



Governing Body

332nd Session, Geneva, 8–22 March 2018

GB.332/WP/GBC/2

Working Party on the Functioning of the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference

WP/GBC

Date: 30 January 2018

Original: English

SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Functioning of the International Labour Conference: Arrangements for the 107th Session (2018)

1. As requested by the Governing Body at its 331st Session (October–November 2017), this document contains proposals for the organization of the 107th Session of the Conference, to be held from Monday, 28 May to Friday, 8 June 2018. The proposals are based on the approved agenda for the Conference,¹ taking into account the experience of the last three sessions of the Conference and the guidance provided by the Governing Body with regard to the introduction of further adjustments and improvements.² The implementation of some of these measures, if approved by the Governing Body, will require the suspension of provisions of the Standing Orders of the Conference. The corresponding proposals which could be recommended by the Governing Body to the Conference are described in detail in Appendix I.

Conference logistics and preparation

2. Among possible further improvements to those introduced in recent years, considered for implementation in 2018, the following were supported during the discussions of the Working Party last November.
3. **Early dissemination of pre-Conference information.** In line with recent practice, the Office will continue making available as much information as possible on the Conference website, as well as in the convocation letter to the 107th Session, despatched in January 2018. This includes the note entitled *Advance information*, which will be revised to reflect any

¹ The agenda of the 107th Session of the Conference was approved by the Governing Body at its 328th Session ([decision on the third item on the agenda](#)) and is available on the [web page](#) of the Conference. A proposal for the provisional placement of an additional item, namely any amendments to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, that the Special Tripartite Committee may adopt at its third meeting in April 2018, is also before the Governing Body under the item “Agenda of the International Labour Conference” (GB.332/INS/2).

² See [GB.331/INS/17](#) and [GB.331/WP/GBC/2/1](#).

arrangement agreed by the Governing Body in March 2018, and thereafter posted on the website as the *Conference Guide*. The Guide will be updated, as required, up to the Conference, and printed in a pocket format for distribution to delegates on registration. Individual web pages created for each of the technical committees will continue to allow the early posting of information or material. Briefing sessions will be organized for Geneva-based missions and, on request, for regional groups.

- 4. *Early nomination of committee chairpersons and preparatory consultations.*** Efforts will be pursued with constituents to ensure that nominations for the officers of all committees are finalized by April. These early nominations are critical to start the tripartite preparation of the committee workplans, which can then be made available to all delegates, pending formal approval by the relevant committees. These nominations should be based on a clear understanding of the required profile; that is, technical expertise in the subject under discussion, experience in conducting tripartite discussions and consensus-building skills. Consultations on the work of the technical committees started in October 2017 and will be pursued in early 2018. More details are provided below under the technical committees section.
- 5. *Enhanced technology.*** The Office will continue enhancing available e-forms and applications to make them more user-friendly, such as the ILO Conference App, the credentials online accreditation system and the system for registration in Conference committees. In this regard, it is proposed to test a simplified system for registration of governments in committees, whereby it will be sufficient to register the country name and not the names of each of the Government delegates or advisers as required under the Standing Orders. In order to implement this simplification, a suspension of the relevant provision in article 56 will be required (see Appendix I).
- 6. *Accreditation and identification of Conference participants.*** As discussed during the last session of the Governing Body, in order to address room capacity difficulties during some plenary and committee sittings, the Office will implement a differentiated badging system, based on the roles of participants at the Conference, with due regard to the role of the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups in the functioning of the Conference. At the same time, the Office will broadcast those well-attended sittings (such as the Conference opening ceremony, the World of Work Summit, or some of the sittings of the Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)) in overflow rooms open to all Conference participants, subject to the availability of such rooms, in particular at the Palais des Nations.
- 7. *Provisional Records.*** As requested, the Office will re-introduce *Provisional Records* of all speeches on the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General in the form of lightly edited transcriptions of the English, French and Spanish audio recordings of the plenary sittings, to be made available after the session. The Office will also web post, in a consolidated manner, all documents and records of plenary and committee work pertaining to the same session of the Conference in order to facilitate the consultation and search of Conference proceedings.
- 8. *Side and parallel events.*** In order to avoid overlaps or disruptions in the work of the plenary, the committees and the groups, it is proposed to pursue the policy applied since 2015 of restricting the holding of side events to ceremonies or briefing sessions on major issues having a direct link with the ILO approved by the Governing Body or by its Officers. Traditionally, the only side event is the celebration of the World Day against Child Labour. As this year it falls on Tuesday, 12 June, following the closure of the Conference, it is proposed to organize an event concerning the elimination of child labour on Monday or Tuesday of the second week of the Conference.

