



Date: Monday 22 July 2019

Plenary sitting

Outcomes of the work of the Committee of the Whole

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Friday, 21 June 2019, 4.55 p.m.

President: Mr Elmiger

Presentation and discussion of the outcomes of the work of the Committee of the Whole

The President

(Original French)

Our next item concerns the work of the Committee of the Whole, in particular the ILO draft Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, contained in *Provisional Record No. 6A*. The summary of proceedings will be published online after the session as *Provisional Record No. 6B(Rev.)*.

The Officers of the Committee of the Whole are: Mr Baddoura, Chairperson; Ms Hornung-Draus, Employer Vice-Chairperson; and Ms Passchier, Worker Vice-Chairperson. Mr Mdwaba will stand in for Ms Hornung-Draus at this sitting. I would like to invite them to join me on the podium, together with Mr Ndebele, Reporter.

First of all, I call on Mr Ndebele, the Reporter of the Committee of the Whole, to provide us with a summary of the Committee's work. The other Officers will then each speak in turn.

Mr Ndebele

Reporter of the Committee of the Whole

I have the great honour of presenting to the Conference the report and the outcomes of the Committee of the Whole. For my Government, the Republic of South Africa, this is a double honour as Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, co-chaired the Global Commission on the Future of Work, which has inspired our work.

Oscar Wilde once said: "The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it." Our process of rewriting the history of the ILO was naturally fraught with challenges as the Committee was dealing with an uncharted working method: a try it and test it approach. This had its own challenges which tested our resolve. There were several times when I had to remind myself of the words of former President Thabo Mbeki, when he said: "Those who complete the course will do so only because they do not, as fatigue sets in, convince themselves that the road ahead is still too long, the inclines too steep, the loneliness impossible to bear and the prize itself of doubtful value."

Our Committee held 17 sittings, and the drafting group held seven, with a few very long nights. I must say that informal consultations helped us to move forward, but the primary concern of the Committee of the Whole was to ensure the widest tripartite ownership of the ILO Centenary Declaration. We just want to point out that our approach was that when the letter "i" is replaced by "we" even illness becomes wellness. While there were differing views and opinions at times, we brought to bear the full power of the ILO's tripartite approach and we were able to transcend ourselves and our positions to find compromise. As former President Nelson Mandela once stated: "One of the things I learned when I was negotiating was that, until I changed myself, I could not change others." For this Committee, coming together was the beginning, keeping together was progress, and working together became success. I am proud to say that the Committee of the Whole achieved the tasks set before it. This was in large part due to the invaluable and strategic guidance provided by the

Governing Body, but also due to the various consultations with the tripartite constituents before the Conference.

The ILO Centenary Declaration itself is structured around a preamble and four parts. The preamble anchors the Declaration. It reaffirms the aims, principles and purposes of the Organization. It then moves to the present, noting the imperative of social justice and recognizing the role of sustainable enterprises as generators of employment, innovation and decent work. And finally, it looks ahead, calling on all ILO constituents to reinvigorate their efforts to achieve social justice. It also commits to a world of work, free from violence and harassment, thus reflecting the adoption of the Convention and Recommendation this morning.

Part I of the Declaration sets out the principles that must govern our Organization in its journey forward. Noting the transformative change in the world, it clearly states that the ILO must respond by further developing its human-centred approach. It ends on a note of hope: the ILO's near universal membership means that social justice can be achieved in all the regions of the world; but it also notes that there must be full, equal and democratic participation in the ILO's tripartite governance.

In Part II, we call on the Office to direct its efforts in the face of these profound changes in the world of work, laying emphasis on the human-centred approach. These efforts include, but are not limited to: harnessing the potential of technological progress; skills development; creating an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises; social protection; the protection of workers' rights, as a key element; and the continuing importance of social dialogue.

In Part III, the Declaration addresses to all ILO member States a call that they should further develop a human-centred approach for the future of work. This would be achieved by: strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of the future; strengthening the institutions of work to ensure the adequate protection of all workers; and promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Part IV sets out how the Organization should go about realizing the aim of the Declaration by fully utilizing all of its means of action and reinforcing its cooperation within the multilateral system.

The Committee also adopted a resolution which invites the Governing Body of the ILO to ensure the follow-up and regular review of the Declaration. It requests the Governing Body to consider, as soon as possible, proposals for including safe and healthy working conditions in the ILO's framework of fundamental principles and rights at work. It calls for the completion at the earliest opportunity of the process of ratification of the Instrument of Amendment to the ILO Constitution, 1986, to definitively democratize the functioning and composition of the governing bodies of the ILO, and it also invites the Director-General to submit to the Governing Body proposals aimed at promoting greater coherence within the multilateral system.

It would be remiss of me to conclude without thanking the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr Baddoura, for his supremely diplomatic management of the discussion and his excellent sense of humour. I am also grateful to the two Vice-Chairpersons, Ms Hornung-Draus for the Employers and Ms Passchier for the Workers, for their total commitment to tripartism. I thank also members of Governments who were part of the Committee who shouldered the responsibility of speaking for their regional groups, and the other Government members for their engagement and constructive input. Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to the members of the secretariat for their invaluable support under the able leadership of Mr Vines, representing the Director-General, and his deputy, Mr Jiang.

On this historic occasion of the Organization's Centenary, it is my great honour to present the ILO Centenary Declaration and its implementing resolution to the 108th Session of the Conference for adoption. As one of President Mandela's favourite poems says: "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul." We, through this Declaration, have indeed stated that we are masters of our fate and captains of our soul.

