards such as diesel exhaust, ballast dust and solvents. They faced psychosocial risks including violence against staff and the stress of lone working, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder after accidents. The recognition by the ILO in 2022 that a safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental principle and right at work must now be put into practice in the rail sector. Public ownership and predictable investment were essential to ensuring safety, employment stability and quality services. Criticizing approaches based on fragmentation, outsourcing, and short-term concessions for weakening standards and creating a two-tier workforce, he stressed that railways were a public good that should operate in the public interest. He called for mandatory labour

clauses in procurement, consistent with the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94).

8. Critical challenges included worker shortages, understaffing and an ageing workforce. He stressed the need for science-based fatigue management, safe rostering, adequate staffing, quality apprenticeships, and lifelong learning to attract young workers. He emphasized the importance of equality and inclusion, drawing attention to the under-representation of women and urgent need to eliminate barriers to work and career progression, violence, and harassment. To that end, he urged Member States to ratify the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). It was also important to protect migrant workers and workers with disabilities. With regard to the latter, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Railway Workers Disability Charter provided a useful framework.
9. It was vital to guarantee fundamental rights at work to all workers, irrespective of employment status, including freedom of association and collective bargaining. In many parts of the world, rail workers were denied their rights, including the right to strike, without which, railway workers cannot effectively defend safety, jobs or working conditions. He encouraged the establishment of institutionalized social dialogue at the enterprise, sectoral and national levels, and observed that, unlike other transport modes, the rail sector lacked international tripartite structures. He proposed developing global regulatory frameworks, similar to those in other sectors, and sector-specific international standards for railways, as well as enhancing the ILO's cooperation with UNECE, the UNESCAP, and other international bodies.
10. In view of the impact of climate change, including extreme weather events, on railways and workers' safety, climate resilience must be integrated into the Decent Work Agenda for the sector. Railway workers were on the frontline when floods washed away tracks, when heatwaves buckled rails, and when extreme weather disrupted operations. Extreme weather events already caused significant service disruptions, with costs running into billions, and workers were often first responders in dangerous conditions. Digitalization and decarbonization were reshaping the rail sector; just transition measures were needed to ensure that technological change created better jobs rather than eroding employment and safety. In that regard, he welcomed the Office's analysis of the impact of restructuring and outsourcing on pay, job security, skills and operational performance. He highlighted the need for stable and sustainable financing, warning that unpredictable investment undermined safety and skills, and urged Governments to commit to long-term funding and reject austerity policies. Measures to revitalize the rail sector must also promote decent work, with a focus on public responsibility, safe staffing, as well as strong rights and unions. He called for tripartite dialogue to build a safe, sustainable and worker-centred sector.
11. The Government Vice-Chairperson said that railways were essential to economic development, connectivity and integrated transport networks, particularly for long distances and in countries with remote territories. Although some Governments had prioritized and invested in modernization, others still needed to make large-scale investments, despite the limited resources available. He underscored the importance of international cooperation and standardization to increase efficiency and interoperability. He observed that Governments were reviewing legal and institutional frameworks to ensure safety, security, sustainability and resilience, while balancing mobility and trade needs with limited budgets, subsidies and debt ceilings. For the sector to remain competitive, as well as for strategic and environmental reasons, Governments needed to balance modal shifts between rail, road and air transport. He noted that, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, further measures were required to support enterprises and workers, including with regard to technology transfer.

12. Public and private railway undertakings sought to promote safe and healthy working environments by adapting their normative frameworks. Employment creation programmes, measures to uphold labour rights and updated training requirements could help to ensure decent work. Meeting discussions needed to consider issues such as sustainability, employee engagement, human capital investment, and the long-term viability of the sector in the context of a green transition, technological change and structural development. New technology and environmental targets would have a profound impact on employment in the sector. It was important to focus on interoperability and to standardize operations and signalling. It was also vital to maintain social dialogue structures and respect the right to collective bargaining. New business models had significant implications for job security, safety and health, as well as for attracting and retaining staff. In recent years, the loss of a skilled workforce had created significant challenges and exacerbated existing problems, including skills shortages, lack of training and an inadequate infrastructure. He encouraged the sharing of best practices in that regard.
13. The Government representative of Türkiye underscored the importance of regulatory and policy frameworks – especially relating to occupational safety and health. Significant improvements to the Turkish railways sector had included implementing modern signalling systems and safety standards on high-speed lines compliant with European Union regulations; reducing accidents, including through projects supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, while improving working conditions through union-employer negotiations; investing in electrified and high-speed lines; and enhancing environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. He further reported significant investment at the national level in green energy sources and reiterated his Government's commitment to social dialogue, collaboration, and innovation in addressing current challenges and promoting sustainable development in the railways sector.

II. Statements from observer organizations

14. A representative of the UNECE outlined the commission's role in promoting sustainable development and economic integration, including through setting standards and developing legally binding instruments to facilitate international collaboration, especially in the area of inland transport, and mentioned the drafting of a new convention on the international carriage of goods by rail. Through fostering interoperability and legal instruments such as the European agreement on main international railway lines and the European agreement on important international combined transport lines and related installations, efforts focused on enhancing connectivity and interoperability, harmonizing legislation, supporting States' modal shift to rail and promoting the role of railways in intermodal transport and decarbonization, including model rules to support rolling stock investment. UNECE's sustainable transport work also aimed to strengthen climate and hazard resilience, advance innovation, including intelligent rail systems, digital automated coupling and harmonized passenger hub design, and strengthen security by combating human trafficking in the sector. It also promoted decent work, occupational safety and human-centred approaches, co-administering the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units, and published guidance on freight transport, automation, and digitalization, with a focus on education, training, and working conditions.
15. The Executive Secretary of the meeting delivered a statement prepared and sent by UNESCAP, outlining its study on women's role in rail transport, focusing on South-East Asia where women's participation rates stood below the global average. Although Governments were taking steps to increase women's economic participation in the rail sector, significant gaps remained, including a lack of data on women's representation. The study conclusions indicated that increasing

women's participation would make the rail workforce more inclusive while improving competitiveness – by widening the talent pool, fostering innovation, and enhancing organizational performance. Policy recommendations had been developed on the basis of the above-mentioned study, relating to recruitment, selection, career development, work-life balance, safety and security. Many of the recommendations were low-cost and rapid to implement, for example involving women workers in recruitment processes, implementing blind resumé selection and offering flexible working arrangements. Investing in women's representation would benefit workers, railway users and the economy, while making transport more inclusive. The recommendations could be applied across the Asia-Pacific region.

16. A video statement by a representative of the International Transport Forum (ITF-OECD) was broadcast. The railways sector was key to supporting connectivity while reducing emissions and enhancing safety. Given that total transport demand was predicted to double by 2060, with particularly rapid growth in intercity passenger travel, sound policies were needed to enable the sector to meet demand and strengthen its resilience. The rapid pace of technological change meant that the rail sector needed ensure the well-being and dignity of its workforce and foster opportunities and skills. Given that digitalization would likely have a profound impact on employment in the transport industry, a just transition must include measures to help workers to acquire new skills; social dialogue was key to achieving that goal. His organization's work on artificial intelligence focused on opportunities to improve efficiency and safety while identifying risks relating to employment, working conditions and inclusion. Public authorities played a key role in ensuring that automation and artificial intelligence were used to create decent work and delivered benefit across all social groups. He noted that the organization's next annual summit would take place in Leipzig from 6 to 8 May 2026 on funding resilient transport.
17. A representative of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) described the agency's work to improve the sustainability and safety of the railway system, and emphasizing its commitment to decent work in the railways sector. Focusing on safety certification, vehicle authorization, and European Rail Traffic Management System track site approval, the agency's mission was to build a safe, sustainable and borderless European railway system. Key areas of activity included promoting a harmonized approach across Europe, monitoring national safety authorities and promoting the implementation of Common Safety Methods in Member States. His agency also provided guidance, training and monitoring to support implementation and compliance.
18. A representative from the OTIF provided an overview of her organization's work to promote, improve and facilitate international traffic by rail. Its activities focused on: technical interoperability, including efforts to ensure safe and efficient cross-border rail operations through harmonized technical standards developed jointly with the European Union; regulations relating to the international carriage of dangerous goods to ensure safety and prevent accidents and damage, including work with UNECE on harmonizing relevant international legislation; and railway contract law, particularly the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail and the associated CIV Uniform Rules for Passengers and CIM Uniform Rules for Goods. The organization's legal department also had depositary functions and an ad hoc committee on legal affairs and international cooperation was convened twice a year.
19. A video statement by the Director-General of the International Union of Railways (UIC) was broadcast, providing an overview of the organization's work to foster international cooperation and standardization in railways, bringing together railway professionals and institutions around common standards, practices and objectives. Its membership had expanded significantly over the past century and currently stood at more than 210 members. Based on the principles of unity, solidarity and universality, the organization's work focused on ensuring safety, promoting sustainability, preserving rights at work, enabling just transitions, fostering social dialogue and

addressing skills gaps, in order to build a strong, safe and sustainable global rail sector. Its activities focused on developing international technical standards and specifications to ensure seamless interoperability; creating platforms for sharing best practices through benchmarking, peer exchange and collaborative innovation; promoting rail transport as a low-carbon climate solution, to decarbonize the economy and contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, he outlined activities aligned with Sustainable Development Goals relating to decent work, climate action, and gender equality, including measures to ensure supportive working environments that minimized risk and upheld workers' dignity; initiatives to encourage members to set ambitious environmental targets and measures to promote women's participation across all railway professions, and to ensure inclusive and accessible railway services. His organization also worked to facilitate shared learning, cross-border collaboration, and the co-development of practical guidelines to benefit all railway stakeholders. By fostering dialogue and cooperation, it helped to create an environment in which knowledge was exchanged, best practices were adopted, and the sector could continue to innovate while prioritizing decent work. Those contributions reflected the core pillars of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, namely rights at work, social protection, social dialogue, and employment creation. His organization's work helped to ensure that the rail sector continued to provide decent jobs in which people could thrive, develop their skills, and contribute to safe, sustainable and efficient mobility. By integrating safety culture, sustainability, gender equality and social dialogue, decent work could be strengthened in the railways sector, to build a safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable future.

20. The Executive Director of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) provided an overview of his organization's mission and main priorities, including its commitment decent work for a sustainable and reliable rail sector. As a leading employers' association that brought together close to 70 rail companies in the European region, social dialogue was the cornerstone of his organization's approach, which had delivered several important agreements and recommendations, including on: train driver competencies, cross-border working regulations, working time and rest times; and gender equality, in particular the 2021 agreement on women in rail, a landmark European social partner agreement on gender equality, to promote gender equality and increase women's participation in the rail sector workforce. His association also worked to improve working conditions by promoting a work-life balance, including measures on flexible hours, part-time and telework, and parental and caregiver leave; promote and support a flexible work culture and attract a motivated workforce.
21. The Secretary-General of the Latin American Railways Association (ALAF) said that his organization, which brought together railway companies and industry actors from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula, worked to promote safe, efficient, and economically viable rail transport, to support regional integration and development. It engaged with regional and national authorities to promote technical cooperation, rail-friendly transport policies, environmental protection measures, fair competition, cross-border transport and multimodal integration, including through rail corridors, and measures to protect the region's rail heritage. Strategic actions included supporting technical cooperation on standardizing technical norms, infrastructure development and safety regulations; developing legislative frameworks for safer and more equitable rail systems; engaging with financial institutions on the financing of infrastructure development projects in the region; and collaborating with academic institutions, including on establishing a regional network of transport experts. An online platform for the railways sector had also been launched to facilitate exchange and promote engagement through social media channels. His organization also carried out studies, published statistical and technical documents, and organized seminars, workshops and courses. It also worked closely with other entities in Latin America and Europe, including the International Union of Railways, on relevant

topics, such as technical standards and the transport of dangerous goods. In general, his organization's efforts focused on capacity-building and promoting infrastructure development in the region, including with support from the World Bank and other institutions.

