

**IMEC STATEMENT ON REFORM OF GOVERNING BODY,
FINAL 11 NOVEMBER 2009**

BEGINS

1. I am speaking on behalf of the 38 Members of the IMEC Group. We thank the Secretariat for the very useful non-paper and the paper tabled for this meeting. Both provide a good basis for the start of our discussions; and in fact show that a number of past decisions have yet to be implemented. Against that background, our starting point for these discussions is that any recommendations that the Governing Body agree as a result of this exercise must be respected by us all, must be acted upon, and must deliver practical results. We support the need for more concise GB documents, more strategic agenda setting, better time management, earlier distribution of documents, and shortening (or even cancelling) committees if they do not have substantial business. Chair, IMEC believes that reform of the Governing Body is a part of the modernisation process taking place in this UN agency, and is of vital importance for its efficient functioning and credibility as we all agreed in the follow-up to the 2008 Declaration.

Action Point (1): Success rates regarding implementation of recommendations agreed by the Governing Body as a result of this exercise should be monitored and reported to the Governing Body each March and November.

2. The current generation international organizations are based on delivery of measurable results, and they have active Governing Boards.

3. They have to respond effectively to the legitimate demands and expectations of their constituents. Uniquely in the UN system, the ILO benefits from the strength of tripartism and, as such, must manage what are sometimes different expectations. Governments with financial responsibility expect prioritisation and results, social partners expect decisions to have an impact on their lives and businesses. The Governing Body has a responsibility to balance these expectations.

4. We also need to consider what other roles the Governing Body needs to fulfill in order to be effective in a 21st Century organization. Here we do not need to reinvent the wheel. According to the Constitution and the 2006 Compendium of Rules Applicable to the Governing Body of the International Labor Office, the GB "has two types of function: on the one hand, those of control over the International Labor Office and, on the other, a number of functions of

its own concerning the functioning of the organization and matters relating to international labor standards.”

In other words, the Governing Body needs to be the embodiment of a solid management policy operation, being both responsible and responsive to change and crisis management.

5. With this aim in mind, we believe that the following changes will have the necessary transformational impact:

a) We believe that for all consultation and working groups/parties, the basic rule of representation should follow those set in the Governing Body, which are in fact replicated in this working party, namely that for each and every representative from the social partners we must have an equal representation from governments. Therefore, consultation and working groups established by the GB should always follow the format of 8/16/8 or 4/8/4, or 1/2/1.

Action Point (2): All future consultation and working groups/parties of the Governing Body to follow the format of 8/16/8 or 4/8/4, or 1/2/1.

b) There should be more effective consultation so that there can be real consensus reached on issues. IMEC feels that there is sometimes an imbalance in the way the ILO deals with social partners through ACT TRAV and ACT EMP, and that consultation, information and exchange with Government representatives is not always wholly satisfactory. IMEC would like the Office to begin discussions with Governments as to how this situation could be improved. Some ways in which this could be achieved might be through: greater transparency, more intensified communication among regional groups or with social partners; or more structured, regular and formal briefings from the Office.

Specifically, we would propose:

- Documents, including drafts, must be shared with governments at the same time they are shared with ACT TRAV and ACT EMP;
- Improved consultation with governments, both through regional co-ordinators and directly - including improved use of the internet by the ILO to communicate with non Geneva-based government representatives;
- Use of online discussion forums open to the tripartite constituents;
- Improvements in the ILO website to facilitate information sharing, including an online listing of consultations that the Office has with the various groups;
- Improved transparency of Governing Body decision making through a

clarification by the Office after each GB Committee discussion on how the views expressed by constituents will concretely be incorporated in the follow-up to each adopted decision point;

- Further improvement of the support to the Chair of the Government Group to co-ordinate the Group. The ILO Office should assist in preparing the Group meetings and should continuously provide it with the most up to date information on current GB and ILC events.

Essentially, we want to ensure that Governments have the same opportunities to provide input to the Office, to contribute to decisions on the agenda of the Governing Body and its Committees, and to respond to discussions in Committees and plenary that the social partners have.