Mr Mdwaba

Speaking on behalf of Ms Hornung-Draus,
Employer Vice-Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole

As those of you who spent endless hours in this Committee can clearly see, I am here on behalf of Ms Hornung-Draus, Employer Vice-Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole. She could not be here at this moment due to travel plans. I am honoured to deliver this speech on her behalf and I thank her immensely for leading the team with an outcome-based leadership style while keeping in mind the realities we must address in this futuristic and pragmatic text. The work of this Committee has taken place in a constructive, often difficult but open atmosphere, and the Employers' group expresses its satisfaction with the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work which is now accompanied by concrete follow-up measures contained in the resolution. The Declaration will provide us with a clear direction on how to harness the opportunities which come with the future of work, as it sets the basis for a reinvigorated International Labour Organization and shapes a future of work that realizes its founding vision. This is our hope.

President Franklin Roosevelt highlighted in 1941 – and indeed I have said this twice in the last five months as part of this Centenary celebration:

"... in those days, the ILO was still a dream. To many it was a wild dream. Who had ever heard of governments getting together to raise the standards of labour on an international plane? Wilder still was the idea that the people themselves who were directly affected, the workers and the employers of the various countries, should have a hand with government in determining these labour standards. Now, 22 years have passed. The ILO has been tried and tested."

Colleagues, 100 years later we are still living in a wild dream, where workers, employers and governments are able to take decisions and act together. The wild dream is now a reality. We look forward to the next 100 years, to strengthening our efforts and to improving the standard of living of millions of people. There is a need to leverage the opportunities brought about by this diversification to achieve social and economic progress; generate full productive employment and freely chosen employment; and provide social justice and decent work for all. We cannot change our past, but we have the power to shape the future.

After two intense weeks we were able to shape a tripartite consensus on many important and complex topics. Certainly, the outcome document does not entirely favour one constituent over another and we all had to sacrifice some important points. This is often the outcome of social dialogue, a compromised position that allows the various groups to share their experiences and circumstances with the common goal of having a reinvigorated, stronger and improved Organization.

The process we went through to reach consensus on the outcome document was regrettably far from optimal. The unusual working methods and pre-Conference preparations were not conducive to substantive discussions. We could have had a more visionary or eloquent outcome. This should be a lesson learnt for the Office and for all of us who are here who may be around for the future. We live in a period of fundamental changes in the world of work. The world is moving a lot faster than we can adapt. We all need to move quickly to shape the future, not only for our generation but also for the generations to come. This

Declaration has great value in, inter alia: first, confirming that consented action of governments, employers and workers is essential to the development of social justice, democracy and the promotion of universal and lasting peace; second, recognizing the importance of the role of sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work; third, harnessing the fullest potential of technological progress and productivity growth as one of the areas where the ILO must direct its efforts; fourth, promoting the acquisition of skills, where the ILO needs to become a global leader in providing concrete key policy guidance to address skills gaps; fifth, underlining the need for the ILO to support the role of the private sector as a principal source of economic growth and job creation by promoting an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises in order to generate decent work, productive employment and improved living standards for all; and sixth, promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy.

Furthermore the Declaration has a forward-looking approach to diverse forms of work arrangements, production and business models. This rightly reflects the reality of the modern world we live in. The Employers look forward to playing their part in the implementation of the actions that are part of this Declaration and first of all, within the content and structure of the 2020–21 Programme and Budget discussions, with adequate resources being allocated to those priorities.

In conclusion, we would like to express our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this Committee. It is through our collective efforts, determination, goodwill and love for this institution and what it represents that we managed to reach a consensus on such an important occasion. The discussion was stretched right to the end with rumours about the possibility of not having consensus and what this would mean. I will not reveal a conversation that took place in a vehicle in which the President of the Conference kindly offered the two Vice-Presidents and myself a lift back from the last high-level lunch we had at our ILO building. I will leave it to you to guess, as rumours abounded and people were starting to panic.

In particular, we would like to stress our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole, Mr Baddoura, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Government of Lebanon, for his hard work and capacity to mediate multiple difficult positions with endless patience and understanding. Please allow me to also thank Ms Passchier, Worker Vice-Chairperson, and her team for their constructive collaboration. We managed to end this Committee's work with a text that includes priorities for all sides.

We take this opportunity to thank our colleagues in the Employers' group for their personal and intellectual support, as well as for their dedication and commitment during all our sittings. We would like to express our gratitude in particular to the Employer members who contributed greatly to the drafting of this Declaration and resolution. Please know that your input and support have been immensely appreciated. Your efforts will not be forgotten.

We also appreciate the efforts of the Office, because when we had endless hours and indecent hours, they were there too, to make sure that things continued. So, to you, colleagues, thank you very much.

Lastly and certainly by no means least, I thank our team for their invaluable support and help: Mr Suárez Santos, Ms Assenza, Ms Morni and Mr Hall from the International Organisation of Employers, as well as Mr Greene, Ms Tugschimeg and Mr Asfaha from ACT/EMP. With this, ladies and gentlemen, we agree to adopt the Declaration and resolution.

Ms Passchier

Worker Vice-Chairperson of the
Committee of the Whole

Those that were with me in the Committee of the Whole – which was abbreviated as the “COW” by the Chairperson, but in my view was more like a donkey – know that I have already spoken too much. But of course it is very important, at this moment when we are going to adopt this Declaration and its resolution, that we share, on behalf of the Workers in this house and maybe also on behalf of workers outside this house, a few reflections with you.

It has been a tremendous two weeks for the ILO. I have heard from colleagues that the many Heads of State visiting this Conference were generous with their words, both looking back and looking to the future of the ILO. I did not pick up any sentiment that the ILO is somehow redundant. So, the ILO should be confident in its beliefs and convey the message to the world that it does have solutions for people, responsible businesses and the planet.