III. Point by point discussion

Discussion of point 1

What current and emerging issues have most impacted the realization of decent work in the railways sector? Please take into consideration the following aspects: regulatory and policy frameworks; ownership, management, structure; transport safety; financing, investment and economic conditions; just transition; innovation; and cross-border or regional interoperability.

22. The Worker Spokesperson drew attention to the absence of a binding international regulatory framework for the rail sector. In contrast to the aviation and maritime sectors, a patchwork of regional frameworks currently operated in lieu of a global, harmonized system. He stressed the need for the ILO to develop international standards for rail. At the national level, rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining must be guaranteed, alongside mandatory labour clauses in procurement and concessions. It was also imperative to guarantee a safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle and right at work, through enforceable duties, joint safety committees and worker participation. Railways were a public good and public ownership offered the most reliable basis for safe operations, predictable investment, system integration and planning and workforce stability. Fragmentation and outsourcing blurred responsibilities, weakened safety management systems and created a two-tier workforce. Where contractual models were used, legislation and contract provisions must guarantee employment continuity, collective agreements and clarity on safety responsibilities.
23. Rail safety depended on deliberate policy decisions on staffing levels, fatigue management, robust maintenance and a just culture enabling workers to report risks without fear of reprisal. An ITF survey conducted in 2025 had revealed that chronic understaffing was linked to increased accidents, inadequate inspections, poor training, and neglect of women workers' specific safety needs. Data from the ITF's 2021 Global Railway Review indicated that staffing levels had been reduced in almost 70 per cent of countries, with ticketing and maintenance workers most affected. Driver-only operations, single-operator practices, the removal of guards, and the premature deployment of artificial intelligence without meaningful consultation, comprehensive risk assessments and public oversight also compromised safety. Recent incidents in Europe, including the 2023 rail collision in Germany, illustrated the high economic cost, as well as increased risk to workers, of reducing staffing levels, outsourcing safety-critical work or delaying investment in infrastructure and maintenance. He also noted that ITF's Technology and Decent Work Charter also set out the rights directly relevant to rail safety management. Comprehensive risk and labour impact assessments should be carried out before new technologies were introduced, with full trade union participation. Workers must retain control over safety-critical operations, and data governance should be negotiated. Outsourcing, workforce casualization and non-standard work undermined safety and potentially increased the risk of violence and harassment, particularly for women workers. He called for science-backed work schedules to prevent fatigue, with limits on excessive hours and full respect for rest periods, in line with international labour standards; adequate sanitation facilities as defined by the ITF Sanitation Charter; gender-sensitive measures and personal protective equipment; and full staffing across operations. He stressed the need for decent jobs on the basis of direct employment, covered by collective bargaining and robust occupational safety and health standards. Workplaces should have recognized occupational safety and health committees and elected representatives, to ensure the full representation for

women workers. Decent work, secure jobs and a skilled and committed workforce were prerequisites for safety in the railways sector.

24. On the issue of financing, fragmented and stop-start funding undermined safety and service quality. Inadequate investment led to ageing rolling stock, outdated signalling and deferred renewals, while austerity measures cut recruitment and training budgets. Sustainable transport action master plans and national climate finance platforms were needed to align investment with climate goals and decent work. Stable, predictable, multi-year public investment were also essential for productivity, congestion reduction and to achieve climate goals. Current funding levels, in particular in the global South, fell short of requirements. Public financing and ring-fenced funding streams developed through social dialogue provided better value, safety and protection for workers. Where the use of blended financing was necessary, it must be fully transparent and its impact on jobs, safety and working conditions must be evaluated at every stage, with oversight provided by workers and communities. A just transition involved early consultation, mapping of job impacts, paid time for training and guarantees relating to redeployment and income.
25. Given the ageing workforce and need to attract the next generation of skilled railway workers, it was vital to invest in apprenticeships and decent conditions, aligned with the ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, and supported through public financing. Innovation and technological change must be guided by clear objectives to improve safety performance, strengthen skills and enhance jobs and job quality. Genuine consultation and collective bargaining should precede the introduction of new systems, with proposals that failed to meet the above-mentioned objectives subject to review, in consultation with workers and their representatives through social dialogue. Technology should assist and enhance the work of railway staff and workers must share in the benefits of digitization and productivity gains, which should translate into shorter working time without loss of pay, wage improvements linked to verified productivity, and sustained investment in training and safe staffing. Data generated through the work process should be recognized as workers' data and governed by negotiated rules. With digitalization reshaping the skills needed by the sector, licencing and competence management systems needed further development; in that regard, the European train driver licencing framework provided a model for competence recognition. Seamless cross-border operations required aligned worker rights, procedures and protections. He called for the mutual recognition of licences and competencies, coherent working time rules, and common minimum occupational safety and health standards, including harmonized emergency procedures. He invited the Office to collaborate with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and regional rail bodies to pilot corridors where technical interoperability incorporated social dialogue, safety standards and labour protection, through formal tripartite mechanisms. Looking ahead, it was important to agree on practical follow-up, including through subregional and national meetings to exchange best practices and joint research outputs to guide future rail policy. Decent work, legal frameworks, public accountability, and predictable financing were essential to safe, sustainable railways.
26. The Employer Vice-Chairperson agreed that safety was non-negotiable and risks must be mitigated. She also acknowledged that women were under-represented in the rail sector and affirmed the need for change. Railways played an important role in economic development, sustainability and job creation, including beyond the rail sector, while also enabling urban regeneration, greener growth and trade. Rail was a capital-intensive and infrastructure-heavy industry, requiring heavy upfront investment and costly, ongoing maintenance. As a result, while railways were mature and stable enterprises woven into the fabric of their regional economies, they were also vulnerable to economic turbulence; moreover, limited competition, compared with

road or air transport, stymied growth, restricted expansion and created entry barriers for new enterprises, with an impact on job creation and the advancement of decent work. She stressed the need to modernize the sector and address the skills gap, calling for Government cooperation on training opportunities at the national and regional levels.

27. Rail transport was key to sustainable mobility, offering a pathway to new green jobs, safer work and a more productive economy. The sector emitted about 75 per cent less carbon dioxide per passenger kilometre and freight tonne kilometre than alternative modes of transport. It also accounted for less than two per cent of transport emissions while carrying over eight per cent of global passenger traffic. Innovation and digitalization had the potential to transform the sector. She advocated for smart technologies to reduce hazardous tasks, modernize operations and boost safety, efficiency and productivity, and to attract young workers.
28. Citing World Bank data on economic benefits, she underlined that railways also played an important role in urban regeneration and connectivity, stimulating commerce, tourism and local development. It was vital to focus on innovation, support for investment, inclusive and effective social dialogue, and an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, using approaches tailored to diverse ownership models and stages of development. Success depended on careful implementation, irrespective of ownership models. While stable funding and investment were necessary, public financing might not suffice; as a result, creative, sustainable solutions would be required. Context-specific solutions would help to ensure that railways fully embraced new technologies, became greener and more efficient and offered attractive job opportunities to the next generation of workers, while keeping pace with changing economic and workplace realities, as well as demographic shifts.
29. The Government Vice-Chairperson said that railways were transitioning away from natural monopolies towards a new framework that focused on profitability, cost control and operational efficiency. He drew attention to increasing privatization in the sector and the absence of an international standards agency, stressing that such an agency would help to identify minimum areas for cooperation. While, in certain cases, privatization delivered positive outcomes in non-critical operations such as catering or ticketing, in others it led to job losses. He described occupational safety and health as a fundamental right and stressed that workers' safety must not be compromised. Governments understood safety as a general concept that covered both passenger and employee safety. Innovation had the potential to improve safety and enhance operational efficiency. In that regard, he emphasized the need for intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration among rail companies on technology transfer and exchange of best practices.
30. Rail was a capital-intensive sector with an ageing infrastructure, requiring significant investment. To tackle that major challenge, Governments were exploring bilateral and multilateral funding options. He emphasized the importance of funding and regional connectivity, and interoperability also posed challenges, particularly for landlocked countries seeking port access.
31. Bipartite and tripartite social dialogue frameworks existed but were undermined by fragmented approaches with multiple unions representing certain groups of workers. He stressed the importance of monitoring standards and working conditions, including during privatization or concession processes, to ensure that safety standards were maintained, and highlighted the need for capacity-building and training on occupational safety and health. He affirmed the sector's economic and social importance and stated that even as railways sought to improve operational efficiency through privatization strategies, safety and decent working conditions remained non-negotiable.
32. The Government representative of Mauritania stated that his country had chosen social dialogue as the preferred approach to safeguarding workers' rights and upholding fundamental principles,

and the process of electing representatives was under way. Once that process was completed, sectoral collective agreements could be negotiated, including in the railways sector.

33. The Government representative of Zimbabwe said that labour rights were enshrined in her country's constitution and applied to all workers, including those in the railways sector. However, the right to collective action was restricted for essential workers. The number of trade unions in the railways sector had grown to a total of four. The bipartite National Employment Council, established to foster social dialogue, served as both a dispute resolution forum and to enforce collective agreements through labour inspections. The National Railways of Zimbabwe had comprehensive staff regulations on working conditions, employee entitlements and remuneration, and served to guide management decisions. Previously a government-owned monopoly, the rail sector had been opened up to private sector participation, including the Beitbridge-Buluwayo Railway Company under a build-operate-transfer scheme. The national rail company had recently been restructured into a commercial entity with profit-oriented operations, reduced subsidies and a stronger focus on cost control and efficiency, while the infrastructure remained government-owned. Those changes had increased the profitability of certain branches of the company. Although the enterprise cost structure had not changed substantially in the past decade, operations had been streamlined and accountability strengthened, including by separating departments such as real estate operations.
34. Turning to transport safety, railways should, in principle, be the safest mode of transport. Although safety challenges arose from ageing lines, rolling stock and human error, appropriate action to address those issues could significantly reduce accidents. The National Railways of Zimbabwe promoted health and safety in its operations by ensuring that safety took precedence over other interests. A safety policy had been developed and made available to all workers. The main causes of accidents included traction and rolling stock problems, strength and sleeper issues, signalling challenges and vandalism. All incidents were investigated by committees that included worker representatives, and recommendations made to prevent recurrence. Recapitalization measures had been delayed, leaving the national rail operator unable to fund the rehabilitation of ageing infrastructure from its operational revenue. As a result, there were insufficient resources available for locomotives, wagons and rail tracks.
35. On innovation, she noted that the company had been slow to embrace technological change, and lessons could be learned from regional best practices. Although ensuring seamless regional interoperability was challenging, functional cross-border transport had been achieved, with locomotives and wagons able to move through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
36. The Government representative of Malawi said that the rail sector in her country had a vibrant trade union presence and that fundamental principles and rights at work were guaranteed by the constitution and legislation, including on labour relations, occupational safety and health, employment and social security. Transport safety remained a challenge, owing to damaged infrastructure and overcrowding. Measures to address those problems included increased investment, awareness campaigns and collaboration with law enforcement. On financing, she observed that the railways sector was capital-intensive and that Malawi, a landlocked country, was focusing on projects such as the Nakala Corridor linking Malawi to Mozambique, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, to secure port access and promote economic growth. Despite difficult economic conditions, opportunities for private investment existed. In that regard, there was a need to enhance the business and enabling environments to attract investment.
37. While the State retained ownership of railway infrastructure, operations had been transferred to the Central East African Railways, a private consortium, through concession agreements. That

public-private arrangement was intended to improve freight and passenger services while reducing costs. On the issue of interoperability, she noted that the electrification of the railway network remained limited, but that connections with Zambia and Mozambique were functional and work was ongoing to extend services to United Republic of Tanzania through the Nakala Corridor. She stressed the need to harmonize gauges, legal frameworks and customs procedures at the regional level and highlighted the potential of projects such as the Nakala and the proposed Makara Corridors, which would require substantial investment to achieve interoperability and enable efficient cross-border transport of goods and passengers.