Conference workplan

9. The timelines described below are summarized in the tentative plan of work in Appendix II. Subject to confirmation by the Governing Body, it will be posted on the web page of the Conference.

A. Group meetings

10. Provision will continue to be made for the Employers' and Workers' groups to meet on the Sunday preceding the opening, that is on 27 May. Employers' and Workers' groups' meetings will take place as usual throughout the Conference.
11. Provision will continue to be made for regional Government groups to meet on request on the Sunday preceding the opening. On the opening day, it is proposed to schedule regional group meetings from 9 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., with a meeting of the whole Government group from 10.30 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. The Conference opening ceremony will commence immediately afterwards at 11.30 a.m. Thereafter, on each day of the session of the Conference, two hours of interpretation services (9 a.m. to 11 a.m.) will continue to be provided to each of the official regional groups. Regional groups may, on request, share this interpretation service time with a regional subgroup needing that support.

B. Plenary

12. **Opening sitting.** The arrangements in place since 2015 to reduce the duration of the opening sitting will be continued. Pending the adoption of amendments to the Standing Orders, the necessary suspensions to the provisions of the Standing Orders will be presented in a *Provisional Record* to be published prior to the opening of the Conference. The suspensions that the Governing Body could recommend to the Conference for adoption at the opening sitting are in Appendix I.
13. **Discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the Director-General.** As discussed by the Governing Body in November 2017, it is proposed to start the discussion on Thursday, 31 May, morning, and to close it on Wednesday, 6 June, end of the afternoon. This would allow for a maximum of ten sittings, two each day, with the possibility, based on demand, of extending the morning plenary sittings of the second week by 30 minutes till 1.30 p.m., rather than the normal 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. sittings.
14. **The World of Work Summit**, scheduled for Thursday, 7 June, will be themed around employment and decent work for peace and resilience, following last year's adoption of Recommendation No. 205. The Summit will be structured around an interactive panel discussion and a number of addresses by high-level dignitaries whose visits should all be concentrated on that day. Consultations will be held with the tripartite constituents in advance to allow sufficient time for preparations and ensure an interactive approach to the discussion.
15. **Adoption of committee reports, votes and closing ceremony.** Proposals will be made to the Conference to ensure better planning of the time allotted for the adoption of the report of each committee by the plenary, including timelines for the introduction of the reports by the officers of the committees and time limits for individual interventions. The reports of the Selection Committee and the Finance Committee will be presented for adoption by the plenary between Monday, 4 and Wednesday, 6 June as they become available. It is proposed to commence the adoption of the other committees' reports following the closure of the Summit, on Thursday, 7 June, with the adoption of the report and conclusions of one

technical committee. Friday, 8 June, will be entirely devoted to the adoption of the other two technical committee reports, the report of the Credentials Committee, the report of the CAS and the closing ceremony. In order to avoid the difficulties with the quorum faced last year when a vote was scheduled at the end of the first week of the Conference, any vote this year will be scheduled during the second week, outside of the Assembly Hall for a fixed period announced in advance that will allow delegates to vote outside of the scheduled time of the meetings of the groups, the plenary and committees. In order to take advantage of the maximum presence of delegates in the Conference premises for those votes, it is proposed to hold any such vote on Tuesday, 5 June, as two of the technical committees may not be in session on Monday, 4 June, when amendments are received to the drafts conclusions prepared during the weekend.