Is the Declaration before us as ambitious as the Declaration of Philadelphia? Maybe not, but it was never our intention to change our constitutional mandate; rather, our intention was to reaffirm it, to – as it were – “renew our vows”. In our view, the ILO – treaty-based and with a tripartite mandate for social justice and peace – embodies the very first powerful and genuine social contract in the world. Today, in this Declaration, we call on all constituents to reaffirm our unwavering commitment and to reinvigorate our efforts to achieve the social justice and universal and lasting peace to which we agreed in 1919 and 1944.

This is a powerful message. It is, in our view, the renewal of our social contract, which is celebrating its 100th birthday, and it is not superfluous in the world of work of today. Although the world may be a good place for some, it is a worrying place for many, and if we do not take action now to put people and the planet above profit, our planet will soon be dying.

With this Declaration, the ILO has a road map for its future which is true to its values and reaches out across generations to bring those values and rights to workers, all of whom are impacted by the digital revolution. A road map as relevant to Silicon Valley as it is to agriculture, industry and services. A road map for the future of work we want.

In my opening statement, I mentioned that, in 1919, at the First Session of the International Labour Conference, out of some 500 registered participants, 22 were women. None of them had delegate status. But looking at pictures, there was another striking feature of that session: there were very few persons of colour. One continent, Africa, was barely represented at all. So it is only right that we address this matter as a point of urgency in the Centenary Declaration and its resolution. It is now time to set this right.

Let me now turn to the key elements in the Declaration that, for us, are really very important and need to be addressed. There are some “bonus points” that I want to mention too. One bonus point is certainly that, in the preamble, we commit to a world of work free from violence and harassment. It is very significant in this Centenary year to show that we can still perform a standard-setting function on a very important and very relevant issue in the world of work that requires action at the global level and at every other level. In our view, the Declaration delivers also on the following key issues. It confirms that the historic tripartite and normative mandate of the ILO is still fully relevant and up to date and, at the same time, identifies areas in which there is unfinished business, ensuring that decent work for all and social justice are at the heart of the ILO’s work. It addresses concerns about the erosion of the employment relationship and the need to address the protection of all workers, to cover old and new workers, including in non-standard forms of work, taking into account

the diversity of work arrangements (as the Employers prefer to call it), as well as platform workers and other new groups. And it also addresses the need to ensure that ILO standards remain inclusive.

The Declaration contains a clear message on providing all workers with adequate protection in line with the Decent Work Agenda and sets out the elements that at least need to be addressed, such as respect for fundamental rights, adequate minimum wages, maximum working hours and safety and health at work, while reaffirming the relevance of the employment relationship and the need to promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy. It thus lays the foundation for a labour protection floor to be further developed as a matter of urgency.

The Declaration promotes workers' rights as a key strategy for inclusive and sustainable economic development. It provides us with an important and authoritative basis on which to strengthen social dialogue and collective representation as strong and indispensable building blocks of democracy in the workplace and in the world of work at large.

Certainly, one key workers' right is the right to go to work and arrive back at home safe and sound. And all records show that, even after 100 years of this being at the centre of the ILO's actions, it is far from being achieved, with new challenges arising as a result of technological and climate change. So, safe and healthy working conditions really deserve – and have done so for a long time – to be accorded the status of a fundamental right. This Declaration and its resolution clearly and unambiguously set out the path towards making this happen.

My Employer colleague already mentioned the importance of addressing skills and I will not go into the detail there. The Declaration also gives urgent priority to the development and implementation of a transformative agenda for gender equality at work, with evaluation of progress made. Gender equality can no longer be just an add-on to our agendas, something that you pledge your commitment to in one sentence of your text and then continue with business as usual. It is high time to take that commitment further to ensure real change, and this was certainly a point of great convergence in our Committee.

The Declaration clearly recognizes the role of public services and the public sector, and the employment opportunities they generate, in providing the foundation for sustainable, inclusive and gender-equal economies and societies.

Let me now turn to technology. This brings huge promises and opportunities, yet we must learn from the past and from the initial sufferings caused by the Industrial Revolution. It took more than a century, with a key role being played by the ILO's policies and regulations, to lay the basis for decent work. And this is still not a reality for all everywhere in the world. Technological change does not automatically produce well-being and fair outcomes for all workers. In order to create the future of work we want, we must manage and master it in order to reap its benefits.

The Declaration recognizes the need for a human-centred approach with a strong guiding role for the ILO, including in respect of privacy protection and platform work. It also recognizes the importance of social dialogue in the context of technological change.

A change of direction is certainly needed when it comes to the current business models governing economies, societies and the world of work, which put profit above people and the planet. We must ensure that businesses and companies are geared towards more sustainable models of enterprise, showing that social and economic progress can and must go hand in hand. The preamble, as well as the rest of the text, shows that we have clearly looked into all these elements in connection with each other.

In order to deal with all this effectively, in our view, it is indispensable not only at the national level, but also at the cross-border level when it comes to global supply and value chains, to address the matter with due diligence in respect of the human and labour rights that are at the heart of it. This is certainly a point where we would have wanted more forward-looking language, but the elements for this are there and we will have to convince Employers to be more courageous to enter into this area together with us to our mutual benefit.

The Declaration also shows that we must address the global macroeconomic frameworks and the trade, industrial and sectoral policies that promote decent work and enhance productivity. It has very concise language on the ILO's leadership role to ensure decent work in labour migration. This is more important than ever, taking into account the seemingly unbridgeable gap between regions that insist on rights for migrants regardless of their status and other regions that give priority to managing migration flows. It was possible to bridge this gap in the Committee only by referring back to previous ILO language.