38. The Government representative of India provided statistical data on Indian Railways, emphasizing the scale of its operations. No railway strikes had occurred in India for the previous five decades, reflecting the model employer status that railways enjoyed in the country. A robust legal and regulatory framework, underpinned by the constitution and the Railways Act of 1989, alongside consultative mechanisms, facilitated social dialogue. While the network had been opened up to private sector participation through public-private partnerships in areas such as catering and ticketing, future involvement would focus primarily on infrastructure development and investment areas, with operations remaining largely under government control, to ensure protection of workers' rights.
39. Noting that transport safety encompassed both employee and passenger safety, he emphasized the need for enhanced training mechanisms, sharing of national best practices and improved investigation methods for incidents. On financing and investment, following a phase of chronic underinvestment the Government had invested considerable capital in the sector, including to improve its environmental sustainability, facilitate the construction of bridges and tunnels, and to complete electrifying the network. That environmentally sustainable approach would serve to facilitate a modal shift towards rail transport. Although Indian Railways had adopted the broad-gauge system, which left it somewhat isolated, opportunities to enhance interoperability included agreements on harmonizing standards and transport practices across different railway systems.
40. The Government representative of Gabon said that to ensure decent work, it was essential to also guarantee adequate working conditions and remuneration. Workers must be able to cover their needs and those of their families. A regulatory gap existed in his country, as the absence of collective agreements in the railways sector meant that enterprises set their own wage structures, resulting in salary disparities and potentially leading to tensions and social injustice. The Government was working with the social partners to establish a unified wage structure applicable to all enterprises within the rail sector, with a common salary grid. Progress on occupational safety and health required the modernization of railway equipment and infrastructure, and investment in human capital. The various subcontractors engaged in maintenance services operated in highly technical areas requiring specialized training. However, they often recruited untrained staff, increasing potential exposure to occupational risks. The Government was collaborating with employers to establish training frameworks to create a pool of skilled workers to perform specialized tasks, with a view to mitigating occupational risk exposure linked to lack of adequate training.
41. The Government representative of Brazil highlighted the critical importance of labour inspection services in ensuring compliance with regulations and legislation. He called for the meeting conclusions and recommendations to acknowledge the importance of labour inspection personnel and regulatory frameworks, as well as the role of Governments in enforcing legislation and performing enterprise inspections, to ensure compliance with legislation and regulations, including on occupational safety and health, working conditions, working time and rest periods, with a view to upholding international labour standards.

- 42. The Worker Spokesperson welcomed the consensus emerging on a range of points, in particular that safety was non-negotiable; that measures were required to increase diversity and women's participation; and that training opportunities for workers were needed. He also agreed that it was imperative to create supply chain jobs and that the rail sector had an essential role to play in a just transition. Affirming that the rail industry was highly capital-intensive, he stressed the need to tackle that issue. He encouraged discussions on different models of ownership, as well as on public financing – which was currently insufficient.
- 43. Responding to a point raised by the Government group on the lack of a specialized international agency for the railways sector, he pointed out that the ILO was the organization best suited to the task of developing labour policies and standards for the sector. He agreed that financing was critical to unlocking the sector's potential and increasing connectivity, highlighted the need for more capacity-building and training – noting that safety and health were non-negotiable – and emphasized the importance of labour inspections. He concurred with the Government group on the importance of collective bargaining agreements and measures to close the wage gap.
- 44. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the common ground identified during the discussions.
- 45. The Government Vice-Chairperson confirmed his group's alignment with the Employers' and Workers' groups on many issues, which he viewed as conducive to progress.

Discussion of point 2

What railway safety and sustainability policies, measures and regional practices have worked, what has not worked well, and what needs to be done to contribute to the promotion of: the fundamental principles and rights at work; an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises; a just transition; social dialogue frameworks; and skills gap reductions?

- 46. The Employer Vice-Chairperson described railways as the quiet backbone of growth, key to productivity, trade, development and inclusive, low-carbon mobility. Sector structures and ownership models in different regions varied significantly, from full State or private ownership to public-private partnerships and mixed models; it was vital to focus on management and investment to ensure productivity, safety, sustainability and decent work in an enabling environment with effective social dialogue and models adapted to market needs. In the capital-intensive rail sector, sustained investment, innovation and productivity were needed to enhance safety, promote diversity, attract and retain workers and ensure a just transition.
- 47. To unlock that potential, outcome-based policies were needed, as well as open markets with independent oversight, and long-term financing and maintenance regimes. It was essential to ensure predictable, multi-year funding and conditions that attracted investment; ring-fenced resources for preventative maintenance; competitive neutrality and fair access to infrastructure; and practical, effective and data-rich tripartite social dialogue, focused on problem-solving. Outcome-based policies had produced positive results, from high-speed systems built on rigorous safety management to digitalization that enhanced capacity, to mixed-traffic networks protected by modern train control; from decarbonization linked to business value through renewable power and energy efficient driving, and from independent investigation and confidential reporting that turned near-misses into learning to corridor policies that aimed to shift freight to rail and integrate it into larger, intermodal systems.
- 48. To foster growth, it was important to ensure: fit-for-purpose regulation, with outcome-based and risk-proportionate frameworks, avoiding incoherent, ambiguous language and obsolete rules; financing and maintenance for asset life, through 10 to 15-year rolling programmes, ring-fenced operations and maintenance funding aligning tax and depreciation with long asset lives; blended

finance and green instruments alongside open interfaces to avoid vendor lock-in; and investment in safety innovation where risk was highest, including multi-year programmes to complete automatic train protection on priority corridors, scale-predictive and wayside detection and embedded, science-based fatigue-risk management. Those core measures should be built on interoperable systems, anchored in a just culture, with confidential reporting and time-bound disclosures of near-miss incidents.

49. Moreover, it was essential to ensure a people-centred investment approach, linking technology with targeted upskilling, as well as safer career pathways for women and young workers. That approach was particularly needed in signalling, motive power and energy systems. Clear career entry and progression pathways were needed, supported by accessible facilities and predictable scheduling, to deliver a just transition while upholding fundamental principles and rights. The knowledge and skills gap must be addressed, as retaining and upskilling older workers was vital to maximize potential and retain knowledge, especially with regard to risk management. To attract young workers, the sector must present itself as a modern, innovative and future-oriented industry, with attractive career options. In that context, positioning railways as central to sustainable transportation, climate action, and smart mobility could increase the sector's appeal.
50. To achieve those goals, effective, practical and data-rich tripartite social dialogue was needed, linked to agreed metrics such as on-time performance, asset availability, energy efficiency and near-miss disclosure rates, with regular consultations on occupational safety and health mechanisms and policy monitoring, with non-punitive reporting and data collection. She encouraged standardization where such an approach added value, for example with regard to interfaces, data formats and training modules to reduce costs and promote labour mobility. In other areas, it was preferable to adopt a tailored approach, including with regard to climate, gradients and legacy platforms, to respect the sector's diversity and accelerate improvements. The future of the sector depended on ensuring its competitiveness, safety and sustainability.
51. In this sense, the International Labour Conference's Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, 2007, remained highly relevant. The above-mentioned measures would help to strengthen fundamental rights, create enabling environments, deliver a just transition, strengthen social dialogue, promote inclusion and close skills gaps.
52. The Worker Spokesperson said that investment in safety management systems, training and a just culture led to improved safety outcomes. In Austria, for example, legal frameworks for training and testing safety-critical personnel ensured consistent, high-quality training and recognition of competences, promoting the highest safety standards and facilitating workers' employment with other rail companies. National training standards were key to safe operations and safeguarded workers' rights. Agreements with social partners delivered results; the European train driver licence was an example of how agreed skills standards and mutual recognition supported safe operations. Public investment fostered safety, reliability and decent work. He offered examples of effective infrastructure investment in the European Union, the United States of America and India.
53. Turning to gaps and challenges, he noted that Europe still lacked a mandatory system to monitor working, driving and rest time for all safety-critical mobile grades, leading to inadequate control of fatigue risks. In Germany, the deregulation of vocational education and weak oversight had eroded skills: under current European Union rules train driver licences could be issued after a few months of theoretical training, with examinations conducted in-company, often without independent assessors. Outsourcing and long contracting chains fragmented accountability and weakened occupational safety and health management, with a negative impact on skills, enforcement and safety culture. All too often, public service tenders focused exclusively on price

and competition, overlooking social conditions and skills development. He noted that in Germany, unions had secured legislation requiring that staff be transferred when contracts changed operator. International standards should make clear that competitiveness should not be achieved at the expense of workers' job security, wages or training opportunities.

54. He drew attention to the ongoing relevance of the labour priorities identified by the 1994 ILO Conclusions of the Tripartite Meeting on the Consequences for Management and Personnel of the Restructuring of Railways: state compensation for public service obligations, embedded social dialogue, redeployment and retraining before separations, and firm application of core ILO standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining. The conclusions of that meeting had stressed that planned privatization and outsourcing could erode skills and safety and urged the ILO to continue to monitor labour impacts and provide training and advisory support. More than three decades later, many of the same problems persisted – understaffing, fragmented contracting, skills erosion and insufficient monitoring of safety-critical work. Stronger protection and enforcement mechanisms were needed, with predictable public investment tied to safe staffing, competence, fatigue controls and full worker participation across the whole system, including contractors.
55. Social dialogue and collective bargaining delivered results, through collective agreements and initiatives such as Women in Rail. By contrast, restrictions on trade union rights or minimum service requirements without genuine negotiation contravened the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). Evidence from the ITF's Women Transport Workers Survey had identified that discrimination had a direct impact on safety and decent work including systemic barriers faced by women, unequal access to jobs, promotions, equipment and uniforms, as well as legal restrictions pertaining to their work in transport. In addition, vandalism, violence and trespassing undermined working conditions, increased stress and affected mental health. In certain jurisdictions, railway workers were misclassified as public servants, restricting their right to freedom of association, collective bargaining and strike action. Failures to engage in meaningful social dialogue were linked to incidents including derailments. Elsewhere, for example in Mali and Senegal, the concession of railways had led to a loss of more than 1,500 jobs, with an impact on passengers and communities.
56. Safe and healthy working conditions must be recognized as a fundamental right, with enforceable prevention duties, joint occupational safety and health committees, protection for workers who raised concerns, and independent accident investigations – free from fear of retaliation. In Canada, affiliates reported that the application of regulations on locomotive voice and video recordings entailed risk of misuse. Systematic monitoring and disciplinary use by management undermined trust, violated workers' rights, and weakened safety culture. There was a need to embed the principles behind the Dignity for Drivers campaign in railway safety policy. Access to safe and clean sanitation was a fundamental right and operational necessity. The results of a survey conducted in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland by the train drivers' union, ASLEF, indicated that a large proportion of drivers lacked suitable toilet access, with up to 80 per cent restricting their fluid intake to cope, leading to serious health and safety risks. When railway workers experience traumatic incidents, the International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision, recognizes acute stress disorder as a legitimate condition. Following traumatic incidents, safety-critical workers – such as train drivers – must be released from duty immediately, at least for the rest of their shift, and psychological support must be offered without delay. He offered the example of Austria, where regulations provided for an extended recovery time of 72 hours.
57. It was essential to ensure sustainable financing, including stable, multi-year public investment. Predictable funding supported renewal, strengthened skills, and underpinned safe and reliable services. By contrast, fragmented, short-term approaches and stop-start policies undermined

performance and safety. Citing examples from Australia and Canada, he highlighted the impact of underinvestment and lack of reciprocity, noting that imbalances undermined fair competition, eroded local employment, and created regulatory inconsistencies that weakened oversight. Climate change exacerbated risks, as shown by the impact on railways of recent floods in Pakistan. The sector required predictable public investment, strong regulatory frameworks, and effective social dialogue, as well as measures to integrate climate resilience into funding and governance models. All rail investment and concessions should include binding labour provisions: on safe staffing, training, equality, and occupational safety and health.