Action Point (3): Office to begin discussions with Governments as to how to improve consultation, information exchange etc

c) The running of any successful Governing Body depends on good time keeping which implies responsibility from all speakers. In fact, IMEC over a number of years has called for the enforcement of a time limit on interventions for Members of the GB and the Secretariat. We would suggest that a maximum of 5 minutes for each individual speaker is sufficient with the understanding that Group Statements could be granted longer. We would like to stress one other very important point related to the conduct of meetings. In line with the procedures which apply in all UN agencies, governments must have the right to reply if specifically mentioned at any stage of a discussion, including in the concluding remarks by the vice chairs.

Action Point (4): Introduction of a 5 minute limit to individual interventions at the Governing Body from March 2010.

d) We suggest that the current committee structure should be revamped to align with the four strategic objectives of standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue. PFAC would continue its current role, and substantive TC issues relevant to each strategic objective could be taken up in the relevant committee, while TC management/governance issues could be addressed in the PFAC.

e) Should the current committee structure be retained, we suggest that not all Committees need to meet at every Governing Body session. For example, IMEC suggests that this Working Party consider the possibility of reducing the STM and MNE committees to one meeting per year. Also the mandate of the TC Committee needs to be clarified, and unnecessary duplication with discussions in other Committees should be eliminated. The TC Committee could also meet just once a year. In our view, the Committee should be dedicated to strategic tripartite

discussions on how to make the ILO effective in delivering development assistance. We note that participation by expert representatives would facilitate such discussions.

Action Point (5): Current committee structure should be revamped to align with the four strategic objectives. Should the current structure be retained, consideration should be given to holding STM and MNE (and if it is retained TC) committees meetings once a year without any loss of substance.

f) On the non-paper, we agree with the proposal in para 21 that LILS and ESP should continue to meet in March and November and that they should focus on topical issues or issues which call for GB action. LILS is probably the best functioning Committee - well organized with a clear agenda - and could be taken as an example. No two major committees (which LILS and ESP are) should meet at the same time. This would have implications for STM and MNE committees as stated previously. Here we would also note that since most LILS agenda items are for decision, scheduling that committee early in the committee week would make it easier for the Office to produce the report for consideration by the plenary the next week.

Action point (6): LILS and ESP to continue to meet in March and November; to focus on topical issues, issues which are of long term relevance or issues which call for GB action; and no major committee should meet at the same time.

g) We agree with para 22 that employment and social protection could be dealt with separately in March and November. This could help ensure a more thorough discussion of key issues and at the same time reduce the length of ESP. This should be the normal arrangement, but it should allow flexibility so that urgent discussions on either employment or social protection could be discussed at the next available Governing Body session if needed.

Action point (7): Employment and social protection would normally be dealt with separately in March and November.

h) The meetings of the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization should have a clear agenda and be more focused. Documents should be prepared and published in time to allow a more substantive discussion. It must be clear that there is a strong necessity for the Working Party to address a policy issue; and if not the issue could be taken up by the GB plenary.

i) We think that reducing the budget discussion in the PFAC to 3 days

(para 23) has obvious and potentially serious risks, and would ask whether we are certain that it is sufficient to devote only 3 days over two years to scrutinising a budget over \$650m. The Programme and Budget is one of the Governing Body's most important responsibilities; and we need to ensure it is given the time and attention it deserves. We suggest instead the next budget discussions (in 2011) be planned around a 4 day debate - ensuring that the time allocated should be used efficiently - and that the Governing Body assess the situation after those discussions.

Action point (8): 2011 Programme and Budget discussions to be planned around 4 days, and length of future Programme and Budget discussions reviewed in light of 2011 experience.

j) Having said this, in regard to para 28, a shortening of March and November Governing Body meetings by one day has shown itself to be feasible. We suggest that as a rule, if time is used efficiently, it should be possible to limit the plenary to three days.