Finally, the Declaration places the ILO at the centre of a global multilateral system to achieve social justice and thereby lays the basis for a strong tripartite commitment to take this further within and beyond the ILO, with a special responsibility for the member States, including in the context of United Nations reform.

The Global Commission on the Future of Work and its report helped us in our deliberations and they are a source to which the ILO should return for ideas and guidance in the future. The Declaration and the report together, when translated into action, will realize the vision we have for a brighter future for people and the planet. The Global Commission warned about sleepwalking into a grim future if we do not take action now. It is true that we have been deprived of sleep these past two weeks, but we must be aware of the millions of workers out there, many of whom work many more hours than the eight-hour working day, every day. But also, billions of people will sleep better and easier when we secure a future of work for them which is truly human-centred.

Those of you that have been with me in working groups and committees know that I always somehow make reference to a bear, because whenever my group has a small victory, my colleagues start to be very happy, and then I say that we should not applaud because, in my language, we say: "Do not sell the bearskin before you have shot the bear." So, this morning, I got some messages from my group saying: "Now you got the bear." And I want to tell you, I will not shoot the bear; I want to set it free, because without bears and without other species on this planet, given their own place next to the human species, there will be no future, including for the human species.

So I want to conclude by saying that a world in turmoil requires leadership and this is what the ILO can and must offer, as much as it did in 1919 with social justice as its guiding principle and primary goal.

For those that were not in our Committee, let me just compare our work with climbing Mount Everest. I think we all felt imprisoned; we felt as if we could not get out without a result and we did not know if we would ever get there. The fact that we got there is thanks, first of all, to our impressive Chairperson, the Ambassador of Lebanon, with his stamina, his patience – sometimes he was very much like a class teacher, telling us to "stop causing trouble" – his inclusiveness and his charm, even at a very late hour of the day, and I want to thank him very much for that. I know I caused some trouble too.

I want to thank the Office and, via Greg Vines, all the staff in the Office and the invisible people, from the cleaners that made sure that we still had clean toilets after 18-hour working days and the people working in the cafeteria, to the interpreters, the translators, and of course, also the people that tried to ensure that we continued to focus on what we really

wanted to achieve. So thank you very much, all of you, I think you deserve a round of applause.

I want to thank the representatives of Governments, all of whom were very committed. We had extensive debates, and very often found it difficult to really agree on the detail, but I think on the main lines, we always agreed on the need somehow to reach the top of this Mount Everest and to come up with a Declaration that will be useful for the future of this house. As for the spokespersons of the regional groups, who I think had a similar job to mine, coordinating a lot of different views and perspectives and coming up with clear positions, I admire them greatly and I really want to thank them all. I note in particular that, at this session, we had four women in those leadership roles. And I think that this shows that you can make change happen. I want to say to Renate Hornung-Draus – who I really regret is not there anymore, because I got so used to her sitting opposite me – that I miss her. But of course I will once again get used to Mthunzi Mdwaba sitting on the other side, tomorrow in the Governing Body. In any case, I think Renate is a force of nature, her group must be very happy to have had her as their leader, and we respected her even though, especially in the first week, we had difficulty in really agreeing. We really respected her for her endurance and for keeping focused on the interests of her group.

I must say that I think that this Committee of the Whole – this donkey – after some difficulties, got into real social dialogue and that does not mean that you have to agree on everything, but the most important point is to agree that you have to work together to make something happen. I think that that is what we did, over the last few days especially, and I think that it was a great experience for all of us.

I want to thank my own group, all my trade union colleagues. We had a big team with strong views but also with a lot of solidarity and a lot of expertise, and they were solidly with me until one o'clock in the morning. And I want to thank the commissioners that worked for us in the Global Commission on the Future of Work, because they really did everything possible to set out this path on which we could build our work. I want to thank the team from the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), especially Anna Biondi, the Deputy Director, and all her team that really supported us with a lot of the material that we needed throughout the process. I want to thank our colleagues from the International Trade Union Confederation and I especially want to thank Raquel González, because she is not only the Secretary of the Workers' group but in this Committee she was also actually my lifeline. On many occasions, she helped me to focus on the next amendments, and she made sure that I did not start to throw tomatoes once in a while at some people who I was totally getting passionate about. I think she kept me sane, so I really want to thank her especially.

With all that being said, I think it is up to all of us to make it work and to bring this to the ILO and its institutions and the Governing Body, and to really have a future with a human-centred agenda for this house.

Mr Baddoura

Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole

I have the honour in my capacity as Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole to present to you the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019. Speaking on my own behalf and on behalf of my country, Lebanon, I feel profoundly honoured and humbled to do this on this momentous occasion and after so many distinguished and eloquent speakers. Next Friday, exactly 100 years will have passed since the Paris Peace Conference agreed to the ILO Constitution, enshrined in the Treaty of Versailles.

This makes the ILO one of the oldest multilateral organizations in what is today termed the United Nations system. Yet, the spirited debate in our Committee that has produced the Declaration before you has helped to ensure that the ILO will remain both relevant and

young, and pulsating with energy. Over the past two weeks, the members of the Committee of the Whole have impressed me with their profound commitment to the imperative of human dignity. They have fully embraced the spirit of tripartism and social dialogue, and they have demonstrated their firm desire to rise to this momentous occasion. They have worked relentlessly to ensure that the ILO has a Declaration that will allow it to pursue its constitutional mandate in its second century with unwavering commitment and unrelenting vigour.