58. Turning to the issue of a just transition, innovations such as digital signalling could contribute to real improvements as long as workers were consulted, trained and guaranteed redeployment. Too often, automation was used to replace inspectors rather than to support them. Without clear rules, digitalization could undermine jobs and safety. Closure of station ticket offices and dismissal of frontline staff had an impact on accessibility and customer service quality. He gave the example of how passenger and customer watchdog objections to the planned closure of ticket offices in England had led to a reversal of those plans. A just transition, in relation to both climate resilience and the introduction of technology, relied on strong social dialogue, investment in reskilling, and clear rules so that technology served people. Institutionalized social dialogue had delivered results at the enterprise, national and regional levels. Offering positive examples of bipartite and tripartite mechanisms in India, which had secured a range of improvements and ensured the redeployment and retraining of workers following restructuring, he stressed that constructive dialogue could ensure safer, fairer transitions. He contrasted that approach with one involving fragmentation and long contracting chains that excluded workers and weakened oversight, citing an example from Australia of problems caused by inadequate staffing and automation without consultation and safeguards. Social dialogue was essential, not optional. Measures to prevent union leaders from carrying out their legitimate representation duties, as illustrated by an example from Pakistan, not only breached fundamental rights but also deprived enterprises of constructive dialogue needed to improve safety and working conditions. It was vital to embed genuine social dialogue, including collective bargaining, at the enterprise, national, regional and international levels. It must also extend across borders in international operations. Only then could investment, technology and governance reforms translate into safe, sustainable and decent work in the railways sector.
59. On skills and equality, he stressed that apprenticeships and competence frameworks delivered real results, providing replicable models that supported safe interoperability and created pathways into skilled, decent employment. Examples included the transformation of the training culture in Japan, to make training more effective and safer. An ageing workforce, rigid job classifications and weak training left skills gaps unaddressed. In the United States, rail car inspectors were often given only seconds to check highly complex equipment. To support lifelong learning and professional growth, especially for young workers, genuine opportunities were needed for learning and career development, including coaching, mentoring, training, shadowing and knowledge exchange. Apprenticeships and training must provide pathways into decent, lifelong employment. The ILO Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208) provided a strong framework to achieve that goal. He stressed that Governments must oversee apprenticeship programmes and qualifications schemes.
60. His group proposed: adopting enforceable policies on safe staffing and scientific fatigue management, including proper monitoring of working, driving and rest time for all safety-critical grades; prioritizing direct employment and ensuring that every workplace had a joint occupational safety and health committee, with full representation for women and integrated equality measures; committing to predictable public investment, embedding labour provisions

across the supply chain. Of course, the above-mentioned measures must be underpinned by full respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. There was also a need to chart a path towards international frameworks for the rail sector, covering competence, working time, fatigue and supply chain labour protections, along with measures to ensure that gender equality and youth inclusion were placed at the heart of future standard-setting. Recognizing the employment multiplier effect of investment in rail and the creation of supply chain jobs, the rail industry had a responsibility to respect human rights, including labour rights, in its supply chains, in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration).

61. The Government Vice-Chairperson said that, in most States, work in the railways sector was covered by general labour legislation, although some countries had sector-specific laws. General legislative frameworks regulated working hours, rest periods and occupational safety and health. The right to collective bargaining was generally recognized in most countries, albeit subject to restrictions in some jurisdictions. In the context of increasing private sector involvement, the rights of workers must continue to be protected and enforced through labour inspection. Social dialogue frameworks existed in many countries, including consultations on welfare and management decisions. Such arrangements generally produced positive outcomes. He expressed support for increasing women's participation in the rail workforce. Challenges included an ageing infrastructure, and the impact of rapid expansion and modernization. A just transition to automation and digital technologies must ensure that labour rights remained protected. Both formal and informal dialogue mechanisms should be encouraged. Training, capacity-building and reskilling programmes were essential to meet the technical demands of modernized, expanded networks. He stressed that railways should be promoted as the most eco-friendly mode of transport and underlined the economic and social significance of the rail sector, which generated considerable employment, social and environmental benefits. He stressed the need for effective national legislation, inclusive social dialogue and active government engagement to maintain a competitive and sustainable railway system.
62. The Government representative of Mauritania provided information on elections to establish legitimate representation for workers and employers in his country, at both the central trade union and company levels, with a view to concluding collective agreements across various sectors, including railways. The Labour Code was up to date and applied to all workers in all sectors, laying the groundwork for compliance with international labour standards. Nonetheless, there was currently no specific labour legislation tailored specifically to the railways sector. Challenges included skills shortages; in that regard, he appealed for support from the ILO. The Government aimed to follow examples set by other countries in strengthening vocational and technical training.
63. The Government representative of Malawi said that her country's constitutional provisions and labour legislation framework aligned with international labour standards. Fundamental principles and rights at work were enshrined in the constitution and legislation on employment, labour relations, compensation, health and welfare, and pensions, and applied to all workers. The legislative framework promoted and protected freedom of association, effective collective bargaining and expeditious dispute settlement. The right to strike was explicitly recognized in law, labour inspections were conducted by occupational safety and health and labour services departments, and efforts were made to create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprise, including by ensuring prerequisites such as peace, political stability, good governance, infrastructural development, education and training, and the rule of law. Social dialogue had been institutionalized through a tripartite advisory council. There was also ongoing bipartite dialogue on a range of issues. To address significant skills gaps in the rail sector, skills development

programmes had been implemented with World Bank support, with the aim of building a skilled and competent local workforce. She underscored the importance of investment, particularly in the context of broader challenges related to infrastructure financing and policy frameworks.

64. The Government representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo said that railway services in her country were managed by a State-owned enterprise. While operations were currently limited, efforts were under way to modernize the rail network. However, progress was hampered by insufficient investment and there was a need for coordinated public-private and cross-border partnerships. The provisions of the Labour Code applied to all workers, including in the railways sector, and social protection was guaranteed through the National Social Security Fund. Companies had also concluded collective agreements and developed internal regulations to improve working conditions. Occupational safety and health were addressed through legal mandates for workplace safety committees, and compliance overseen by a general labour inspectorate. Social dialogue frameworks existed, including bipartite and tripartite mechanisms. Employers in the sector were organized under a national employers' federation, and active participation by workers contributed to policy dialogue and institutional development. With regard to fundamental principles and rights at work, national legislation was aligned with core international labour standards, and the Government was in the process of ratifying the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187). She echoed calls for the adoption of minimum standards in the railways sector.
65. The Government representative of Zimbabwe said that his Government had ratified the core ILO conventions relating to relating to freedom of association, collective bargaining, elimination of forced labour, abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination in employment, as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155). It was currently working on ratifying the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and a consolidated bill had been drafted on occupational safety and health. Labour rights were enshrined in the constitution, underpinning legislation and policies to promote fundamental principles and rights at work. Labour legislation and the Railways Act provided a regulatory framework and provided for freedom of association. A tripartite negotiating forum had been established, as part of efforts to foster a culture of social dialogue. An occupational safety and health council oversaw the implementation and enforcement of relevant policies and legislation. The Railways Act ensured that safety was a priority in the sector, and the bipartite Railways Employment Council worked to promote the rights of workers and employers and carried out labour inspections. A training centre had been established to upskill and reskill workers. A new ministry had been created to enhance skills for the labour market, including in the railways sector. The Government also cooperated with private sector entities in the rail sector. Moreover, the national rail operator also worked with coal mining and cement manufacturing companies to develop partnerships to support the maintenance of wagons used to transport those types of cargo. Given that the railways sector was capital-intensive, the national rail operator's outdated business model faced resource constraints. The national rail operator was not self-sustaining and had therefore been unable to rehabilitate the rail infrastructure or take steps to prevent accidents linked to outdated machinery. Furthermore, due to capacity constraints, some collective bargaining agreement provisions had not been implemented. Moving forward, he stressed that it was necessary to invest in new technologies and infrastructure, strengthen social dialogue, develop skills retention programmes, share regional best practices relating to innovation and embrace new technologies, including artificial intelligence.
66. The Government representative of Mali referring to comments made by the Worker Spokesperson on the dismissal of workers by the State-owned rail company in his country, clarified that Senegal

and Mali had inherited a railway network originally used to transport raw materials. Both States had initially sought to use the network to promote development. However, challenges and constraints had ultimately led them to privatize the railways, resulting in their concession to a Franco-Canadian company, Transrail. That company had failed to honour its commitments, and the infrastructure and services had deteriorated over time, owing to a lack of investment and maintenance. Operations had ceased and one thousand employees had been dismissed, with an impact on communities. Efforts to relaunch the rail network faced a range of technical and financial challenges. Since 2018, under an agreement signed with Senegal and the railway trade union, workers' salaries were paid from the State budget. That measure, adopted to avoid technical unemployment, demonstrated the will of both States to preserve the railways sector, which was essential to development. The State had also taken on the financing of an emergency plan for the rail sector and provided subsidies to ensure service continuity.

