I am pleased to inform you that the seventh meeting of the Working Group will be held on Saturday, 14 November 2009, from 2:30 to 5:30 pm in Room V (ILO building).

A proposed agenda for this seventh meeting and an information note for the discussion are appended.
Working Group on the Working Methods of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards
(7th meeting)

Informal Tripartite Consultations

Saturday, 14 November 2009 (2:30 to 5:30 p.m.)
ILO, Room V

Proposed agenda

1. Improvements in time management


3. Balance in the individual cases selected by the Committee

4. Other questions
Information note

1. In June 2009, the Committee on the Application of Standards has continued to implement the conclusions of the working group. It confirmed that all the changes recommended have resulted in real improvements in the working methods. At the last session of the Conference, the Committee was able to adopt on the second day of its session the final list of individual cases to be discussed. In addition, a significant effort was made to implement the rules of decorum and conclusions on all cases were adopted by consensus. The Committee requested that the working group continue its work.

2. As a follow-up to the June 2009 Session of the Conference and in view of the preparation of the June 2010 Session, the working group may wish to consider discussing the following three points: (1) improvements in time management; (2) modalities for the discussion of the forthcoming General Survey on Employment in the light of the parallel discussion of the recurrent report on Employment during the June 2010 International Labour Conference (ILC); and (3) the balance in the individual cases selected by the Committee (relevant figures are attached).

Time management

3. At its last session, the Committee on the Application of Standards endured extreme hours of work, in particular the last two days, where it had to work until 11:45 p.m. and 3:40 a.m., respectively. The general feeling at the end of the session was that improvements in time management should be a priority for the next Session of the Conference. In this respect, the Employer Vice-Chairperson made several suggestions in his speech before the plenary. They included the following.\(^1\)

- Cases should be better distributed over the second week of the session. If 25 cases are selected for discussion, five should be discussed each day. If there is more than one complex case to be discussed on a given day, then the number of cases could be reduced for that day. Rules should make it clear that, if the schedule is full on a particular day, most notably on the last day, Friday, governments will need to register for another day.
- Document D.1 on the work of the Committee should be explicit on the time limits for the discussion of cases in line with the announced time limits for the past several years – 15 minutes for the Government, Employer and Worker spokespersons, five minutes for the other members, except for the Employer and Worker from the country concerned, who would have ten minutes. These time limits should be enforced by a light signal similar to the one used in the plenary.\(^2\)
- It should also be explicit on the need for governments to provide the Committee with written replies, in addition to their oral replies, if their case is complex or

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\(^1\) ILC 2009, PR No. 20, Report of the Committee on the Application of Standards.

\(^2\) The plenary also uses a sound signal.
requires responding to an information request from the Committee of Experts, and it is not otherwise possible to present their explanation to the Committee in 15 minutes.

- The question of the overall number of speakers in a particular case should be discussed: this year, the number of speakers, including Government, Worker and Employer spokespersons ranged from five to 29 in one particular case.

4. The working group may wish to discuss the issue of time management and propose solutions in this respect.

Modalities for the discussion of the forthcoming General Survey on Employment in the light of the parallel discussion of the recurrent report on Employment

5. It will be recalled that, in November 2008, the Governing Body decided to align the subject of the General Survey with that of the recurrent report (i.e. Employment) to be prepared under the follow-up to the Social Justice Declaration, the General Survey being considered as an important source of information on law and practice. As a consequence, during the ILC in June 2010, the General Survey on Employment will be discussed by the Committee on the Application of Standards and the recurrent report on Employment by a technical Committee of the Conference.

6. The technical committee of the Conference is expected to discuss the recurrent report with a view to the adoption of a comprehensive plan of action. This plan of action would establish priorities for future action and to that effect mandate the mobilization of the different means of action of the Organization, including activities relating to promotion, research, policy orientations, technical cooperation and possible standard setting or other standards-related action. It would be expected that the normative component of this plan of action be informed by the General Survey of the Committee of Experts and its discussion by the Committee on the Application of Standards.

7. Two recent developments concerning the Committee on the Application of Standards in June 2009 should be mentioned in this context, because they could be relevant for the next session of the Conference. For the first time, the Committee adopted conclusions on a General Survey (i.e. the General Survey on Occupational Safety and Health which was not linked to a recurrent report). It also adopted a statement on the importance of international labour standards within the context of the global economic crisis. The modalities of any possible interaction between the Committee on the Application of Standards and the technical Committee that will discuss the recurrent report would have to be determined in advance and if necessary could be addressed by the Governing Body at its next session in March 2010.

8. The working group may wish to discuss any adaptations to the methods of work of the Committee on the Application of Standards that could enable it to avoid or minimize duplication. In doing so, it may consider the modalities of the discussion of the General Survey in order to ensure the best interaction of its outcome with the discussion of the recurrent report on Employment, including how any possible conclusions of the Committee on the Application of Standards can best be taken into account by the technical Committee concerned.

3 GB.303/LILS/6 and GB.303/12.
Annex

List of Conventions selected by the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards in the context of the individual cases since 1999

25 Cases: 18 on fundamental Conventions, including 12 on freedom of association, 1 on governance Conventions and 6 on “technical” Conventions.

2000: Conventions Nos 87 (8), 98 (4), 29 (3), 105 (2), 111 (3), 122 (1), 81 (1), 169 (1), 95 (1).
24 Cases: 20 on fundamental Conventions, including 12 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 2 on “technical” Conventions.

2001: Conventions Nos 87 (11), 98 (2), 29 (2), 111 (3), 138 (2), 81 (1), 122 (1), 35 (1), 95 (1), 97 (1), 158 (1).
26 cases: 20 on fundamental Conventions, including 13 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 4 on “technical Conventions”.

25 cases: 19 on fundamental Conventions, including 10 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 4 on “technical Conventions”.

25 cases: 17 on fundamental Conventions, including 12 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 6 on “technical Conventions”.

2004: Conventions Nos 87 (6), 98 (5), 29 (4), 111 (2), 138 (1), 81 (1), 122 (1), 77 (1), 95 (1), 103 (1), 156 (1).
24 cases: 18 on fundamental Conventions, including 11 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 4 on “technical Conventions”.

2005: Conventions Nos 87 (12), 98 (2), 29 (2), 111 (1), 182 (2), 81 (1), 144 (2), 77 (1), 78 (1), 95 (1), 102 (1).
26 cases: 19 on fundamental Conventions, including 14 on freedom of association, 3 on governance Conventions and 4 on “technical Conventions”.

27 cases: 20 on fundamental Conventions, including 12 on freedom of association, 1 on governance Conventions and 6 on “technical Conventions”.

2007: Conventions Nos 87 (12), 98 (2), 29 (1), 100 (1), 111 (2), 182 (2), 81 (1), 122 (1), 144 (1), 95 (1), 119 (1), 155 (1).
26 cases: 20 on fundamental Conventions, including 14 on freedom of association, 3 on governance Conventions and 3 on “technical Conventions”.

2008: Conventions Nos 87 (8), 98 (2), 29 (4), 105 (1), 111 (3), 138 (1), 182 (1), 81 (2), 162 (1), 180 (1).
24 cases: 20 on fundamental Conventions, including 10 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 2 on “technical Conventions”.

2009: Conventions Nos 87 (11), 98 (1), 29 (1), 100 (1), 111 (3), 138 (1), 182 (1), 81(1), 122 (1), 35 (1), 97 (1), 143 (1), 169 (1).
25 cases: 19 on fundamental Conventions, including 12 on freedom of association, 2 on governance Conventions and 4 on “technical Conventions”.