I would like to present some reflections on the work of our Committee through a few verses composed by a poet from my homeland, Khalil Gibran. He writes: “Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars.” Our Organization was born in 1919, out of immense bloodshed, but it was a very human suffering that ultimately shaped our founders’ conviction that universal and lasting peace is based on social justice. The only scars to mark the work of our Committee have been too little sleep – with nightmares – and heated debates reaching deep into the night. I consider this to be a small price to pay for delivering a vision that is advocating a human-centred approach to a future of work that we all want, so this little amount of suffering is worth it.

We are talking about a future of work that will continue to change rapidly, because of the transformative pressures of technology, globalization, climate and demographic change, but a future of work that will be shaped by all of us; a future of work driven by the innovative forces of sustainable enterprise; a future of work with rights enjoyed by all workers, in which no one is left behind; and a future of work with the ILO at the heart of the multilateral system, that can and will provide the guarantees for peace and stability.

Khalil Gibran further tells us: “Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need.” More than just a visionary document, the Declaration before you has sprung from true dialogue between Governments, Employers and Workers. I am deeply indebted to the Employer Vice-Chairperson, Ms Hornung-Draus, and to the Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms Passchier, for their profound and passionate belief in the value of social dialogue. They both, at times, gave more than they could and stretched their sense of compromise to the utmost. They are two great ladies indeed.

I am also deeply grateful to the governments from the various regions of the world, and especially to those from the Asia and the Pacific region, who supported wholeheartedly my nomination as Chairperson of our Committee. I thank all member States and their brilliant experts for their flexibility throughout and for sometimes – as regards some of their demands – ending up empty-handed. They accepted that because negotiation and diplomacy is all about trade-offs, and give and take.

I furthermore salute the representative of the Secretary-General, Mr Vines, the deputy representative, Mr Jiang, and the other members of the secretariat for their invaluable assistance and for their dedication and friendship.

We do not know the future or the destiny of those who will be inheriting our planet, but we do know that our children will face many challenges as they set out on their quest to find meaning in work, if they find it. I hope that, just as our mothers and fathers were inspired by the Declaration of Philadelphia, our children will be inspired and guided by the Declaration that we are adopting today. We – all of us, starting with all the member States, the representatives of workers and employers, and the secretariat, in this august assembly – must now take urgent action to translate the aims, priorities and principles of the Declaration into action. We owe it to our children to put our Organization at the service of a future that will be even better for all.

It has been a great challenge and the Committee has lived up to this challenge. It is with great enthusiasm and facing the future that I commend to you a Declaration particularly rich

in thoughts; thoughts that have proven essential to social justice and peace in the past and that I hope will bring peace to the house of tomorrow. There is a proverb in Arabic that says: “If speech is silver, silence is golden.” I will be pretentious and I will try to complement this by adding that “meditation is diamond”. So better for me to stop talking now and leave you to meditate this Declaration and mull over the work that lies ahead to create a brighter future of work for us all. I thank you all very much from the bottom of my heart.

The President
(Original French)

The discussion on the outcome of the work of the Committee of the Whole is now open.

Mr Coulibaly
Government (Mali),
speaking on behalf of the Africa group
(Original French)

The Africa group notes the report of the Committee of the Whole, which it fully endorses. I would like to start by congratulating the President of the Conference and the Director-General of the ILO and his team for all the work they have done over the past two weeks. I would also like to thank the Chairperson of the Committee, the Ambassador of Lebanon, Mr Baddoura, for his masterful leadership of our deliberations. His calm and composure were invaluable for the success of our work. I would also like to thank the Committee’s two Vice-Chairpersons – Worker and Employer – for their spirit of compromise, thanks to which we were able to adopt this Declaration, a source of pride to us all. In addition, I would like to thank the coordinators of the various regional groups of governments: the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC), the Asia and Pacific group (ASPAG), the group of industrialized market economy countries (IMEC), the European Union, and all the member countries that I must have forgotten to mention. I would like to thank the Ethiopian coordinator of the Africa group and the African Union for the support they gave our negotiating team. Lastly, I would like to thank our Reporter, Mr Ndebele of South Africa. I would like to thank all of the members of the Global Commission on the Future of Work for their commitment and their report, *Work for a brighter future*.

When the idea first emerged of setting up a commission to look at the future of work during the Centenary, it was welcomed unanimously by all member States and Employer and Worker representatives in the Governing Body. We welcomed the informal consultations carried out throughout the process of drafting the Declaration.

The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, which we want to and will shortly adopt, is the outcome of fierce and difficult discussions within the Committee of the Whole; however, thanks to women and men of great quality with a keen sense of social dialogue, we have a Declaration and a resolution. Thank you to all of you. We should all celebrate this victory, which is a victory for social dialogue.

The Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work will be a key means of promoting decent work at the start of the next 100 years and against the backdrop of social justice and democratization of governance bodies so dear to Africa. The Centenary Declaration affords member States a unique opportunity to advance social justice and come to grips with the transformations in the world of work.

We wanted to take this opportunity to rewrite the history of the ILO and its system of governance. I thank you for giving us the opportunity to do so, which is also a blessing.

Mr Liu
Government (China),
speaking on behalf of ASPAG

ASPAG wishes to express our gratitude for the privilege and honour to have been able to contribute to the work of the Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole is the culmination of a long process of preparation. The Committee is also the result of 100 years of hard work. We are fully aware that the ILO has proven its value time and time again. Through conflict, instability, technological developments and demographic changes, the ILO has endured.