- 16. *Possible inclusion of a maritime item on the Conference agenda.*** Subject to adoption of any amendments by the Third Meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee established under Article XIII of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), to be held in April 2018, the Conference will receive those amendments to the Code of the MLC, 2006, for approval. In accordance with Article XV of the MLC, 2006, the Conference may decide either to approve the amendments, or to refer them back to the Special Tripartite Committee for reconsideration. If this item is placed on the agenda of the Conference, a vote in this regard could be scheduled on Tuesday, 5 June, at the same time as the votes on the abrogation and withdrawal of a number of international labour instruments (see paragraph 19 below).

C. Standing committees

Selection Committee

- 17.** Following the suggestion made in November, it is proposed to concentrate the approval of all formalities necessary to set the Conference in motion during the opening ceremony of the Conference, including some of the formalities carried out by the Selection Committee. These include the setting of the closing date for the registration of speakers in plenary, suggestions to facilitate the work of the Conference and its committees, or invitations to international non-governmental organizations to participate in committees. These proposals will be contained in a *Provisional Record* made available to Conference participants before the opening of the Conference.
- 18.** It has also been proposed to transfer the steering functions of the Selection Committee with respect to the programme of the Conference and the time and agenda of sittings to the Officers of the Conference or to a tripartite group placed under the responsibility of the Officers. Pending further discussion in the context of the comprehensive review of the Standing Orders of the Conference on the mechanism to be put in place in this regard, these functions remain with the Selection Committee and its Officers.
- 19.** In view of the inclusion on the Conference agenda of an item on the abrogation of Conventions Nos 21, 50, 64, 65, 86 and 104 and the withdrawal of Recommendations Nos 7, 61 and 62, and in line with article 45bis(3) of the Standing Orders and past practice, it is proposed that the Conference refer this item to the Selection Committee for discussion on Tuesday of the first week, 29 May, when no plenary sitting is scheduled. With the adoption of the Selection Committee's report by the Conference, possibly on Monday, 4 June, as suggested above, the final vote could be held on Tuesday, 5 June. The Selection Committee would also be convened to consider any other matter which might not warrant the setting up of a separate committee, including the referral of resolutions not related to an agenda item.

20. If the Governing Body approves at its 332nd Session the proposed revised *Rules for Regional Meetings*,³ in accordance with article 38 of the Constitution of the ILO, the revised Rules will have to be submitted to the Conference for confirmation. In that case, it is also proposed that the Conference refer the revised Rules to the Selection Committee for examination on Tuesday of the first week, 29 May. While past practice has been to set up a Standing Orders Committee in such cases, it is proposed to simplify the procedure in view of the fact that, in accordance with article 38(2) of the Constitution, in the case of the *Rules for Regional Meetings* the Conference is only called upon to approve the rules drawn up by the Governing Body, unlike in the case of amendments to its own Standing Orders.

Finance Committee

21. As 2018 is a non-budgetary year, a single meeting of the Finance Committee should be sufficient to deal with any matters before it. This meeting could be scheduled on Wednesday of the first week, when no plenary sitting is foreseen. In line with the practice introduced in 2017, the report of the Committee will be submitted, after approval by the officers, directly to the plenary for adoption on Monday of the second week. As with the reports of any other committee, the draft submitted to the plenary will be open for corrections by committee members during one week after the closure of the Conference.
22. As discussed by the Working Party in November, the Office intends to create a web page for the Finance Committee on which it will post all working documents for the committee's consideration which, in the past, were subject to limited distribution.

Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS)

23. Informal consultations on the working methods of the CAS took place on Saturday, 4 November 2017.⁴ The meeting reviewed the functioning of the Committee in recent years, including measures that were implemented on an experimental basis, and it examined the issues that would ensure its continued effective functioning.
24. Further suggestions for improvement in 2018 were also discussed, in particular as regards awareness raising among delegates about the modalities and criteria for the establishment of the list of cases already endorsed by the CAS, including to the extent possible avoidance of duplication of procedures in respect of ongoing cases under article 26 of the Constitution. Reference was also made to the inclusion in the general discussion to cases of progress and enhancements in the information provided in the table on the follow-up to the conclusion of the CAS that is made available on the CAS dedicated web page. Previously introduced measures to ensure strict time management will be pursued, as well as the adoption in a "patchwork" trilingual version not only of the CAS report, but also of the minutes of the discussion of individual cases. It is also envisaged to display on screens the draft conclusions on individual cases during their adoption by the Committee.
25. A further round of consultations on the working methods of the CAS will take place during the 332nd Session of the Governing Body to pursue consideration of other possible improvements to be introduced at the Conference in June 2018.

³ GB.332/WP/GBC/3.

⁴ See the summary of the discussions in [GB.331/INS/17](#), paras 17–19.

Credentials Committee

26. The Credentials Committee will continue to function under the arrangements and adjustments introduced in the past three sessions of the Conference, including reduced time limits for lodging objections and complaints, as reflected in the proposed suspensions to the Standing Orders explained in Appendix I. The importance of employers' and workers' organizations submitting their cases as early as possible in advance of the deadlines should be stressed in this regard in order to facilitate the timely consideration by the Committee of all the cases before it.

D. Technical committees

27. The agenda of the forthcoming session of the Conference comprises one standard-setting committee: Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work (first discussion); and two non-standard setting committees: A general discussion on Effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, and a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social dialogue and tripartism under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008.
28. Following the experience of past sessions, the reports of the technical committees, once approved by their respective officers, will continue to be submitted directly to the plenary and posted on the web. The deadline for the corrections to the reports of technical committees will be set at the end of the week after the closure of the Conference. Outcome documents (draft instrument/conclusions) will be posted on the web the day before their adoption by the plenary.
29. In order to make the best use of the limited time available to committees, in addition to the simplification of the procedural part of the opening sitting of committees already introduced in recent years, each committee may wish to apply time limits for the speeches delivered during the general discussion part of its proceedings, with differentiated limits for groups and individual interventions. If so wished, time-monitoring tools similar to those used at the CAS could be made available to all three technical committees.
30. Following past practice, a number of committee documents will be password protected during the session to restrict their access to the members of the committees concerned. Screens will continue to be available to all technical committees for the discussion of amendments in plenary and to drafting groups, and arrangements will be put in place during any possible late sittings as regards transport and access to food.
31. Consultations started in October–November 2017 on an annotated outline of the report for the general discussion. Further consultations are scheduled in early 2018 to review the proposed points for discussion for both the general discussion and the recurrent discussion, as well as a concept note on a possible special event in the form of a panel in the Recurrent Discussion Committee in line with the framework for recurrent discussions adopted by the Governing Body at its 331st Session (November 2017).⁵ Consultations are similarly foreseen with respect to the workplan of the Standard-setting Committee after the publication of the reports submitted to the Conference (summary of the law and practice and proposed conclusions). If needed, further rounds of consultations will be held before the Conference.

⁵ GB.331/PV/Draft, para. 42.

32. Subject to the outcome of those consultations and to endorsement by the respective committees, it is proposed that the plan of work of all three committees be organized according to the tentative schedule in Appendix II, starting their work on Monday, 28 May in the afternoon, and finishing at the latest on Wednesday, 6 June in the evening.
33. As has been done in recent years, the work of the **Standard-setting Committee** will start with one or two sittings dedicated to general remarks, followed by the submission and discussion of amendments throughout the rest of the time available to the Committee, with a “continuous” drafting committee meeting as needed.
34. Work arrangements of the **general discussion and recurrent discussion committees** could include, as per past practice and taking into account the framework for recurrent discussions, three or three-and-a-half days of general debate in committee plenary, followed by a restricted drafting group during the Friday and Saturday of the first week to prepare draft conclusions. The text issued of the drafting group is then open for amendments on Monday of the second week, the following Tuesday and Wednesday being reserved for the discussion of any amendments and the adoption of a final text to be submitted to the Conference plenary.

