Informal tripartite consultations on the working methods of the Committee on the Application of Standards
(2 November 2019)

Brief report of the meeting

1. Informal tripartite consultations on the working methods of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards (hereinafter: the Committee) were held on 2 November 2019 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

2. The meeting was chaired by Mr Ndebele (Government representative, South Africa). The Employer Vice-Chairperson of the Committee at the 108th Session (2019) of the International Labour Conference, Ms Regenbogen, and the Worker Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, Mr Leemans, spoke on behalf of the Employers’ and Workers’ groups, respectively. The Government representatives were from the following nine countries: Algeria, Canada, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, the Philippines, Poland, Thailand and Uruguay. The meeting was also attended by a number of observers.

3. The meeting had before it a background note prepared by the Office. The agenda of the meeting was presented by the Chairperson, who opened the floor for comments in relation to the brief report of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2019.

I. Functioning of the CAS following the changes introduced in June 2019

4. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department described the manner in which the changes to the working methods of the Committee had been implemented during the previous session of the Conference, as well as the two proposals put forward by the Office in that regard. The first proposal involved extending the deadline for the publication of the report in the three languages. As the transition to a verbatim record had resulted in a longer report and a greater amount of time required for its translation, the Office proposed extending the deadline from 30 to 40 days. The second proposal was to limit to 1500 words the additional written information submitted prior to the Conference by the countries on the long list and to redefine the rules concerning such submissions.

5. The Employer spokesperson appreciated the reorganization of Parts I and II of the Committee’s report which brought more clarity and coherence. While acknowledging the difficulties linked to the translation of the report, her group disagreed with further extending the deadline for its publication in the three languages, as this would reduce the time available for constituents to prepare their submissions by 1 September. Other measures should be considered by the Office to ensure that the deadline of 30 days was met.

6. The Worker spokesperson noted the minor difficulties arising from the reproduction of the delegates’ statements in verbatim, in particular with regard to the transcription of speeches in languages other than the official languages. A joint effort was needed to ensure that speeches were submitted in advance. His group disagreed with the proposal to extend the deadline for the publication of the report since it would delay giving visibility to the work of the Committee as well as the social dialogue needed at the national level to ensure
its follow-up. The new practice of allowing Governments on the long list to submit written information should be maintained but Governments should respect the conditions agreed upon. Word limits and deadlines had not been always met and that was problematic for the social partners who had to digest the information without having the opportunity to consult their national constituencies. To be helpful, the information in submitted had to be concise, specific and relate to new facts and developments that had arisen since the adoption of the report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (Committee of Experts). The Workers’ group agreed with the proposal to summarize / remove the information where it exceeded the length permitted or constituted duplication. Another solution would be to find a technical system that made it impossible to go above a certain number of characters.

7. Speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), a Government representative of Uruguay considered that the publication of verbatim records was a very positive initiative which allowed for greater transparency, and which should therefore be maintained. The request for the deadline for the publication of the report to be extended from 30 to 40 days was understandable, given the amount of work required to translate the verbatim records. GRULAC welcomed the possibility of submitting additional written information, and indicated that, if the written information provided by governments exceeded the limit of 1500 words, the Office was not required to edit or summarize it, but could instead request the country concerned to resubmit the information. The possibility of using alternative technologies could also be examined. While GRULAC welcomed the practice of submitting a printed version of conclusions to Governments prior to the reading of the conclusions by the Chair, it considered that Governments should have more time to examine them, for example, 30 minutes.

8. Speaking on behalf of the Western European group, a Government representative of Greece noted the importance of sending speeches in advance for the elaboration of the verbatim records and agreed with the proposal to extend the deadline for the publication of the report. It was noted that special paragraphs were less highlighted with the new format of the report. While recognizing that limits to the size of the written information provided by the Governments were necessary, the Western European Group did not accept the proposal of summarizing information.

9. Speaking on behalf of the Eastern European group, a Government representative of Poland agreed with the limitation of 1500 words but indicated that more time was needed to reflect on the possible use of a template or new technologies.

10. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria underscored the positive impact of the changes introduced to the working methods of the Committee and recalled that the tripartite consultations were an excellent opportunity to discuss the improvement of these methods in a transparent and fair manner. The additional written information provided by governments should be published online as soon as possible in the three languages. Furthermore, given the length of time between the meetings of the Committee of Experts and the Conference, flexibility should be allowed regarding the information submitted, and a limit of four pages would be preferable. The 30-day deadline for the publication of the report should be respected and should only be extended to 40 days in exceptional circumstances.

11. Speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific Group (ASPAG), a Government representative of Lebanon referred to the need to give full flexibility to governments in terms of the timing and the content of the written information provided. The proposed time and length should not be mandatory. ASPAG agreed with the extension of the deadline for the publication of the report on the understanding that the Office would make every effort to do better.
12. A Government representative of Canada expressed support for the verbatim records and the extension of the deadline to 40 days for the publication of the report, but emphasized that the deadline had to be respected. The Office’s proposal to summarize written information provided by governments when exceeding the limits could only be considered if the objective was to remove clearly duplicative information.

13. In response to the questions asked by several Government representatives, the Director of the International Labour Standards Department indicated that the limit had previously been set at three pages, which amounted to around 1500 words (500 words per page). For two thirds of countries, the written information submitted did not exceed 2000 words. During the previous session of the Committee of Experts, the Office had deliberately decided to publish all the information received, including information that had exceeded the limit established, and to bring this matter to the attention of the tripartite consultations, so that a decision could be made. A limit of 2000 words (including annexes) seemed reasonable, and the Office could work on developing a form (template) that incorporated such a limit, which it would present at the next consultations. Moreover, when the Office was unable to translate the information received into the three working languages, such information was immediately published online in the original language of the submission on the Committee website.

14. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, the Eastern European group, the Western European group and GRULAC, the Government representatives accepted the limit of 2000 words and the proposal by the Office to prepare an online form for the subsequent consultations.

15. The Chairperson summarized the discussions indicating that the participants were in agreement with the limit of 2000 words (including supporting documents) and that countries would submit information in one working language, with the possibility, on a voluntary basis, to also provide translations in other working languages.

16. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay emphasized the need to specify in the D.1 document (Work of the Committee) that, if the information provided exceeded 2000 words, the additional information would not be published. GRULAC recalled that when the Committee examined individual cases, the written information provided by governments was translated into the three languages.

17. Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of the Philippines indicated that it was important for Governments to be in a position to establish facts. Those formal requirements of words limits might constitute an obstacle to a real dialogue. The opportunity given to governments to provide written information before the Conference was aimed at establishing the truth and that objective might not be achieved with such stringent words limits.

18. The Chairperson considered that there was agreement for the 2000 words limit (including annexes) on a trial basis. At the next meeting, the modalities for the implementation of that limit would be further discussed. It was also agreed that on a purely voluntary basis, governments might submit information in more than one working language.

19. Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, Government representatives of Lebanon and the Philippines expressed disagreement with the position of the Chairperson and emphasized that there should be flexibility. The meeting should not be so stringent as to refuse exceptions to the 2000 words limit.

20. The Chairperson indicated that ASPAG’s concerns had been noted and would be recorded. Furthermore, the majority was in agreement with the 2000 words limit on a trial
basis. The issue would be reviewed at the next meeting together with the template. On this occasion, the above-mentioned concerns would be taken into consideration.

II. General Survey: Structuring the CAS discussion around questions

21. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department recalled that the Office’s proposal related to structuring the discussion of all General Surveys, independently of their content, around a series of questions. The discussion could be organized around the following themes: i) progress and challenges in the implementation of the instruments under examination; ii) measures to be taken to promote Conventions and their ratification in light of the good practices and obstacles identified; and iii) pathways for future ILO standards action and technical assistance. In addition, the Committee of Experts could be requested to draw the attention of the Committee to a more specific question when that was deemed necessary.

22. The Worker spokesperson welcomed the proposed guiding questions to structure the discussions on General Surveys, but emphasized that those questions should only be of a guiding nature without limiting the richness of the discussions and conclusions. Delegates should continue to have the opportunity to share their country-specific or theme-specific experiences.

23. The Employer spokesperson reiterated her group’s agreement with structuring General Survey discussions by questions that should as far as possible reflect the structure of the General Survey, and be of a simple and recurring structure for all General Surveys. However, the proposed questions or themes were either too general or too narrow. For instance, the second theme: “ii) measures to be taken to promote Conventions and their ratification in light of the good practices and obstacles identified”, presumed that good practices had always been identified, which might not always be the case. The Employers’ group stood ready to provide feedback on the determination of these questions.

24. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria expressed support for the proposal to structure the discussions on General Surveys around questions prepared in advance, in order to help focus the debate, produce detailed recommendations for each instrument, and therefore inform the discussions held in the Standards Review Mechanism (SRM) and on the Conference agenda. The proposed action would also enable governments and the social partners to draw attention to the difficulties experienced concerning ratification.

25. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay indicated that GRULAC could accept the proposal to structure the discussions on General Surveys around questions, provided that such questions were prepared in consultation with the regional coordinators and representatives of the social partners, and that the questions be submitted in advance. It was also important to place an emphasis on good practices.

26. Speaking on behalf of the Western European group, a Government representative of Greece appreciated the continuing efforts to improve the General Survey discussions, and agreed with the questions as formulated by the Office.

27. A Government representative of Canada supported the proposal. It would allow discussions to focus on key points and possibly facilitate the adoption of constructive conclusions. The proposal could also help to increase engagement and enhance the value of the General Survey conclusions and their use in subsequent venues, such as the recurrent ILC discussions and SRM exercises.
28. **Speaking on behalf of the Eastern European group, a Government representative of Poland** supported all efforts leading to an improvement of the discussions of General Surveys.

29. **The Director of the International Labour Standards Department** clarified that the proposed questions were of a generic nature and would apply to all discussions of General Surveys.

30. **The Chairperson** noted the positive views expressed during the discussions, including the view that the structuring of the Committee discussion around questions should not be limiting the richness of the debate.

### III. Publication of the list of individual cases

31. **The Director of the International Labour Standards Department** referred to the background note, which documented the institutional practice over time in terms of the date of publication of the long list and final list. The information contained in the appendices were proof that the informal tripartite consultations were useful and helpful, as they had led to improvements in the publication of the long list and final list. A discussion on further improving timelines could only concern the long list, as the rules of the Conference, which was the forum in which the final list was adopted, were setting a limit in that respect.

32. **The Employer spokesperson** also indicated that the participants in informal tripartite consultations had no ability to change the timing of the adoption of the final list, which only left the discussion on the long list. In the not such a distant past, the adoption of the long list had ranged from nine days to 15-16 days. Moreover, the practice of publishing the long list 30 days before the beginning of the Conference provided much earlier notice to Governments than in the past. Governments were notified that they might be required to speak with the publication of the long list. That notification was informed by everything that came before the publication, namely the submission of Government reports to the Committee of Experts, the work of the Committee of Experts, and the publication of the Committee of Experts’ report. After the publication of the report of the CEACR in February, some time was needed to properly consider and analyze the observations in the very voluminous report, which informed the long list of cases. The Employers’ group did not see room in advancing the adoption of the long list. In fact, 30 days advance notice should be sufficient to allow Governments to respond to the Committee, as they had been aware of the issues raised by the Committee of Experts from February. She reiterated that the final list was something that the informal tripartite meeting had no ability to change, and emphasized that the long list struck an appropriate balance to give as much notice as possible to Governments to appear before the Committee.

33. **The Worker spokesperson** recalled that both lists had been published earlier and earlier over time. It was impossible to publish the final list before the beginning of the Conference, as it had to be adopted after the formal constitution of the Committee. Governments had expressed the need for adequate time to prepare their submissions, but they should begin to reflect upon the additional information to be sent from the date of publication of the Committee of Experts, and not only from the time they were notified of being included in the long list. Additional support might be provided by the Office to Governments on the long list in order to help them prepare in due time. Perhaps the Office could reach out to Governments to provide guidance in relation to the preparation for the Committee.

34. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay** welcomed the progress achieved in the publication of the long list, and the continued dialogue on the final list. GRULAC reiterated its position that the final list should be published earlier to
give Governments more time to prepare. The group suggested that innovative solutions be identified to expedite the publication of the final list. Furthermore, such a list should contain a brief description of the reasons for including a country on the final list. It was fundamental to establish an order of priority in terms of the seriousness of the cases to ensure transparency in the supervisory system.

35. **Speaking on behalf of the Western European Group, a Government representative of Greece** took note of the constraints mentioned by the social partners in publishing the final list at an earlier date. She recalled the challenges faced by Governments to prepare when the Conference had already started. There was value in overcoming legal obstacles as well as using new technology to finalize the final list at least one week before the Conference, for example by convening the Committee electronically to decide on the final list.

36. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria** reiterated the Group’s proposal to publish the long list in March during the Governing Body, at the latest. The final list should also be published at least 30 days before the beginning of the Conference to enable Governments to prepare their replies. To do so, the social partners could take advantage of new technologies. Furthermore, the seriousness of issues, balance among the regions, and diversity of the Conventions examined should be taken into account in the drafting of the lists, to ensure greater transparency in the choice of the criteria applied. The Africa Group was in favour of including six cases per region on the list, and that the discussions on the criteria for drafting the list be pursued in the upcoming consultations.

37. **A Government representative of Thailand** requested the Office to provide information on the reason why a country was moved from the long list to the final list.

38. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay** welcomed the proposal made by the Government representative of Greece, and the proposal by the Africa Group to take into account geographical balance when compiling the list. New ideas regarding that proposal could be developed during the next consultations.

39. **The Chairperson** recalled that there had been significant progress in advancing the time of publication, and a situation had now been reached in which no change was possible without changing the current rules and regulations, for which the informal tripartite meeting had no mandate. The suggestion by the African Group concerning the publication of the final list 30 days before the Conference would mean changing the rules and a decision had to be sought whether those proposals were implementable and in the case that they were not, the matter had to be taken to a different platform.

40. **Speaking on behalf of the Western European group, a Government representative of Greece** indicated that the informal tripartite meeting was not the forum to change rules. However, the discussions should continue, including legal aspects and the appropriate platform to discuss these questions or change those regulations. Creative suggestions should be sought.

41. **The Employer spokesperson** stated that the adoption of the final list was a matter of the Standing Orders of the Conference and therefore only the Governing Body could decide on that matter. If a revision of the Standing Orders was sought, this question should therefore be taken to the Governing Body. Discussing the date of publication of the final list was not a useful way to spend the time of the informal tripartite meeting and this question should not be discussed again in the next meeting. The only option for discussion could be whether the long list should and could be adopted earlier.
42. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of Lebanon** indicated that it was the prerogative of the Committee to shortlist cases by consensus, and that the Officers of the Committee could only do so with clearly stated reasons thereof. The final list should not be received later than 30 days before the start of the Conference. The entire process should be fair, objective and transparent.

43. **Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay** supported the statement made by ASPAG. The matter of adopting the final list was part of the work of the Committee. All Governments had expressed concern or had made suggestions on the issue but had not received satisfactory replies. While noting the proposal to hold the discussions in other forums, GRULAC considered it important to retain the item on the agenda of the consultations.

44. **Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria** considered that the publication of the final list did not fall under the mandate of the consultations. Nevertheless, the Africa Group requested clarification on the criteria for the inclusion of countries on the list, and wished to pursue the discussions on the matter during the next consultations.

45. **Speaking on behalf of the Western European group, a Government representative of Greece** emphasized that the legal framework of the Committee was within the working methods, and would like to keep the discussions open in the consultations.

46. **Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of Lebanon** indicated the full support of the position of the Africa Group.

47. **Speaking on behalf of the Eastern European group, a Government representative of Poland** indicated that the discussions were held to improve the working methods of the Committee, and that it was important to continue any discussion in this informal platform with the purpose to improve those methods.

48. **The Worker spokesperson** recalled that the Committee was a standing committee of the Conference and not a standing committee of the Organization. Some Governments wanted the Committee to operate during the whole year, on a virtual, physical basis, etc. This was not within the mandate of the informal tripartite meeting, which should reflect on working methods to accommodate the functioning of the Committee during the Conference. If Governments wanted to change that, they should discuss the issue in the Governing Body, which had the mandate to change the Standing Orders. In 2008, the final list had been adopted during the sixth sitting of the Committee, in 2010, during the fifth sitting, in 2011, during the seventh sitting. In 2012, there had been a crisis and the Employers and Workers found a joint agreement, which was shared by the Governments to make the Committee function. Since the decision in 2012, the final list was adopted in the second sitting. Earlier than that seemed impossible. The adoption of the final list gave definitive certainty that an individual case would be discussed, but Governments that acted responsibly had to already prepare themselves to appear before the Committee one month in advance following the publication of the long list.

49. **The Chairperson** expressed his understanding that as regards the long list for some countries, the current practice of publishing it 30 days before the beginning of the Conference provided sufficient time to prepare. As regards the early adoption of the final list, the informal tripartite meeting could not discuss the issue, and if there was a strong feeling about that matter, it should be taken to the Governing Body.
50. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria clarified that the aim of the proposal made by the Group was to continue the discussions on the criteria for including countries on the final list.

51. Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of Lebanon sought clarification regarding the inclusion of governments in the long list.

52. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department explained that the long list was based on the report of the Committee of Experts, which contained on average 800-900 observations. Among those observations, about 40 were selected by the Vice-Chairs in establishing the long list. A list of criteria for that decision was contained in Document D.1.

53. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay reiterated that the matter was of the utmost importance, and that GRULAC wished to pursue discussions on the issue, and on the selection criteria.

54. Speaking on behalf of the Western European Group, a Government representative of Greece supported the statement made by GRULAC and requested to maintain the item on the agenda for March.

55. The Chairperson sought clarification on whether there was agreement on the publication 30 days before the beginning of the Conference of the long list, and that the discussion on the publication of the final list had first to be taken to the Governing Body. He further sought clarification that some Governments wanted to retain the issue on the agenda to discuss the criteria for the selection of cases.

56. The Worker spokesperson expressed his puzzlement at the fact that some countries had indicated that they wanted to continue discussing the issue, which in his view was not within the mandate of the meeting. If countries wanted to continue discussing the issue, then legal advice had to be sought on whether it was within the mandate of the meeting.

57. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay indicated that GRULAC did not agree with the statement made by the Chairperson. GRULAC accepted the Workers’ proposal to seek legal assistance to obtain additional information, and requested that the item on the adoption of the list be retained on the agenda of the consultations, and that the discussions on the selection criteria be continued.

58. Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of Lebanon supported the position of GRULAC.

59. The Chairperson sought clarification from the Office whether it was possible to seek the opinion of the Legal advisor before or at the next meeting.

60. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department stated that the legal opinion of the Legal advisor could be sought with regard to the specific question of whether the final list of individual cases could be adopted prior to the Conference; and that it could be included in the background note for the next meeting. The Legal Adviser could also be invited to join the next meeting.

IV. Adoption of the conclusions

61. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department recalled that the meeting had requested more information on the evolution of the role of the Chairperson in
the adoption of conclusions. Until 2014, the Chairperson, with the support of the Office, had prepared the conclusions for adoption by the Committee. A number of criticisms, including on the timeliness of the procedure, the length of the conclusions and the role of the Office had led to the decision in 2015 to entrust the Vice-Chairs of the Committee with that role and responsibility, without the support from the Office.

62. The Employer spokesperson considered it important for the conclusions to reflect the recommendations formulated by the social partners based on consensus, a practice which had now existed for some time. It was also important that the divergent views and any submissions be accurately and faithfully reflected, which was ensured through the verbatim record, which was an important development. The reflection of all positions in the verbatim record had increased transparency and enabled Governments to understand the conclusions in the context of the entire record of proceedings. Having the Government agree on the required action in conclusions was problematic. The Chairperson played a very important role in facilitating, supervising and encouraging the discussions that led to consensus-based recommendations. However, there were limitations to the appropriate participation of the Chairperson. The ultimate decision regarding the determination of the list of individual cases and the conclusions were in the purview of the Vice-Chairpersons to avoid conflicts of interest for the Government group. The Chairperson, in the same way as the Government concerned (and other Governments), could provide information that were important to them to the Vice-Chairpersons, which would be taken into account in good faith in determining the contents of the conclusions. There were many ways in which the Government could influence the conclusions. They could provide additional written information, they could make a fulsome intervention highlighting important information when they appeared before the Committee, and they could also take the floor to make concluding remarks highlighting the aspects of the case that they believed to be important. While the Employers’ group was open to hearing ways in which the process could be improved, it considered that it worked in fair, efficient and reasonable manner.

63. The Worker spokesperson stated that his group would align itself with the statement made by the Employers.

64. Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, a Government representative of Algeria indicated that Governments should be informed of the conclusions prior to their adoption to enable Governments to prepare their arguments or express their objections in that regard, and to allow for such arguments and objections to be reflected in the summary records. Governments should also be able to take the floor before the reading of the conclusions. It was important to ensure an effective tripartite dialogue. The Africa Group therefore reiterated the proposal to seek the consultative opinion of the Chairperson in order to explain to the other groups of the Committee the viewpoint of the Government concerned regarding the feasibility and relevance of the conclusions, which would facilitate a better implementation of the conclusions. The conclusions should accurately reflect the content of the discussions and take into account the comments of the tripartite constituents.