We are proud of this Centenary Declaration. It will become a platform to reaffirm the relevance and importance of the ILO's social justice and decent work mandate, and also to chart a path that will enable the Organization to rise up to new challenges as it enters its second century. This Declaration reaffirms the principles enshrined in the ILO Constitution and the Declaration of Philadelphia. The social justice mandate and the Decent Work Agenda will remain irrefutable and will continue to guide this Organization and its ASPAG members in the future of work that we want.

As we are aware, the world of work is undergoing profound transformations. In order to navigate these transformations and to respond effectively to new challenges, ASPAG members believe this Centenary Declaration serves as an invaluable instrument to guide our development and to consolidate a human-centred approach to the future of work, which puts workers' rights and the needs, aspirations and rights of all people at the heart of economic, social and environmental policies.

We affirm the significance of promoting multilateralism, particularly in shaping the future of work that we want and in dealing with the challenges of the world of work. Such a future of work is fundamental for sustainable development that puts an end to poverty and leaves no one behind. We also reaffirm the normative mandate of the ILO. We recognize the importance of social dialogue. It is imperative to act with urgency to seize the opportunities and address the challenges to shape a fair, inclusive and secure future of work with full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all. ASPAG members endorse the Centenary Declaration, together with the resolution.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairperson, Mr Baddoura, for guiding us through this strenuous process of negotiation. We are very proud of him and of his contribution. We thank both Vice-Chairpersons – Ms Passchier of the Workers' group and Ms Hornung-Draus of the Employers' group. Indeed, they are certainly two great ladies. We also thank our Reporter, Mr Ndebele. Our gratitude also goes to the Office – we thank the Director-General Mr Ryder for his leadership in this long process. We thank Deputy Director-General Mr Vines and his colleagues, because without their support, this task could not have been achieved. Our thanks also go to everyone who has supported this endeavour, including those working behind the scenes. To you all, our heartfelt appreciation and thanks.

Mr Foradori
Government (Argentina),
speaking on behalf of GRULAC
(*Original Spanish*)

The group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC) welcomes the historic adoption of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work.

We recognize the efforts of all the groups to produce such an important document, which aims to revitalize this Organization and address current and future challenges in the

world of work. In addition, we are grateful for the work of the Office and for the wisdom of the Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole, Mr Baddoura.

We would have preferred it if the consultation process had begun earlier; however, all those involved overcame the difficulties in order to reach an important consensus text, which we hope will stand the test of time.

The Declaration contains various elements that were inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the Declaration reinforces the complementarity of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in light of the ongoing development of a human-centred approach to the future of work. In this approach, we believe that lifelong learning, strengthening skills and competencies particularly in order to support people's transitions throughout their working lives, realizing gender equality, protecting vulnerable people, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and adequate and sustainable social protection are essential.

The Declaration also emphasizes the central role of the private sector, in particular sustainable enterprises, in job creation, innovation and decent work. We should do more to address the challenges facing the world of work. The Declaration allows for the opportunity to do more to unlock the potential creation of employment for young people, to create policies that take into account new technologies and structural changes in the labour market, and to do more to address the necessary transition from the informal to the formal economy. Sustainable enterprises, in particular micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives, will be essential in this work.

The ILO must also do more in the area of international cooperation, seeking coherence with other members of the United Nations system, sharing best practices and offering adequate and evidence-based technical assistance.

In the light of the Declaration, the Organization should redouble its efforts in pursuit of transparency in its normative system, in particular, in its standards supervisory mechanism. It must also guarantee that the system is effective and recognized; these are goals that can only be reached through true tripartism, in which governments are fully involved and when adequate working methods are in place.

We hope to continue collaborating in the ongoing and fundamental development of a human-centred approach to the future of work.

Ms Nojszewska-Dochev
Government (Poland),
speaking on behalf of the Eastern European group

I would like to thank the President very much for his diligent exercise of the chairmanship. I take this opportunity to speak on behalf of the 28 countries of the Eastern European group.

The 108th Session of the International Labour Conference has been a magnificent event for the world of work. It will define and determine many dimensions of the future of work. We are strongly convinced that the Centenary Declaration we have agreed upon over the last two weeks, which we are ready to adopt today, will be enduring and is of significant importance to all of us. Allow me to congratulate the Director-General, the Officers of the Conference, the interpreters and all of us for this outstanding effort and sacrifice to bring this Centenary Session of the Conference to a successful outcome.

Mr Tudorie

Government (Romania),
speaking on behalf of the European Union
and its Member States

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the Stabilization and Association Process country and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Georgia align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons; the Office, with special emphasis on Director-General Guy Ryder and Deputy Director-General Greg Vines; and the Government, Employer and Worker members of the Committee of the Whole for their engagement and commitment. The Centenary of the ILO has provided us with a unique chance to set the agenda for a decent future of work, and to show the added value of tripartism and the influence and vision that it can have in shaping a better future of work.

We did not expect a negotiation of key and complex issues. Nonetheless, the Committee has proven that social dialogue is able to clarify the challenges in the world of work and come up with a sustainable solution to address them. As a Committee, we have worked out a Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, which lays the foundations for decent work in the coming years. This is an important result for all of us.

The European Union and its Member States particularly welcome the following important elements of the Declaration: engagement in the process of including safe and healthy working conditions in the ILO framework of fundamental principles and rights at work; promotion of the acquisition of skills throughout working lives; an emphasis on gender equality and commitment to a world of work free of violence and harassment; the core principles of labour protection, fair conditions of work for all workers and decent work in global supply chains; a commitment to universal access to social protection and support for people's transitions throughout their working lives; acknowledgment of the role of trade and industrial policies promoting decent work across the world; the ILO's engagement in furthering a just transition to an environmentally friendly and sustainable future of work; negotiation of the ILO's important role in a multilateral system, including by promoting policy coherence in pursuit of this human-centred approach to the future of work; and, finally, the contribution of social dialogue to the building of social justice.