67. The Government representative of Türkiye said that examples of successful measures had included the introduction of clear and enforceable regulations and standards, which had reduced risks of incidents and injuries and made a real difference to safety in the railways sector. Effective bipartite and tripartite social dialogue mechanisms ensured that workers' voices were taken into account, particularly with regard to safety and sustainability. Collective bargaining agreements in many countries addressed working hours, rest periods and safety provisions, in alignment with ILO standards and principles. Turning to difficulties and obstacles, he highlighted ongoing challenges in the implementation of safety standards, linked to outdated infrastructure and weak enforcement. Privatization and outsourcing had, in certain cases, undermined safety culture by prioritizing cost over the protection of workers. Gaps in the enforcement of labour rights in cross-border rail operations had led to problems such as wage dumping and unequal protection, as laws were not harmonized across the region. Automation and digitalization also posed challenges, including with regard to training, upskilling or policies to ensure job security, leaving workers vulnerable to redundancy or precarious employment. The integration of women into the rail sector workforce remained inadequate, and women continued to be under-represented, especially in technical roles and leadership positions. In his own country, the Government had taken steps to advance decent work and fundamental rights in the rail sector. He provided examples of projects, including infrastructure improvements and investments, which had strengthened occupational safety and health. The Government continued to work closely with the ILO to improve working conditions, align regulations with international labour standards, and strengthen regional cooperation and social dialogue mechanisms. He stressed the need to ensure that investment in the rail sector aligned with green transition and sustainability goals, and to effectively monitor and enforce equality policies.
68. The Government representative of Brazil said that fatigue management could contribute to reducing safety risks. Fatigue, relating to excessive working hours or lack of sufficient rest periods, was a significant source of risk for rail operators and workers. In addition to legislation on working hours and mandatory rest periods, fatigue management systems could be established through regulations or incorporated into company-level safety management systems. The aim was to prevent accidents and occupational illness. That concept could be further developed or reflected in the conclusions drafted by the meeting. Privatization, vertical integration and concessions in the railways sector remained major concerns for workers. He drew attention to the suggestion put forward by the Workers' group to embed safety and health provisions, along with working time, directly into concession contracts, to prevent the erosion of minimum standards or labour rights. That constructive proposal would both safeguard fundamental rights and protect decent work in concession-based systems. He also underlined the importance of labour inspection in that regard and called for measures to strengthen inspectorates to ensure the enforcement of legislation and protect workers' rights. His own country had a well-established labour inspection

system, and had created a regulatory agency for land transport, which also contributed to strengthening safety standards, regulating the railways sector to improving safety. He reaffirmed the importance of integrating fatigue management and contractual safety and working time safeguards into regulatory frameworks. Strong inspection and regulatory mechanisms were key to safe and decent work in the rail sector.

69. The Government representative of Mexico said that in his country, labour policy applied broadly to all sectors. A national development plan had been rolled out including the railways sector, with more than 2,500 overall projects, as well as major investments. Thousands of kilometres of new track had been laid. However, the sector remained underutilized, which limited its growth despite the efficiency of rail transport and its environmental benefits. The Government sought to improve passenger and freight transport and increase competitiveness by consolidating an intermodal transport system and expanding the rail network to ensure efficient, sustainable, safe and affordable transport. In recent years, national labour policies had changed the landscape of work, to correct past injustices and introduce a range of improvements. Those policies also applied to the railways sector and included measures to attract young people through capacity-building and professional training programmes. He noted that his Government also sought to strengthen collective bargaining, increase purchasing power through higher wages, stimulate productivity, and reinforce compliance with labour standards. Efforts to reduce informal work and improve livelihoods included certification and training programmes, including those aimed at ensuring that workers acquired the skills needed to adapt to technological change. Occupational safety and health were of paramount importance, supported by labour inspection systems that guaranteed compliance with standards and rules. He emphasized the importance of decent work and formal employment opportunities for workers in critical roles or those exposed to occupational risks, in order to ensure continued progress in line with the fundamental principles of decent work.
70. The Employer Vice-Chairperson recalled that many forms of social dialogue existed. She emphasized that employers recognized the importance of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). She underlined, however, that all forms of social dialogue were necessary, particularly with respect to occupational safety and health. She reiterated the group's position expressed the previous day that safety was non-negotiable, as it was essential both for decent work and for sustainable enterprises. She stated that its effectiveness required the use of all forms of social dialogue. The matter of the right to strike was currently before the International Court of Justice, following a decision adopted by vote during the special session of the ILO Governing Body in November 2023. Her group did not wish to reopen or pre-empt that debate, as it exceeded the scope of sectoral discussions.
71. She further referred to points raised about inadequate facilities, such as toilets, and the barriers they created for women in the railways sector, noting that the issue was linked to the need for stable funding and investment to support long asset lives. Retrofitting locomotives was extremely costly and could take decades. Stable funding would not only facilitate such improvements but also help to attract a new generation of workers from broader segments of the population, including women, while benefiting the workforce as a whole.
72. On the issue of privatization, some Government representatives had indicated that such an approach could help to sustain the railways sector in the long term, given the scale of the investment required. Although incoherent frameworks and complex transitions from public to private ownership had often made the process uneven and difficult, public-private partnerships could constitute a positive approach, allowing investment to be mobilized while avoiding disruptive transitions. Her group did not favour or reject any particular ownership model, but sought to identify ways to strengthen and improve them all.

73. Finally, she stressed that outsourcing provided companies with access to diverse expertise, skills, and services that might not be available in-house. It enabled enterprises to benefit from specialized knowledge, new technology, and innovative practices while focusing their own structures on core business operations. That flexibility fostered competitiveness, efficiency, and resilience, and encouraged collaboration with diverse suppliers, service providers and startups. She added that outsourcing was covered by the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181) and that railways had a diversity of ownership and organizational models, all of which could be valid, provided they delivered decent work.
74. The Worker Spokesperson said that his group agreed with the Employers' group on the need for investment and safety innovation; the importance of compliance-led fatigue management; the urgent need for targeted upskilling in new signalling and power technologies; support for inclusion of women and young people, including via accessible facilities, predictable schedules and measures to attract young workers; retraining and upskilling workers, including older workers; improving the attractiveness of the sector; effective tripartite social dialogue and the need for independent reporting of accidents and incidents, without fear of retaliation. His group also agreed on the need for predictable, multi-year funding; measures to improve interoperability; and training and capacity-building. While his group recognized that different jurisdictions had either sector-specific or general labour legislation applicable to the rail sector, he stressed that international labour standards, fundamental principles and rights should always be respected. He thanked Government representatives for their accounts of their national frameworks and measures, with particular reference to the clarifications provided by the Government representative of Mali, and welcomed the support expressed by the representative of Brazil for equal protection for outsourced workers.
75. He would have liked to have heard more on the structural issues facing the sector, including deregulation and privatization, sustained attacks on fundamental principles, low pay and poor occupational safety and health outcomes. He hoped that his group's comments had adequately reflected the key issues facing rail workers. Overall, he welcomed the areas of convergence identified. Noting that his group was aware of the position of the Employers' group on the right to strike and the proceedings pending before the International Court of Justice, he said that the examples he had cited aimed to highlight the reality on the ground for many rail sector unions. His group's position on that issue was clear. Although rail union leaders and workers potentially risked jail to participate in legitimate industrial action, they would not be deterred from exercising their fundamental rights.
76. The Employer Vice-Chairperson reiterated that while her group took on board concerns regarding the right to strike, the matter was currently before the International Court of Justice, and she had no wish to pre-empt the court's ruling. She welcomed the common ground that had been found. To clarify a previous point raised by the Workers' Group, she said that her Group had referred to non-punitive reporting of near-misses, but that no reference had been made to independent inspections.

Discussion of point 3

What recommendations can be made for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members – governments, employers' and workers' organizations – regarding the promotion of decent work in the railways sector? In particular related to: policy recommendations for tripartite action, priority actions and practical orientation for the Office?

77. The Worker Spokesperson said that Governments needed to: ensure that fundamental principles and rights at work, as well as relevant international labour standards, were effectively

implemented and applied to all workers in the railways sector; invest in and promote the development of rail infrastructure and systems through stable and predictable public financing; engage in sustainable procurement practices, guided by the Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94); in consultation with the social partners, take all possible regulatory, policy and financial measures to tackle climate change and guarantee a just transition for all rail workers, in line with the ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all; and strengthen labour administration and inspection systems to ensure full compliance with international labour standards and national laws and regulations in the sector.

78. The ILO's tripartite constituents should, where possible and as appropriate, recognize rail transportation as a public good; conduct labour impact assessments and develop frameworks for meaningful social dialogue, including collective bargaining, and effective negotiations on innovations such as artificial intelligence; create and support an enabling environment for effective social dialogue with collective bargaining at its core, including cross-border social dialogue, and take action to ensure the effective recognition of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining in the rail sector, in line with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); establish or strengthen regular tripartite rail consultation forums at the global, regional and national levels. The tripartite constituents should also ensure that railways were properly and adequately staffed and promote a "just culture" with effective grievance mechanisms for reporting without fear of retaliation. They should promote standard forms of employment and fair recruitment, limit subcontracting, and ensure that people engaged in outsourced or other forms of precarious work enjoyed protection no less favourable than directly employed workers; fully respect and implement the Conclusions concerning the consequences for management and personnel of the restructuring of railways adopted in 1994; address sector-specific hazards and violence and harassment, and establish joint occupational safety and health committees; develop and implement policy and regulatory frameworks covering working time and rest periods to address fatigue, taking the rail sector's unique characteristics into account; ensure equal and inclusive employment policies; promote equality of opportunity and treatment for all; make provision for gender-responsive personal protective equipment, clean drinking water, and adequate, accessible and separate sanitary and rest facilities for women and men. They should ensure a living wage for all rail workers, taking into account their needs and those of their families; address skills gaps through retraining and upskilling, recognition of cross-border skills and certification, quality apprenticeships, lifelong learning and training standards; promote diversity in the workforce, including through public funding mechanisms; address challenges relating to cross-border and international worker mobility and fair recruitment; provide universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems to all workers, irrespective of employment status, and ensure the portability of social security benefits across borders; and ensure that the rail industry fulfilled its responsibility to respect human rights, including labour rights, in their supply chains.
79. He called on the meeting to invite the ILO Governing Body to consider all possible normative and non-normative measures to promote and realize decent work in the railways sector, and to convene, when appropriate, a tripartite meeting of experts to draft and adopt a code of practice or guidelines on occupational safety and health in the railways sector, to support operational safety and protect rail workers and the wider community. Turning to priority actions and practical measures, he called on the Office to continue to promote the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, ILO instruments, declarations and tools relevant to the railways sector; help constituents build capacity to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work through the effective implementation of the

Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), and to engage in effective social dialogue, including collective bargaining; provide technical support to constituents on the effective implementation of ILO Conventions including the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), and the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) from a sectoral perspective; promote the participation of women and young workers in the sector; support the design and implementation of skills, reskilling, apprenticeships and lifelong learning schemes; conduct research, including on: best practices for a more inclusive workforce, the impact of technology – including artificial intelligence – on employment levels and working conditions, and the application of international labour standards to the rail sector. The Office was also encouraged to engage in technical cooperation projects, including with landlocked States; strengthen coordination and cooperation with relevant multilateral bodies, including the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail; and to play an active part in the United Nations Decade for Sustainable Transport, together with the tripartite constituents. He also suggested for the draft conclusions and recommendations to include an appendix including ILO declarations, instruments, guidance and tools relevant to the railways sector.