65. Speaking on behalf of ASPAG, a Government representative of Lebanon fully supported the position of the Africa group. The Chairperson should play a lead consultative role in the preparation of the conclusions. This would include presenting the views of the Government concerned for substantive consideration before the adoption of the conclusions. Conclusions should only be consensus-based and divergent views could be reflected in the verbatim record of proceedings of the Committee. Conclusions should also be fully reflective of all the elements raised in the discussion. They should be short and clear, and specify not only the actions expected of Governments, but also those of the social partners and the Office.
66. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay welcomed the statements delivered by the Africa Group and ASPAG. GRULAC considered that it was fundamental to give the Chairperson a consultative role to provide the perspective of Governments when adopting the conclusions. In this respect, it was recalled that, prior to 2015, the Chairperson had submitted the conclusions to the Vice-Chairpersons for consultation. It was essential that Governments receive the conclusions at least 24 hours before a decision was made, in order to prepare their positions. The consultative role of the Government involved was vital to ensure that the conclusions were truly consensual, reflected the national circumstances, and therefore could be implemented effectively.

67. A Government representative of Canada indicated that she was open to the Chairperson being involved in the development of the conclusions. This would be consistent with the practice until 2015. The Chairperson might be able to provide some helpful insight into the feasibility of the recommended measures proposed to Governments. However, confidential participation would be key. Also, care would need to be taken to ensure continued neutrality of the Chairperson, for example to avoid inappropriate lobbying by Governments to influence the conclusions on country cases, which would put the Chairperson in a difficult position and would call into question his or her neutrality. Governments concerned should not play a role in the development of conclusions as they should not be judge and jury of their own case.

68. Speaking on behalf of the Western European group, a Government representative of Greece indicated that ways should be explored to facilitate the balanced and constructive participation of the Vice-Chairpersons and the Chairperson with the assistance of the Office. She supported the idea of transmitting the conclusions to the Government concerned with sufficient time in advance for them to absorb the text. This should be done on the understanding that the conclusions were already finalized and not subject to amendments.

69. The Employer spokesperson indicated that there was room for reflection on the role of the Chairperson, and that it was also possible to reflect upon the level of advance notice to Governments of the conclusions prior to their adoption. There were obvious logistical issues (such as translation and drafting issues and long sittings), which should realistically be taken into account. It was not appropriate for Governments to be involved in their own conclusions, but some other proposals were worth further discussion.

70. The Worker spokesperson agreed with the Employers spokesperson. Limiting the Conference to two weeks had resulted in severe time constraints. He agreed with the statements made that a Government could not be judge and jury in the discussion of its own case, as well as with the statement that the concerned Government should be sufficiently informed in advance to absorb the information and enable it to appropriately apply the recommended measures – however, this should not be done with a view to changing the conclusions. A more active role of the Chairperson could be considered in upcoming meetings, but there was a risk that the Chairperson might become very vulnerable when taking a more active role in the process of drafting conclusions. There was a lot of tension around certain individual cases, and it would be difficult for the Chairperson to remain impartial and objective.

71. Speaking on behalf of GRULAC, a Government representative of Uruguay clarified that GRULAC was not of the opinion that the Government involved should be both judge and jury, but rather that it should be in contact with the Chairperson. It was important for Governments to be able to take the floor prior to the reading of the conclusions, not to propose amendments to the conclusions, but to provide information on national circumstances.
72. Speaking on behalf of the Africa Group, a Government representative of Algeria said that the participation of the Chairperson in the preparation of the conclusions should constitute a consultative opinion that would not influence the conclusions or the consensus reached between the Workers and the Employers. Governments also had the right to be informed of the conclusions in advance in order to prepare and express their views, but not to influence the conclusions.

V. Information on the roundtable event that will take place at the next meeting of the CEACR  
(28 November 2019)

73. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department informed the meeting about the special round table event to be organized during the Centenary sitting of the Committee of Experts, which would address the significant achievements made through the ILO supervisory mechanism – and was open to all those willing to attend. The event had been scheduled for Thursday, 28 November, and the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee had confirmed their attendance.

VI. Other issues raised during the discussions

74. During the discussions, Government representatives from ASPAG raised a number of issues on the functioning of the informal tripartite consultations including the right of observers to take the floor, the availability of a list of participants, the documents establishing the mandate, composition and procedures of the informal tripartite consultations. The Director of the International Labour Standards Department indicated that the Office was not maintaining a list of participants. This could be done in the future at the request of the informal tripartite meeting. Concerning information relating to previous meetings, the Office was working on the establishment of an electronic library compiling the background notes and the brief summaries, that would be made accessible to all participants.