I would like to make one further remark on the issue of safe and healthy working conditions. The European Union and its Member States came to this Conference with a key aim: recognition of the right to safe and healthy working conditions as part of the fundamental principles and rights at work. We very much welcome the fact that there is tripartite commitment to engaging in a process in this regard, and we are ready to further this tripartite process.

The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work marks an important step, one of many that we will take in shaping the future of work for the good of all. The European Union and its Member States call on the Conference to adopt this Declaration. And as we all head towards home, we look forward to working together in order to take this Declaration forward and realize its ambition.

Ms Newton

Government (United States)

We would like to thank the Chairperson, our fellow Government members and the social partners for their sincere and concerted efforts to create this Declaration. I would also

like to thank my colleagues, Mr Shepard and Ms Calderón. Oftentimes we focus solely on the words at the conclusion of these important events, and we do not stop and take time to acknowledge all of those important colleagues who spent hundreds of hours to get us here; we thank you all.

We said at the outset that we hoped to achieve a document that provided the ILO with a clear and concise vision of the future in an era of technological change. Some of these goals were achieved. We reaffirmed the central importance of workers' rights and decent work as the primary functions of this Organization.

The Declaration contains strong and robust language on the role of enterprises as the principal source of economic growth and job creation. It recognizes the importance of training and lifelong learning for both workers and enterprises, of gender equality and of the need for equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. On these subjects – and this is certainly not an exhaustive list – the document succeeds in providing direction and purpose. On some issues, the Declaration does not delineate a clear sense of purpose, and much of the document falls short of providing the clarity and vision that it should provide.

On only a few issues, the United States must disassociate ourselves. We stated that the document is about vision, not governance, and we do not support the adoption of a resolution calling for completion of the process of ratification of the 1986 Instrument of Amendment to the ILO Constitution. We are, however, ready to engage in dialogue with the Africa group on this issue. We also do not support the language asking member countries to work towards the ratification of ILO Conventions; this is a matter of national policy.

We will continue to respect our commitment to annual review reports, pursuant to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as we have done since the process began. We do not support the language on maximum hours of work, which does not represent the needs of many workers who have opted for flexible schedules.

We look back on a century of great accomplishments and look forward to a continued record of achievement in the ILO's second century.

Ms Moltoni
Employer (Australia)

I speak on behalf of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in this year of our Centenary. Our forebears bequeathed us an extraordinary vision in 1919, and an equally visionary renewal and revitalization a quarter of a century later through the Declaration of Philadelphia. Millions of working people, employers and communities have benefited from their courage and foresight.

Those of us who came here looking for a Declaration of ageless prose or a grand vision will be disappointed. Today's Declaration is difficult to read; it contains jargon and repetition. It is more than twice as long as the Declaration of Philadelphia, longer than the United States of America's Declaration of Independence and longer than the Preamble to the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

However, those who look back on our work will see a document that accurately reflects the complex challenges that the ILO faces in 2019 through a human-centred approach. As we have heard, it recognizes the importance of supporting the private sector as the principal source of economic growth and job creation. It also recognizes that diverse forms of work arrangements are important for social and economic growth and can provide decent work, as well as the importance of supporting measures to help older workers. It remains committed to gender equality, social protection systems and, critically, lifelong learning and skills development.

As the world of work transforms, the Declaration, the preceding work of the Office and the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work will provide guidance. We acknowledge that there is still more work to be done by others on these issues.

This Declaration can play its part in helping to deliver a more effective ILO that is more relevant to working people in the future. My Employer colleagues who sit on the Governing Body are ready to play their part. We Employers look forward to the Office's engagement with those who communicate on our behalf and to a proposed programme and budget that is firmly grounded in the needs and priorities of all constituents and addresses the renewed, revitalized and rearticulated priorities set out in the Declaration.

In conclusion, we have all worked so hard over many hours to agree on the Centenary Declaration. We believe that it can help deliver member-driven, needs-based, impactful and balanced activity with the Office as we embark on the next 100 years. We thank all of our colleagues who worked so long and hard to deliver this outcome.

Ms Moore
Worker (Barbados)

At the start of the discussions on the Centenary Declaration, one of my expectations was that it would reinforce and advance the Declaration of Philadelphia's central objective of social justice that balances human rights and economic planning. I came to this discussion fully aware that our context has changed but firmly assured that our principles must remain, for principles do not change like things and people.

But in addition to reinforcing the principles that undergird this house, the Centenary Declaration needed to be one that, when read by my daughter and other generations, would communicate the relevance of this house in language that could be easily understood. I think that we may not have achieved that. I must admit, however, to have been too often worried over the tone of our discussions: that we were missing the fact that in the context of the many transformations in the world of work, we needed to guarantee our children the future and sustained progress at a time when it was becoming apparent that the focus of the debates in this house seemed more about winning a point than on the principle that this sustainable development cannot be guaranteed without freedom of expression and association and other fundamental rights as a universal guarantee.

Why does it still seem so difficult for some to accept that the war on want must be carried on with unrelenting vigour? Why would we prefer to fool ourselves, notwithstanding the changes that have occurred between 1944 and now, by forgetting that if we do not reinvigorate the social contract, sustainable development cannot be achieved? The term "social contract" is not ambiguous, it is not whimsical; the social contract is the essence of our tripartite structure and the basis upon which this Organization was formed. It defines our mutual pursuit of social justice and shared prosperity.