80. The Employer Vice-Chairperson welcomed the common ground established to date, including the importance of safety, the need for long-term sustainable funding, and the value of creating conditions conducive to investment in rail infrastructure and rolling stock. She encouraged Governments, in consultation with the most representative Employers' and Workers' organizations, to: draft shared policy recommendations supporting innovation and productivity to ensure future growth and sustainability; promote coherent, unambiguous and practical policies that reflected current realities, with room for evolution and innovation; introduce effective reforms, especially for transitions from public to other forms of ownership; and update regulations. Reform needs must be identified at the country level, taking into account domestic economic contexts. Support should be provided to modernize upskilling and training programmes to attract and retain a new and diverse generation of workers, as well as to retain older workers and their knowledge. To that end, inclusive and sustainable social protection systems should also be developed, including at the national level, taking national economic contexts into account. It was vital to ensure effective tripartite social dialogue, to develop programmes and solutions tailored to local contexts and needs, and share best practices for developing and modernizing the rail sector, taking into account regional concerns and diverse structures and ownership models.
81. With regard to priority actions and practical measures, she encouraged the Office to apply just transition strategies to the analysis of sectoral issues and development of policies, in line with the 2023 International Labour Conference Resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all; collaborate with other international and regional agencies to support the development of long-term, stable funding and investment, including by connecting employers and Governments with innovative financing solutions; collect and share best practices relating to occupational safety and health, to promote the transferability of proven strategies that improve safety in the rail sector; and support capacity-building for effective social dialogue in the sector. Her group felt strongly that the foundations had been laid for consensus. She thanked the Government and Workers' groups for their constructive engagement and valuable input. The frank and open exchange of ideas had been a testament to the passion and mission-driven nature of "railroaders" the world over. To ensure that rail continued to drive progress around the world, all social partners must work together; only

through effective tripartite dialogue could rail continue to be the cornerstone of safe, productive, sustainable and inclusive development in the future. She encouraged the Office to provide tentative conclusions and practical recommendations that reflected that consensus, as well as the diversity of national contexts and structures, and promote tailored approaches—grounded in investment and sound economic analysis.

82. The Government Vice-Chairperson stated that, in terms of recommendations for future action, his group emphasized the need for common models, aligned with relevant ILO conventions, to guide policies on workers' rights, particularly in occupational safety and health. Railways operated in a regulatory-rich environment, and progressive regulation of working hours and conditions was essential. In that regard, the Office had a role to play in supporting Member States. Railways were a capital-intensive industry; many countries were upgrading, refurbishing or expanding infrastructure, which required significant investment. He stressed the need for assistance with financing arrangements; there, too, the ILO might play a role. In the context of increasing privatization, bipartite and tripartite consultations were crucial to ensuring smooth transitions and protecting workers' rights.
83. He stressed the importance of standardization and suggested that an international standards body be established for the railways sector, comparable to existing entities in the aviation and maritime transport sectors. Emerging technologies and artificial intelligence should be promoted, while monitoring their impact on workers' rights, job security and safety. Innovation had the potential to enhance both passenger and employee safety. It was important to share best practices and success stories. Highlighting the importance of interoperability, he underscored the need for technical support mechanisms to facilitate cross-border and regional cooperation, particularly for landlocked countries requiring access to ports. It was also necessary to ensure common minimum standards and the regional integration of railway networks. Benchmarking and standardization in maintenance practices, signalling, training, licencing and safety monitoring were also highlighted. In addition, accident investigation protocols, similar to those in the aviation sector, should be developed for the railways sector, to ensure that lessons were learned and systems improved. His group also suggested establishing a dedicated international training institute for railways to provide high-level training for Member States.
84. The Government representative of Zimbabwe said that the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) should tailor its capacity-building programmes to the different contexts of Member States, given the disparities in development in the railways sector. She observed that the short videos shown during the meeting (see Annex I) had not included any examples from Africa and asked whether that indicated that the Office was not undertaking railway activities in the region that could have been shared.
85. The Government representative of Brazil said that Governments, employers, other stakeholders and the ILO should make efforts at the international, national and regional levels to implement: legislation and practices on working time and rest periods to prevent fatigue; specific occupational safety and health regulations tailored to freight and passenger transport; legislation and practices ensuring freedom of association, collective bargaining and protection against discrimination; and safety management systems enabling employers to identify and control occupational risks and hazards affecting railway workers. Furthermore, he recommended introducing comprehensive training programmes; legislation and practices on maintenance of rolling stock and tracks within each party's responsibility; strengthened labour inspection structures and training, including capacity-building for accident analysis and identification of causes; including clauses in concession and privatization contracts that preserved workers' fundamental occupational rights; and policies to increase the attractiveness of the sector.

86. The Government representative of India stressed the need to distinguish between safety-critical employees and other railway workers, with safeguards tailored to safety-critical categories, including limits on working hours, which could vary by management system and country. As no common agreement currently existed on the basic facilities and designs required in locomotives, drivers often had to master multiple technologies, which increased the complexity of their work. There was a need to standardize basic facilities, designs and interfaces. With regard to long-term financing, he noted that although railways were the most sustainable mode of transport, mechanisms to monetize the carbon credits that they generated had yet to be developed. Establishing monitoring, reporting and verification regulations could create new financing opportunities for countries investing in railways. He reiterated the importance of developing a common minimum platform for interoperability, that could be adapted to national contexts.
87. The Government representative of Malawi , referring to the point raised earlier on capacity-building, said that although some regions had not been reflected in the presentations, initiatives were under way in different subregions to improve and develop the railways sector. She urged the Office to strengthen cooperation with such subregional bodies to ensure that programmes and strategies in the sector were consistent with international standards and effectively implemented.
88. The Head of the Transport and Maritime Sectors Unit , responding to a question raised by the Government representative of Zimbabwe on ILO activities in Africa, explained that the Office had published a Manual on social dialogue in the railways sector, and that a subregional tripartite workshop had been organized in 2023 in Livingstone, Zambia, bringing together 20 Government, worker and employer representatives from Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as 18 observers. The workshop had provided a platform to exchange best practices and promote a safe and sustainable railways sector through social dialogue. The outcome document had addressed issues such as labour protection, training, skills, financing, recapitalization, policy coherence, structural change in ownership and operations, transparency and effective consultation, with the aim of advancing social justice and decent work. He acknowledged the request for further capacity-building at national and subregional levels.
89. The Government representative of Malawi welcomed the clarification from the Office. However, she expressed concern that many of the examples shown in the short videos tended to focus on a single region, while experiences from other continents were not highlighted. Sharing information from a wider range of regions would enrich the discussion and provide valuable learning opportunities. That recurring concern had been raised in previous meetings, where some regions appeared to have greater visibility than others.
90. The Head of the Transport and Maritime Sectors Unit took note of concerns regarding regional balance in the examples presented and acknowledged that more could be done to ensure broader geographic representation in the future. He welcomed the active participation of many African States in the Government group and underlined that the report of the meeting would faithfully reflect all interventions, experiences and concerns raised.
91. The Worker Spokesperson thanked his fellow Vice-Chairpersons and their groups for their contributions and engagement. He agreed that the Office should undertake actions on railways at the national, subnational and regional levels, including in Africa, building on the outcomes of the workshop held in Zambia in 2023.
92. The Employer Vice-Chairperson said that her group considered the proposal for an international agency for the rail sector as neither appropriate nor necessary. Railways operated within or across national borders under the authority of sovereign States; unlike in the maritime transport sector, there was no equivalent to international waters requiring international oversight. Establishing a

new agency could create overlaps in oversight, conflict and ambiguity. While supporting interoperability, her group stressed that issues such as cross-border trade, migration and international relations remained the prerogative of Governments. An international agency risked setting standards that did not take into account the diverse ownership models, structures and stages of economic development in the rail sector. Instead, her group favoured enhanced collaboration and sharing of expertise and best practices.

93. Labour inspections, which were essential to effective labour administration, should be independent, performed by well-qualified staff, flexible and adequately resourced. In addition to enforcing regulations, inspectors could also provide information, guidance, training and management support to enterprises. She noted that the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) allowed States to exclude certain sectors and define coverage through declarations at ratification. The main challenge was a lack of sufficient resources for labour inspection systems. The issue of labour inspection had been addressed in the 2007 International Labour Conference conclusions on enabling environments for sustainable enterprises, which remained valid and should be promoted to advance decent work in the rail sector. She welcomed the common ground established during the meeting discussions and looked forward to the tentative conclusions.
94. The Government Vice-Chairperson agreed and reiterated his earlier comments.

► Consideration and adoption of the draft conclusions and recommendations

95. At its fourth sitting, and in accordance with the provisions of article 13 of the Standing orders for technical meetings, the meeting set up a Working Party to prepare draft conclusions taking into account the various views, proposals and suggestions made during the discussion in the meeting.
96. The Working Party was chaired by the Chairperson, Ms S.M. Janahi (Employer, Kingdom of Bahrain), and was composed of the following members:

Government members

India	Mr A. AT. Pednekar (Vice-Chairperson) Mr K. Kant Rora (adviser)
Kenya	Mr M. Muli Ms T. Nyandika (adviser)
Mali	Mr B.A.I. Tahar
Namibia	Ms P. Nghidengwa Mr T.M. Shakela (adviser)

Employer members

	Ms M. Martens (Vice-Chairperson, Canada)
	Mr V. Rama Manohara Rao (India)
	Ms N. Chenard (Democratic Republic of the Congo)
	Mr J.F. Flores Filho (Brazil)
Secretariat:	Mr L.R. Morales Vélez (IOE)
	Ms N. Privee Boudeguer (IOE)

Worker members

Mr J.A. Sosa (Vice-Chairperson, Argentina)
 Mr J. Kennedy (Canada)
 Ms P. Singh (India)
 Ms J. Nafula Sikhila Lusaka (Kenya)

Secretariat:

Mr A. Praça (ITUC)
 Mr R. Subasinghe (ITF)
 Mr D. Akdogan (ITF)

- 97.** The Draft conclusions and recommendations on decent work in the railways sector (TMDWRS/2025/6), as revised and amended by the working party, were submitted to the meeting for adoption at its fifth sitting.

Conclusions and recommendations

Introduction

- 98.** Proposed paragraph 1 was approved.

Current and emerging issues that have most impacted the realization of decent work in the railways sector

Proposed paragraphs 2-7

- 99.** Paragraphs 2-7 were approved.

What needs to be done to promote railways safety and sustainability policies

Proposed paragraphs 8-16

- 100.** Paragraphs 8-16 were approved.

Recommendations for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members

Proposed paragraphs 17-21

- 101.** Paragraphs 17-21 were approved.

Appendix

- 102.** The proposed Appendix containing a non-exhaustive list of ILO declarations, instruments, guidance and tools, and other international instruments to promote decent work in the railways sector as a whole, was approved.

Title

- 103.** In order to increase its visibility and for ease of reference, the Worker Spokesperson suggested for the title to be finalized as “Conclusions and recommendations on decent work in the railways sector”. The other groups agreed and the new title of the document was approved.

Adoption of the Conclusions and recommendations

- 104.** The technical meeting adopted the Conclusions and recommendations on decent work in the railways sector ([TMDWRS/2025/7](#)), as a whole, by consensus (reproduced in Annex II).