Action point (9): March and November Governing Body meetings to be reduced to three days.

k) We do not believe a study on the volume of papers would be helpful. We need short, well written and concise documents, with executive summaries when required and with clear decision points, linked to background information. Documents should be available at least 15 working days before the start of the GB. If documents are not available by this deadline, consideration of the item in question should automatically be deferred until the next GB. Exceptions to this rule should be rare, and could include updates necessary to the proper consideration of an issue – for example, the latest information on the situation in Burma.

l) We also believe that, except for PFAC and LILS, committee agendas should generally include no more than three items, unless there is an urgent need to deal with additional issues. Documents presented "For Information" should generally not be discussed. Rather, once a committee has dealt with all of the items for decision, and if there is time remaining in the session, the chair may entertain request for inquiries/comments on such items.

In order to take full advantage of the presence of GB members in Geneva, maximize resources and avoid extended sittings, the GB should revert to meeting from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m – 6:00 p.m.

m) Organisations must be accountable to their constituents once

decisions are made. This includes giving Member States the assurance that decisions, including those made here, and endorsed by the GB will be implemented to the full by the Secretariat and the GB will receive appropriate accounting of that implementation.

Action point (10): For all subsequent committee meetings, working parties, or Governing Body meetings the Office implementation of decisions will be reviewed at future Governing Body meetings.

n) As a first step towards the goal of seeking further views, this Working Party should organise an on-line consultation process with constituents which might prove beneficial to all. We therefore ask the Secretariat to organise an on-line platform on the ILO web-site where all can provide comments and, proposals, which they would wish to have taken on board.

Action point (11): Office to set up an on-line consultation process where interested parties can provide comments and proposals which they would wish to have taken on board.

6. Chair, IMEC would point out that this group has been tasked with the job of improving the functioning of the Governing Body and of the International Labour Conference. We strongly support this reform process also helping to improve the functioning of the annual Conference, in line with the decision from the 305th session of the GB. Finally, IMEC notes that the only guidance with regard to the timing and implementation of Working Party recommendations comes from the decision of the 305th session of the GB, that the Working Party will report to the GB in March 2010. IMEC requests the Office to propose a more detailed timeline for the work of the Working Party, and requests that this timeline incorporate a clear process for the consideration and implementation of recommendations which were approved by the Governing Body.

Action point (12): (a) Office ensures that issues papers and Working Party discussions incorporate consideration of possible reforms to the functioning of the International Labour Conference (b) Office proposes a more detailed timeframe for the work of the Working Party, incorporating a clear process with regard to recommendations made.

ENDS

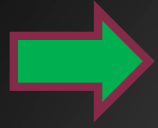


IMEC Action Points



21st Century ILO



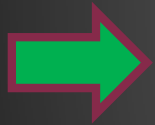


- **Action Point (1): Success rates regarding implementation of recommendations agreed by the Governing Body as a result of this exercise should be monitored and reported to the GB each March and November.**

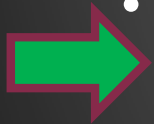


- **Action Point (1): Success rates regarding implementation of recommendations agreed by the Governing Body as a result of this exercise should be monitored and reported to the GB each March and November.**
- **Action Point (2): All future consultation and working groups/parties of the GB to follow the format of 8/16/8 or 4/8/4, or 1/2/1.**

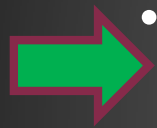
- **Action Point (1): Success rates regarding implementation of recommendations agreed by the Governing Body as a result of this exercise should be monitored and reported to the GB each March and November.**
- **Action Point (2): All future consultation and working groups/parties of the GB to follow the format of 8/16/8 or 4/8/4, or 1/2/1.**
- **Action Point (3): Office to begin discussions with Governments as to how to improve consultation, information exchange**



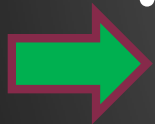
- **Action Point (1):** Success rates regarding implementation of recommendations agreed by the Governing Body as a result of this exercise should be monitored and reported to the GB each March and November.
- **Action Point (2):** All future consultation and working groups/parties of the GB to follow the format of 8/16/8 or 4/8/4, or 1/2/1.
- **Action Point (3):** Office to begin discussions with Governments as to how to improve consultation, information exchange.
- **Action Point (4):** Introduction of a 5 minute limit to individual interventions at the GB from March 2010.