Draft decision

35. *The Working Party, having examined the proposed arrangements contained in document GB.332/WP/GBC/2 and the tentative plan of work for the 107th Session (2018) of the Conference, recommends that the Governing Body propose to the Conference that it implement these arrangements, including the suspensions of provisions of the Standing Orders detailed in Appendix I, for the Conference session in June 2018.*

Appendix I

Suspension of various provisions of the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference

Introduction

1. The implementation of the proposed format of the 107th Session (28 May–8 June 2018) of the International Labour Conference requires a number of changes to the Standing Orders of the Conference. Pending the adoption of amendments to the Standing Orders, it is proposed to proceed, as in the past, by suspending the relevant Standing Orders provisions for this session in accordance with article 76 of the Standing Orders.
2. All proposed suspensions have, unless otherwise specified, already been applied over the last three sessions of the Conference.

Proposed suspensions

Article 12, paragraph 2 – Report of the Director-General

3. In order for the Director-General to continue presenting a thematic Report to each session of the Conference, including in non-budgetary years when the Director-General is required to report on programme implementation, it is necessary to suspend article 12(2), of the Standing Orders to the extent necessary to permit the thematic Report to be submitted along with the Programme implementation report, under article 12.

Article 12, paragraph 3, Article 14, paragraphs 2 and 6, and Article 16 – World of Work Summit

4. For the ILO World of Work Summit, to the extent necessary to enable statements of Heads of State and Government, Prime Ministers and Vice-Presidents, and interactive panel-style sessions, it is proposed to suspend:
 - (a) the limitation concerning the number of statements by each member State in plenary and, to that extent, article 12, paragraph 3;
 - (b) the provisions regarding time limits of speeches and, to that extent, article 14, paragraph 6;
 - (c) the sequence in which the speakers are given the floor in order to facilitate an exchange of views and, to that extent, the provisions of article 14, paragraph 2; and
 - (d) the rules on moving the closure of the discussion provided in article 16.

Article 23, paragraphs 1 and 3 – Records of the Conference

5. As regards the records of the Conference, it is proposed to continue suspending several provisions of article 23, namely:
 - (a) paragraph 1, to the extent necessary, to permit the publication of the *Provisional Records* containing the speeches made during the plenary discussion of the reports of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and of the Director-General only after the Conference;
 - (b) paragraph 3, with respect to the deadline for receiving proposed corrections to the *Provisional Records*, to permit that all records – those published during the session as well as those published afterwards – be reviewed together within the same time period following the Conference.

Article 17, paragraphs 3, 4 and 10 – Resolutions Committee

6. Following agreement at the 319th Session of the Governing Body (October 2013) not to reactivate the Resolutions Committee, the provisions of the Standing Orders concerning the referral to the Resolutions Committee of resolutions relating to matters not included in an item placed on the agenda would have to be suspended, as has been done since 2006 in non-budgetary years when such resolutions were receivable. It is accordingly proposed to suspend the provisions of paragraphs 3, 4 and 10 of article 17 of the Standing Orders.