► Closure of the meeting

- 105.** The Secretary-General of the meeting congratulated participants on their excellent, constructive, productive and outcome-oriented discussions. The deliberations had been fair, respectful and conducted in good faith; that approach was vital to successful social dialogue. The meeting outcome, in the form of a document that served all parties, reflected the hard work of all participants. He thanked the Chairperson for her excellent leadership, expressed his gratitude to the three Vice-Chairpersons and Worker Spokesperson for their solid work and welcomed the constructive engagement of all three groups. He also thanked the Office team and all support staff. He hoped that the next technical meeting would not be three decades in the making. Given the rapid pace of development in the railways sector, a review to take stock of progress would be needed within the next decade.
- 106.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson expressed her appreciation for the rich and rewarding discussions, as well as opportunities to collaborate with rail sector stakeholders from around the world. She thanked her adviser and her group and welcomed the engagement and commitment of the Government and Workers' groups, who had worked hard to find common ground. She thanked the Chairperson for her careful, diplomatic and firm approach. Thanks were also owed to the Office and all staff involved in organizing and managing the meeting, which had served as an excellent example of successful social dialogue. The railways sector was on the cusp of a new era, and she hoped that the tripartite meeting and its outcomes would contribute to shaping the future of the rail industry.
- 107.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson expressed his appreciation for the constructive discussions which, while not always easy, had been guided by a joint commitment to a strong rail sector and future for rail workers. All decision-making needed to prioritize the rights, dignity and safety of workers. The future of the sector must be guided by respect, fundamental principles and rights, and a solid safety culture. He thanked the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons, the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the meeting, the Head of the Transport and Maritime Sectors Unit and the Executive Secretary of the meeting, as well as the Coordinator of the Meeting and Chief of the Secretariat Services and her support team, whose hard work had made the meeting possible. He thanked the members of the Employers' and Government groups, as well as his own group, its secretariat and its spokesperson, for their knowledge, passion, patience and solidarity. He also thanked colleagues from the ITF and ITUC. He stressed that rail workers were vital to ensuring safe and sustainable transportation. Genuine social dialogue, collective bargaining and solidarity were key to ensuring a sustainable and fair public service.
- 108.** The Government Vice-Chairperson thanked the Office for its preparatory work, guidance and support. The meeting outcomes reflected the value of the tripartite platform provided by the ILO. The rail sector was on the cusp of transformative growth, and the meeting conclusions would help to set objectives for decent work in the future. He thanked the Chairperson for her skilled leadership and expressed his gratitude to the members of his group, as well as those in the Workers' and Employers' groups, ably led by their Vice-Chairpersons. Constructive dialogue, involving diverse and rich points of view, had resulted in a document that would serve as a solid policy road map. He thanked all delegations for their dedication and constructive inputs.

- 109.** The Government representative of Brazil congratulated the Office and its staff, the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons. Wishing to avoid any possible misinterpretation of his earlier comments, he clarified that the rail sector in his country was effectively regulated, with a broad range of legislations, including occupational safety and health provisions that protected all workers. Although there were no regulatory provisions that specifically covered OSH in the railways sector, general occupational safety and health legislation and regulations protected workers, including those in the railways sector.
- 110.** The Government representative of Indonesia thanked the Government Vice-Chairperson for his leadership. The rail sector was vital to development, particularly in rural areas, and sustainable interregional and cross-border transport, as well as the continuity of supply chains, and economic and social development. Factors such as rapid technological development, climate change and other global pressures, had an impact on the rail sector. The conclusions of the technical meeting would provide a valuable tool for future action. She hoped that the Office would continue to prioritize technical assistance to the global South. She thanked all meeting delegates for their constructive engagement.
- 111.** The Chairperson, thanking the Office and all meeting participants, in particular the three Vice-Chairpersons, for their professionalism and passion, declared the technical meeting on decent work in the railways sector closed.

► Annex I. List of short videos on selected current and emerging issues impacting the railways sector

In accordance with the meeting's adopted timetable (TMDWRS/2025/2), at its first, second and third sittings, six short video clips conveying the views of railways experts on specific thematic areas were showcased:

Subject	Expert
International governance	Mr F. Dionori (UNECE)
Financing	Ms M. Lawrence (World Bank)
Energy	Mr O. Alsauskas (International Energy Agency)
Artificial intelligence	Mr R. van Dongen (Nederlandse Spoorwegen)
Research and innovation	Mr G. Travaini (Europe's Rail Joint Undertaking)
Efficiency and competitiveness	Mr L. Casullo (Ricardo)

The Office is grateful for the videos sent by these experts.

► Annex II. Conclusions and recommendations on decent work in the railways sector

Introduction

1. Since their emergence, the railways have reshaped the world and made a historic contribution in the pursuit of economic and social objectives from one country to another. Today the sector is a major employer in several countries, and rail services remain a cornerstone and an indispensable driver of economic transformation, job creation, competitiveness and social inclusion. The railways are relatively one of the most energy efficient and low-carbon transport modes, especially over long distances, for both freight and passengers, nationally and internationally. They are critical to developing sustainable value chains, energy transition policies, and ensuring passenger mobility to peripheral regions and economic hubs. They play a key role in facilitating trade and investment in many sectors, and enabling urban regeneration as well as rural development, and constitute the backbone of sustainable economic growth, in particular for landlocked countries.

Current and emerging issues that have most impacted the realization of decent work in the railways sector

2. Despite being an international and cross-border mode of transport in several countries, the railways sector's growth to a truly global mode of transport is impacted by the lack of a common governance framework providing regional and global coherence. Diverse national and regional approaches have resulted in separate frameworks in rail corridor development and regulation, with no comparable global standards as those existing for the aviation and maritime sectors. In certain regions, this has hampered cross-border and regional interoperability.
3. Due to their safety-critical nature and economic and strategic importance for international trade and movement, railways operate in a highly regulated environment. Countries have used various means of legislation, yet a tailored approach could be recommended for the needs and particularities of the sector, as rail systems differ widely in their ownership models and stages of development.
4. The public sector plays a key role in regulating railways services which may be delivered under public and/or private operations, with various degrees of outsourcing and other forms of contracting and subcontracting. The segmentation between infrastructure and railways operations has led, in some regions, to the separation of responsibilities for the infrastructure, traffic management and rail services. Constraints in existing structures have led to the introduction of competition and blended finance in rail operations with varied results which reflects the diversity of the sector. The private sector is also a key driver of innovation, economic growth, job creation, and the transition towards sustainable and inclusive economies, allowing the railways to explore new options and opportunities in some countries. Public and private sectors, working together, can act as a catalyst for a more sustainable and inclusive future. This includes privatization or commercialization, which may involve fixed-term concessions or other forms of private sector participation. In many cases, it may have an impact on staffing levels, working conditions, collective bargaining frameworks, pay and salary structures and the availability of training opportunities. Therefore, effective social dialogue

and coherent and balanced policies are essential to ensure operational efficiency, safeguard decent work and strengthen the long-term sustainability of the sector.

5. Railways are currently one of the safest forms of transport, and safety is non-negotiable for the sector. While rail services have slashed transport costs and travel times for its users, they should, above all, be safe for workers and users, efficient and affordable, and have adequate inspection levels to ensure they remain safe. Occupational safety and health (OSH) risks and hazards include not only accident risks, but also hazards such as fatigue, long shifts, noise and vibration, diesel exhaust, electrical hazards, physical and psychological risks, and violence and harassment. Hazards associated with the maintenance and operation of trains include physical, chemical, ergonomic and biological risks, extreme weather events, including heat stress, and confined spaces. The provision of safe, accessible and adequate sanitation facilities, adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) at no cost to the worker,¹ and uniforms, where required and depending on national contexts, is crucial, including gender-responsive measures to remove the barriers that prevent women from entering and remaining in the sector.
6. Railways systems are capital-intensive, and predictable, long-term and stable investments are critical to unlock their potential and for the railways to provide safe, productive and sustainable services. Yet, in some countries, public financing is insufficient to ensure decent work and successful growth, and to fully embrace innovation and to maintain infrastructure and rolling stock. Long-term economic and financial sustainability to revitalize the sector, including by using new mechanisms such as climate financing instruments, both for public and private rail services, can be a key driver to a just transition and advance decent work as a cornerstone of safe, inclusive and sustainable railways. Capacity-building and training including reskilling and upskilling efforts will require the cooperation of all stakeholders. This will modernize and improve the sector's reputation and support the acceleration of equality and inclusivity to attract, train and retain a more diverse workforce including youth, older workers and, in particular, women, who remain under-represented in many railways occupations.
7. Energy transition policies and new technologies introduced in railway systems have reshaped the sector and opened doors for transformation, and continue to change the workforce needs of railways. The rapid technological changes that have marked rail operations in some countries include digitalization and automation, and the emerging impact of artificial intelligence. The introduction of new technologies requires effective capacity-building and training. Social dialogue can help mitigate any impacts that the introduction of new technologies may have on employment, including levels, working conditions and safety. The productive use of a workforce with increasing levels of technical skills requires training to boost safety and address skills gaps, while also enabling workers to benefit from these productivity gains. The challenges in attracting and retaining workers, which can impact adequate staffing levels, coupled with the increased demand for high-skilled workers to drive innovation, productivity and sustainability in the industry, will require harmonized procedures and

¹ Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), Article 16: Employers shall be required to provide, where necessary, adequate protective clothing and protective equipment to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, risk of accidents or of adverse effects on health; Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 1981 (No. 164), para. 10: The obligations placed upon employers with a view to achieving the objective set forth in Article 16 of the Convention might include, as appropriate for different branches of economic activity and different types of work, the following: ... (e) to provide, without any cost to the worker, adequate personal protective clothing and equipment which are reasonably necessary when hazards cannot be otherwise prevented or controlled.

recognition of competencies to: make rail jobs more dynamic, attract and retain talent, and support the upskilling and reskilling of workers.

What needs to be done to promote railways safety and sustainability policies

8. The effective implementation and application of ratified Conventions, as well as recommendations and fundamental principles and rights at work in national law and practice is crucial for ensuring rights at work in the railways sector. It will be critical to effectively promote policy coherence between technological change and climate action in the industry, and efforts to advance the respect, promotion and realization of the fundamental principles and rights at work, including non-discrimination, and promoting a safe and healthy working environment. Universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems must be strengthened to support all workers.
9. Ensuring equal opportunities and treatment is essential for the future of the industry. This includes respecting the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, eliminating barriers, in particular with regard to women, and young workers, persons with disabilities or migrant workers, advancing labour protection, adequate wage policies, including living wages,² and promoting a work environment that is free from violence and harassment. The sector must approach all aspects of its attraction and retention efforts anchored in the principles of diversity, equality and inclusion, leaving no one behind.
10. A safe and healthy working environment is a fundamental right, and OSH is linked to operational safety. The realization of a safe and healthy working environment in rail transport should be a central and continuous responsibility of governments and employers' and workers' organizations, who have distinct but complementary responsibilities in that regard. Safety management systems (SMS) – that aim to make the sector safer without the fear of retaliation – could effectively ensure compliance with technical regulations and proactive measures. SMS should include policies, hazard identification and prevention, adequate monitoring and hazard control measures of OSH-related hazards and risks in the railways sector, including through joint OSH committees and independent accident investigation mechanisms. SMS and the promotion of a safety culture supported by grievance mechanisms – that aim to make the sector safer without the fear of retaliation – could effectively ensure compliance with technical regulations and proactively address safety, violence, harassment and other incident and event reporting concerns. In particular, adequate staffing, predictable scheduling and science-based fatigue management systems would benefit from standardization and tailoring of hours of work and rest periods for rail workers.
11. National governments and railway undertakings should prioritize the preservation, modernization and utilization of railways systems. The sector's structures and ownership have evolved according to national and regional particularities. Adequate policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks are needed to promote an enabling environment for sustainable public and private enterprises in the sector, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, to increase productivity and decent job creation, taking into account the ILO Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises (2007), in the appropriate national and regional context. Such policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks should ensure the advancement of rights at work, in particular the fundamental principles and rights at work,

² With reference to the Conclusions of the ILO Meeting of Experts on wage policies, including living wages (Geneva, 19–23 February 2024).

and the access to universal, comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection. Structural constraints to competitiveness should be examined and assessed to formulate policies that are effective, well-suited to their purpose, not unduly burdensome, and that promote financing and maintenance regimes built for the long-term. Capital investment, predictable, multi-year and stable public funding, or conditions that attract private investment, should lead to results in terms of modernization, profitability and increased productivity, in conformity with national requirements, while generating jobs with decent working conditions with the highest standards of safety and health.