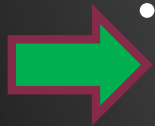
- **Action Point (3):** Office to begin discussions with Governments as to how to improve consultation, information exchange.
- **Action Point (4):** Introduction of a 5 minute limit to individual interventions at the GB from March 2010.
- **Action Point (5):** Current committee structure should be revamped to align with the four strategic objectives. Should the current structure be retained, consideration should be given to holding STM and MNE (and if it is retained TC) committees meetings once a year without any loss of substance.



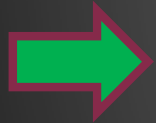
- **Action Point (4): Introduction of a 5 minute limit to individual interventions at the GB from March 2010.**
- **Action Point (5): Current committee structure should be revamped to align with the four strategic objectives. Should the current structure be retained, consideration should be given to holding STM and MNE (and if it is retained TC) committees meetings once a year without any loss of substance.**
- **Action point (6): LILS and ESP to continue to meet in March and November; to focus on topical issues, issues which are of long term relevance or issues which call for GB action; and no major committee should meet at the same time.**



- **Action Point (5):** Current committee structure should be revamped to align with the four strategic objectives. Should the current structure be retained, consideration should be given to holding STM and MNE (and if it is retained TC) committees meetings once a year without any loss of substance.
- **Action point (6):** LILS and ESP to continue to meet in March and November; to focus on topical issues, issues which are of long term relevance or issues which call for GB action; and no major committee should meet at the same time.
- **Action point (7):** Employment and social protection would normally be dealt with separately in March and November.

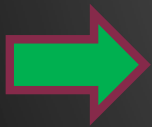


- **Action point (6): LILS and ESP to continue to meet in March and November; to focus on topical issues, issues which are of long term relevance or issues which call for GB action; and no major committee should meet at the same time.**
- **Action point (7): Employment and social protection would normally be dealt with separately in March and November.**
- **Action point (8): 2011 Programme and Budget discussions to be planned around 4 days, and length of future Programme and Budget discussions reviewed in light of 2011 experience.**

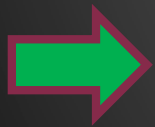


- Action point (6): LILS and ESP to continue to meet in March and November; to focus on topical issues, issues which are of long term relevance or issues which call for GB action; and no major committee should meet at the same time.
- Action point (7): Employment and social protection would normally be dealt with separately in March and November.
- Action point (8): 2011 Programme and Budget discussions to be planned around 4 days, and length of future Programme and Budget discussions reviewed in light of 2011 experience.
- Action point (9): March and November GB meetings to be reduced *to* three days.

- Action point (7): Employment and social protection would normally be dealt with separately in March and November.
- Action point (8): 2011 Programme and Budget discussions to be planned around 4 days, and length of future Programme and Budget discussions reviewed in light of 2011 experience.
- Action point (9): March and November GB meetings to be reduced *to* three days.
- Action point (10): For all subsequent committee meetings, working parties, or GB meetings the Office implementation of decisions will be reviewed at future GB meetings.



- Action point (8): 2011 Programme and Budget discussions to be planned around 4 days, and length of future Programme and Budget discussions reviewed in light of 2011 experience.
- Action point (9): March and November GB meetings to be reduced *to* three days.
- Action point (10): For all subsequent committee meetings, working parties, or GB meetings the Office implementation of decisions will be reviewed at future GB meetings.
- Action point (11): Office to set up an on-line consultation process where interested parties can provide comments and proposals which they would wish to have taken on board.



- **Action point (10):** For all subsequent committee meetings, working parties, or GB meetings the Office implementation of decisions will be reviewed at future GB meetings.
- **Action point (11):** Office to set up an on-line consultation process where interested parties can provide comments and proposals which they would wish to have taken on board.
- **Action point (12):**
 - (a) Office ensures that issues papers and Working Party discussions incorporate consideration of possible reforms to the functioning of the ILC
 - (b) Office proposes a more detailed timeframe for the work of the Working Party, incorporating a clear process with regard to recommendations made.