Articles 26bis and 26ter – Time limits for filing objections and complaints with the Credentials Committee

7. To enable the Committee to examine all objections and complaints in time, it is proposed to reduce the time limit for lodging objections from 72 to 48 hours from the opening of the Conference (and from 48 to 24 hours from the publication of a *Revised list of delegations*) (with the possibility for the Committee to make exceptions) and to reduce the time limit for complaints from seven to five days. Thus, it is proposed to suspend article 26bis(1)(a) and article 26ter(3)(a) to the extent that they provide for the current, longer time limits. With respect to complaints, it is proposed to trial, for the second time, a deadline of four days instead of previously five days.⁶ For the duration of the 107th Session of the Conference only, the relevant provisions would thus read as follows (proposed changes appear in bold):

ARTICLE 26BIS

Objections

1. An objection in pursuance of article 5, paragraph 2(a), shall not be receivable in the following cases:

- (a) if the objection is not lodged with the Secretary-General within **48** hours from 10 a.m. of the first day of the Conference, the date of publication in the *Provisional Record* of the official list of delegations, on the basis of the presence of a person's name or functions on this list, or its absence. If the objection is based on a revised list, the time limit shall be reduced to **24** hours;

...

ARTICLE 26TER

Complaints

...

3. A complaint shall be receivable if:

- (a) it is lodged with the Secretary-General of the Conference before 10 a.m. on the **fourth** day following the opening of the Conference or, thereafter, in the case of a complaint referred to in paragraph 2, it is lodged within 48 hours of the alleged act or omission preventing attendance of the delegate or adviser concerned, and if the Committee considers that there is sufficient time to deal with it properly; and

...

⁶ See [GB.328/WP/GBC/1/2](#), para. 9 and commentary at p. 15.

Article 56, paragraph 2 – Appointment of Government representatives in committees

8. It is proposed to test at this session of the Conference a simplified system of government representation in all committees to which section H of the Standing Orders applies, whereby governments would no longer have to communicate to the secretariat of the Conference the name of their representatives in the committee, but would be validly represented by any delegate or adviser accredited by them to the Conference. It is therefore proposed that the Conference suspend article 56(2) of the Standing Orders.

Article 67 – Adoption of committee reports

9. Since 2014, technical committees have delegated to their officers the authority to approve their reports to avoid the holding of an additional committee sitting to adopt the reports before their submission to the plenary. This does not in itself require the suspension of any Standing Orders. However, with respect to standard-setting committees, whose reports contain a proposed instrument, it would be necessary to suspend article 67 – which concerns the possibility for a standard-setting committee to consider amendments to the text of a proposed instrument submitted by its drafting committee – to avoid that, the committee may have to hold an additional sitting for the adoption of the report containing the proposed instrument. It is therefore proposed to suspend article 67.

Appendix II

Tentative plan of work of the 107th Session of the International Labour Conference (28 May–8 June 2018)

	Mon 28		Tue 29		Wed 30		Thu 31		Fri 1		Sat 2		Mon 4		Tue 5		Wed 6		Thu 7		Fri 8		Sat 9		
	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	
Plenary sittings of the Conference																									
Opening sitting	X																								
Speeches on the DG and GB Chairperson reports							X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X							
World of Work Summit																				X	X				
Adoption of reports																									
<i>Selection Committee</i>													X												
<i>Finance Committee</i>														X											
<i>Credentials Committee</i>																						X			
<i>Application of Standards</i>																							X		
<i>Standard setting Committee</i>																						X			
<i>Recurrent discussion</i>																					X				
<i>General discussion</i>																						X			
Votes *																									
<i>Selection Committee</i>															X										
<i>Amendment MLC, 2006</i>															X										
Closing ceremony																							X		
Committees of the Conference																									
Selection Committee				✓																					
Finance Committee					✓																				
Credentials Committee																									
<i>Meetings convened by the committee as required</i>																									
Application of Standards		✓	✓	✓																					FTA
<i>Discussion of country cases</i>																									
Standard-setting Committee **		✓	✓	SA	DA	SA/DA	DA	SA/DA	DA	SA/DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	FTA
Recurrent discussion Committee		✓	✓	✓	✓	Panel	✓	✓					SA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	FTA
General discussion Committee		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					SA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	FTA
Governing Body – 333rd Session																									
PFA Section		X																							
INS Section																									X

* As required

 General discussion

 SA Submission of amendments

 DA Discussion of amendments

 FTA Final text adoption by Committee

** Ongoing drafting committee meets as required