12. Sustainable procurement practices promote the realization of public services obligations. Adequate coordination mechanisms are also required to ensure coherent policies including enforcement and inspection, in the context where functions may be decentralized or outsourced.
13. Investments in technological, safety and green innovation would have multiplier effects on employment in the railways sector. The ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* (Guidelines for a just transition) provide the central reference for policymaking and a basis for action. Investments in innovation, including digitalization and automation, based on a human-centred approach, can enhance operational efficiency and improve safety, while respecting applicable legislation on workers' privacy and data protection, and at the same time contribute to improvements in OSH as well as the promotion of decent work overall. In addition, rail investments that hold significant potential for generating decent, green and inclusive jobs should be prioritized in order to advance just transitions and provide opportunities for meaningful tripartite dialogue.
14. Effective tripartite social dialogue, at all levels, and across sectors and borders, where applicable, based on the respect of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, as enshrined in the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up*, adopted in 1998 and amended in 2022, has a pivotal role in shaping and effectively implementing policies and legislation that promote decent work and support a just transition in the industry that leaves no one behind.
15. The accelerating speed of technological and environmental transitions in the railways sector makes it necessary to give particular attention to diversity and inclusion, as well as to the initial and further training of railway workers in order to address skills gaps. Skills development and lifelong learning strategies, including quality apprenticeships, developed by governments and employers' and workers' organizations, are key to enable enterprises and workers to better respond to the evolving technological, climate and structural change requirements of the sector. Effective skills certification and international recognition of diplomas and prior learning can support cross-border workers and interoperability among countries and regions. The allocation of adequate financial resources for skills development can also support and guarantee access to training for all workers, particularly women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers and those in vulnerable situations.
16. New technologies introduced in railway systems continue to have a transformative effect, including with regard to human resources and staffing needs. Social dialogue can enable social partners to shape the way technology is introduced and create space for a human-centred transition, fostering a more skilled and engaged workforce capable of driving innovation and growth within the sector. The productive use of a workforce with increasing levels of technical skills requires training to boost safety and address skills gaps, while also ensuring that workers are able to benefit from these productivity gains. Measures should be taken to minimize the adverse effects which these changes might have on employment and working conditions. In

addition, training necessary to facilitate the transferability of the workers concerned to other jobs should be provided.

Recommendations for future action by the International Labour Organization and its Members

17. Governments have the duty to adopt, implement and effectively enforce national laws and regulations to ensure that fundamental principles and rights at work, as set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) as amended in 2022, and ratified international labour Conventions are applied to all workers in the railways sector, taking into account their obligations under the ILO Constitution. They should also promote responsible procurement to advance environmental sustainability and decent work, in line with relevant international labour standards.
18. All enterprises have a responsibility to respect human and labour rights including the fundamental principles and rights at work, throughout their operations, in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration), as amended in 2022.
19. In addition, governments, in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, where appropriate, should:
 - (a) ensure that all workers enjoy decent working conditions, taking into account the respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work, and ratified international labour standards;
 - (b) actively promote and advance freedom of association and inclusive and effective social dialogue, including collective bargaining, at all levels to forge social consensus for policies and measures for smooth and just transitions;
 - (c) promote equality of opportunity for all workers, ensuring equal pay for work of equal value, and work-life balance, including to address gender gaps through maternity protection, parental leave and gender-responsive measures;
 - (d) promote a safe and healthy working environment and the development of effective and standardized OSH management systems and a safety culture, including through enforceable and predictable hours of work and rest periods, and taking into consideration safety-critical rail workers;
 - (e) prevent and address vandalism, trespassing, traumatic incidents, stress, violence and harassment at work, and provide adequate support to workers affected by traumatic incidents, as well as make provision for decent and clean sanitation and rest facilities, clean drinking water, adequate and properly fitted gender-responsive PPE, at no cost to the worker, and uniforms, where required and depending on national contexts, for all workers;
 - (f) provide for adequate and coherent policy, legal and regulatory frameworks for investment opportunities aligned with sustainable procurement practices;
 - (g) cooperate to develop policies that enable modal shifts and complementarity, and just transitions;
 - (h) establish an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, both public and private, that enables them to grow, innovate, and advance decent work;

- (i) strengthen labour administration, including through well-resourced and qualified labour inspectorates, as labour inspection is a fundamental element to ensure compliance and support the continuous safety and improvement of the sector;
 - (j) encourage a human-centred approach to the adoption of emerging technologies while ensuring that the benefits resulting from modernization and innovation be shared among all concerned, including workers;
 - (k) cooperate to address skills gaps in the industry through the provision of financing for modernized training and quality apprenticeship programmes, skills development and lifelong learning opportunities, encompassing reskilling and upskilling;
 - (l) share best practices, including effective measures to advance decent work, at a sectoral and cross-border level for the development and modernization of the rail sector, keeping in mind regional priorities and the variety of structure and ownership models;
 - (m) facilitate the international recognition of certificates and previous experience, to facilitate labour migration through fair recruitment;
 - (n) expand and enhance cooperation and collaboration with multilateral financial institutions, and with relevant railway authorities and safety agencies so that, in developing and undertaking their transport-related activities, the social and labour dimensions of transport are fully taken into account; and
 - (o) provide universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems, including social protection floors, that can reduce vulnerability to life-cycle risks, emerging needs and global risks, and strengthen resilience to facilitate just transitions.
- 20.** Employers' and workers' organizations should, as appropriate to their spheres of responsibility:
- (a) promote a safe and healthy working environment for all rail workers;
 - (b) promote a positive safety culture to make the industry safer without the fear of retaliation;
 - (c) collaborate to develop and implement just transition strategies and plans at the sectoral level through social dialogue including collective bargaining, and institutionalized and effective workplace cooperation, in line with national legislation, and taking the ILO Guidelines for a just transition into account; and
 - (d) raise awareness and share information, as well as provide training to their members about advancing just transitions in the industry, and the fundamental principles and rights at work, in particular OSH.
- 21.** The Office should:
- (a) promote the ratification and effective implementation of international labour standards, ILO declarations, instruments and tools relevant to the industry, and strengthen the capacity of constituents to respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work;
 - (b) strengthen the capacity of constituents to engage in effective social dialogue to promote decent work;
 - (c) provide technical support to constituents, as appropriate, including in cooperation with the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin, regional training centres, and through subregional meetings and workshops;

- (d) develop and strengthen partnerships to promote policy coherence and “Deliver as One” throughout the United Nations System, and other inter-agency and regional bodies, and initiatives, including the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport;
- (e) collect good practices and undertake research on:
 - (i) creating a more inclusive and diverse workforce by attracting youth, women, migrants and workers with disabilities, to address labour shortages and promote the renewal of the workforce; and
 - (ii) the impact of technology and digitalization, including artificial intelligence, on decent job creation, economic growth, productivity, employment levels and working conditions in the sector;
- (f) based on common standards and models to advance a safe and healthy working environment in the railways sector, collect best practices and research on OSH to convene, when appropriate, a meeting of experts to develop guidelines or a code of practice that can support the social aspects of cross-border and regional interoperability, and
- (g) design and implement development cooperation projects taking into account the diverse circumstances and priorities of its Member States, in line with Decent Work Country Programmes.

Appendix

Non-exhaustive list of ILO declarations, instruments, guidance and tools, and other international instruments to promote decent work in the railways sector

International labour standards

Fundamental Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), its Protocol of 2014, and the Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958
- Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146), 1973
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155) and Recommendation (No. 164), 1981
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) and Recommendation (No. 190), 1999
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 187), and Recommendation (No. 197), 2006

Governance Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Labour Inspection Convention (No. 81) and Recommendation (No. 81), 1947
- Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendation (No. 122), 1964, and the Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), and the Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152)

Technical Conventions (and related Recommendations)

- Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1)
- Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention (No. 94) and Recommendation (No. 84), 1949
- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised) (No. 97) and Recommendation (No. 86), 1949
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961 (No. 116)

- Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)
- Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121), and the Employment Injury Benefits Recommendation, 1964 (No. 121)
- Maximum Weight Convention (No. 127) and Recommendation (No. 128), 1967
- Minimum Wage Fixing Convention (No. 131) and Recommendation (No. 135), 1970
- Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132), and the Holidays with Pay Recommendation, 1936 (No. 47)
- Workers' Representatives Convention (No. 135) and Recommendation (No. 143), 1971
- Labour Administration Convention (No. 150) and Recommendation (No. 158), 1978
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), and the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- Paid Educational Leave Convention (No. 140) and Recommendation (No. 148), 1974
- Occupational Cancer Convention (No. 139) and Recommendation (No. 147), 1974
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
- Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention (No. 148) and Recommendation (No. 156), 1977
- Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151) and Recommendation (No. 159), 1978
- Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 154) and Recommendation (No. 163), 1981
- Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Recommendation (No. 165), 1981
- Termination of Employment Convention (No. 158) and Recommendation (No. 166), 1982
- Labour Statistics Convention (No. 160) and Recommendation (No. 170), 1985
- Occupational Health Services Convention (No. 161) and Recommendation (No. 171), 1985
- Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention (No. 168) and Recommendation (No. 176), 1988
- Safety and Health in Construction Convention (No. 167) and Recommendation (No. 175), 1988
- Night Work Convention (No. 171) and Recommendation (No. 178), 1990
- Private Employment Agencies Convention (No. 181) and Recommendation (No. 188), 1997
- Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183) and Recommendation (No. 191), 2000
- Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019

Technical recommendations

- Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation, 2002 (No. 194)
- Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198)
- Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)
- Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
- Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)
- Quality Apprenticeships Recommendation, 2023 (No. 208)

Conclusions, declarations and resolutions

- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, 1998, as amended in 2022
- ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008, as amended in 2022
- ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019
- Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, sixth edition, 2022
- Resolution concerning the third recurrent discussion on fundamental principles and rights at work, 2024
- Resolution concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, 2023
- Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on labour protection, 2023
- Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security), 2021
- Resolution concerning skills and lifelong learning, 2021
- Resolution concerning decent work in global supply chains, 2016
- Resolution concerning small and medium-sized enterprises and decent and productive employment creation, 2015
- Conclusions of the ILO Meeting of experts on wage policies, including living wages, 2024
- Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, 2007
- Conclusions concerning the consequences for management and personnel of the restructuring of railways, 1994

ILO guidance and tools

- *Technical guidelines on biological hazards in the working environment*, 2023
- *Guidelines on general principles of labour inspection*, 2022
- *General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and Definition of recruitment fees and related costs*, 2019

- *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, 2015
- IMO/ILO/UNECE code of practice for packing of cargo transport units, 2014
- ILO code of practice on safety and health in the use of machinery, 2013
- ILO code of practice on safety in the use of chemicals at work, 2013
- *Guidelines on occupational safety and health management systems: ILO-OSH 2001*, 2001
- ILO code of practice on the protection of workers' personal data, 1997

Non-tripartite sectoral capacity-building tools

- ILO manual on social dialogue in the railways sector, 2015
- *On the right track – A training toolkit on HIV/AIDS for the railway sector*, 2010

Other international instruments and processes

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) [Paris Agreement](#), 2015
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, 2011