Therefore, unless we recommit to it where commitment is waning, unless we revive it in those parts where it is becoming breathless, unless we re-energize it where it is becoming weak, unless we reinvigorate it so that it becomes stronger, we may find ourselves undermining the vision of our forerunners: the vision of a brighter future and the hope that our work should be affording to all.

I take this opportunity to remind us that this is the International Labour Organization and that whether we are Workers, Employers or speaking from the Government benches, we are all workers, that special group on which this particular UN organization focuses. Therefore, may we not be afraid to identify with labour in representing labour and in recognizing that all of us are represented when we speak of labour.

Mr Mackall
Employer (United States)

The Committee deserves congratulations for completing its task, and it should be pleased – the outcome deserves support.

We will await future judgement about how the Declaration and its follow-up inform the ILO and affect the world of work, but we do have more immediate lessons to learn from this process: compromise forged in the crucible of a compressed timeline leads to expedient prose rather than concise poetry. The 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia was concise poetry; this Declaration properly reflects compromise and – with less than two months to consider drafts and nine days to address hundreds of amendments – it leans more to expedient prose. This transcends word count and drafting elegance. Good faith consultations between the social partners, on the one hand, and among the social partners and governments, on the other, were essential to completing the work. Time for more of that, allowing deeper engagement and mutual understanding, will always lead to more elegant solutions and better outcomes. We, the tripartite constituents, must own our outcomes because we must live with our outcomes.

In this type of process, 100 meetings of an expert panel is no substitute for even a single working session of the tripartite partners. Greg Vines noted the love for this place revealed in the intense discussions of the Committee. Here lies the most powerful lesson: nobody in this house should doubt the love that anybody in this house holds for this house. And nobody in this house should question our respective commitment to it. When we raise concerns about working methods, positions or other matters, let us seek to understand based on mutual respect, not to dismiss based on mistrust. Allow time fit to the task, promote early good faith engagement, engage based on mutual respect and love for this house – these are immediate lessons that I hope we all can take from the work of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr Naranjo Correa
Employer (Peru)
(*Original Spanish*)

Work as we have known it, during a specific period in the history of humanity, is changing rapidly. Technological progress, robotics, trade without borders, digital platforms that facilitate the exchange of goods and services worldwide, the new forms of business organization and enormous corporate creativity are here to stay and grow. Our own work capacities, as we know them, will change and we will have to adapt – fast. Young people will face more stringent requirements than those of us who are already in the labour market once did.

The forms of entrepreneurship and the concept of business go hand in hand with the drive to innovate and, above all, with technology. This is the backdrop of the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference, at which we seek to adopt a Declaration marking the Centenary of the ILO.

I am from Peru, a Latin American country in which the labour legislation and certain judicial precedents have resulted in one of the most rigid systems of hiring and firing in the world. We employers have called for greater flexibility, as only 27 per cent of Peruvians work in the formal sector; the remaining 73 per cent work in the informal sector, costs in the formal sector being too high. What do we have to do? We have to adjust our policies and adapt our labour legislation to a changing world, in order to meet the overarching goal of Peruvians: generate decent jobs.

It might seem that the digital world and technology will leave us very far from that goal, but, in fact, we believe that the world is moving towards new horizons and

opportunities to create jobs. Our young people have the opportunity to do this, but it means that we have to think differently, we have to think outside the box.

It is all very well to discuss rights, but we believe that we also have to talk about how to build an environment that promotes employment-generating investment. This should also be of concern to the ILO. As Michel Hansenne, Director-General of the ILO, said in his 1994 report, *Defending values, promoting change: Social justice in a global economy – An ILO agenda*, today more than ever, we must ensure that labour law does not make us forget the right to work. That right concerns more than 2 billion people worldwide who are living in the informal sector, who are represented almost nowhere and who have no rights.

The ILO therefore also has to consider making a historic shift and recovering its initial youthful drive by making a change that takes it out of its comfort zone and creates a link to the future. We believe that the greatest concern of the ILO should be to generate decent jobs throughout the world, using its organization, talent and budgets to that end. This will allow not only the tripartite constituents, but also the ILO, to flourish.

Draft ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work: Adoption

The President (Original French)

Let us now move on to the adoption of the draft ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, the text of which is contained in *Provisional Record* No. 6A. We will proceed Part by Part, beginning with the preamble.

If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts the Declaration, Part by Part, starting with the preamble?

(The preamble and Parts I–IV of the draft ILO Centenary Declaration are adopted seriatim.)

If there are no objections, may I take it that the draft ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, as a whole, is adopted?

(The draft ILO Centenary Declaration, as a whole, is adopted.)

The President (Original French)

I would like to say that we are aware of the importance of the outcome reached today with the adoption of this text, which is the result of often tense discussions between the Governments, Employers and Workers. As has been noted, this Declaration marks the renewal of the social contract and highlights the importance of tripartite social dialogue and the shared commitment to adopting a human-centred approach to policymaking. I would like to thank those who led the work of the Committee, the members of ACT/EMP and ACTRAV, and all those who contributed to this outcome. The relevance of this instrument and the consensus that was reached strengthen the position of our Organization and enable it to move forward with confidence towards the future of the work wanted by our tripartite constituents, our citizens and ourselves.

Thank you to all the members of the Committee for having worked in an intense, exemplary and tenacious manner. I would also like to extend my warm thanks to Greg Vines and to the entire team from the Office, who naturally also supported this hard work.

Resolution on the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work: Adoption

The President
(*Original French*)

We will now move on to the adoption of the resolution on the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, the text of which is also contained in *Provisional Record* No. 6A.

If there are no objections, may I take it that the Conference adopts the resolution?

(The resolution is adopted.)

(The Conference continued its work in plenary.)