



SEVENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Effect to be given to resolution adopted
by the International Labour Conference
at its 90th Session (2002)****(a) Resolution concerning tripartism
and social dialogue**

1. At its 90th Session (June 2002), the Conference adopted a resolution concerning tripartism and social dialogue. The text of the resolution is appended (Appendix I). The Director-General intends to circulate the text in the usual way to the governments of member States, and through them to the national employers' and workers' organizations.
2. This paper contains the Director-General's proposals on the effect to be given to the resolution.

National action

3. Operative paragraph 1 of the resolution invites the governments of member States to ensure that the necessary preconditions exist for social dialogue, including respect for the fundamental principles and the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, a sound industrial relations environment, and respect for the role of the social partners. Paragraph 1 further invites governments as well as workers' and employers' organizations to promote and enhance tripartism and social dialogue, especially in sectors where tripartism and social dialogue are absent or hardly exist. In this regard, it invites (i) workers' organizations to continue to empower workers in sectors where representation is low in order to enable them to exercise their rights and defend their interests; (ii) employers' organizations to reach out to sectors where representation levels are low in order to support the development of a business environment in which tripartism and social dialogue can flourish.
4. *The Governing Body may wish to request the Director-General, when communicating the resolution to the governments of member States and, through them to employers' and workers' organizations, to draw their attention to operative paragraph 1 and to ask the governments and social partners concerned for information on measures taken by them to implement the recommendations contained therein.*

Action by the ILO

5. Operative paragraph 2 invites the Governing Body to instruct the Director-General to ensure that the International Labour Organization and its Office engage in various activities to inter alia:
 - enhance the role of tripartism and social dialogue in the Organization;
 - promote the ratification and application of ILO standards specifically addressing social dialogue;
 - promote the involvement of the social partners in a meaningful consultative process in labour reforms;
 - carry out in-depth studies of social dialogue with a view to enhancing the capacity of labour administrations and workers' and employers' organizations to participate in social dialogue;
 - reinforce the role and all the functions of the Social Dialogue Sector within the Office and recognize the unique functions and roles of the Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities within the Office; and
 - further develop technical cooperation programmes with the social partners and governments to help strengthen their capacities, services and representation.
6. Tripartism and social dialogue continue to acquire prominence in the work of the ILO. From an ILO perspective, tripartism and social dialogue are integral components of decent work and essential channels for achieving it. As stated by the Director-General, "Cohesive tripartism is the ILO's bedrock".¹ In this regard, the Office and the Social Dialogue Sector, in particular, are involved in a wide range of activities, both ongoing and planned, to promote and strengthen tripartism and social dialogue, thereby giving effect to the 2002 Conference resolution.

Consolidating the tripartite nature of the ILO

7. Social dialogue is important, not only as an objective in itself, but also as a means of achieving all of the ILO's strategic objectives. Tripartism and social dialogue should be viewed as a cross-cutting strategic objective of the Decent Work Agenda to be mainstreamed by the Organization. To help operationalize this objective, the Office may explore the feasibility of undertaking tripartism and social dialogue reviews or audits of key ILO activities within the four ILO technical sectors, directly involving the unique expertise and specific mandates of the Social Dialogue Sector and its units. The Governing Body may wish to request the Director-General to put in place a comprehensive cross-cutting plan of action for strengthening tripartism and social dialogue. The plan of action could encourage and foster new partnerships and synergies, both in headquarters and the regions. It could result from a creative cross-sectoral integration of activities, directly involving ILO constituents and their respective Bureaux in the Office in the design, implementation and monitoring of activities, while recognizing their unique functions and specific roles within the Office, as acknowledged by the resolution. The plan of action could cover priority issues of the four ILO technical sectors such as poverty reduction,

¹ ILO: *Reducing the decent work deficit: A global challenge*, report of the Director-General, 2001, (Geneva), p. 70.

promotion of gender equality, the follow-up to the conclusions of the general discussion on the informal economy at the 2002 ILC, HIV/AIDS, crisis relief, employment, training and lifelong learning. Full mainstreaming of tripartism requires a deep knowledge in the ILO of the real world demands and constraints that independent employers' and workers' organizations, tripartite institutions and labour administrations are facing as indispensable constituencies of any genuine social dialogue. The Office may consider the development of an internship or exchange programme for ILO staff with workers' and employers' organizations, tripartite institutions and labour administrations. This would allow staff from any technical department – not only from the Social Dialogue Sector – to get first-hand experience of the strategies and practices relating to social dialogue, through work experience in a trade union, an employers' organization or tripartite institutions and labour administrations.

Strengthening employers' and workers' organizations

8. Employers' organizations are one of the three constituents of the ILO. They are central to the social dialogue process, which helps to ensure that national social, and economic objectives attract wide support and are achieved. However, social dialogue cannot function effectively unless the partners participating in the process are representative, independent and effective. In most developing countries and in countries in transition, employers' organizations need to be further strengthened. The ILO programme of technical cooperation with employers' organizations, delivered by the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) is designed to contribute to the development of sustainable and relevant employers' organizations. It seeks to enhance their capacity to influence the socio-economic policy environment to promote competitiveness and enterprise growth and also to develop effective employer participation in tripartite/bipartite framework contexts.
9. Workers' organizations and their Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) will promote tripartism, social dialogue and related ILO instruments as vital elements of good governance and democracy across all of its workers' capacity and institution-building activities. Through ILO technical cooperation programmes and projects, workers' organizations will increase their capacity to deal with social protection issues, to analyse labour market trends, to elaborate employment policy proposals, based on equality of remuneration and opportunities. Special training programmes and materials will improve trade unions' participation in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) process. Particular attention will be paid to develop specific programmes to promote the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS. Vocational training programmes will address women, youth and informal economy workers' needs. Equity between women and men as a collective bargaining issue, and working conditions of women workers – particularly in export processing zones (EPZs) – will be high on the priority list. Greater emphasis will be placed on strengthening workers' participation in national tripartite bodies, making it possible for them to influence social policies and labour legislation.

Promoting the ratification and application of ILO standards specifically addressing social dialogue

10. The ratification and application of the core ILO Conventions are key to effective social dialogue. Standards-related work, as well as the follow-up to the Declaration, aim increasingly at improving the application of such standards. Particularly with high levels of ratification of the fundamental Conventions, and increased ratifications of other up-to-date Conventions, more attention will be paid to implementation, including that of Conventions related to social dialogue.

11. The promotion of such Conventions is also carried out by the InFocus Programme on Social Dialogue, Labour Law and Labour Administration (IFP/DIALOGUE). In the current biennium, the priority has been the promotion of the ILO Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), and Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150). Advocacy materials on Convention No. 144 were developed in order to make the Convention more accessible and to illustrate its value to governments and the social partners. Promotion of Convention No. 144 was included in the programme of several conferences on broader social dialogue issues. In the coming months, several activities will be carried out and other events are under preparation in some countries in Central Asia, the Balkans and Latin America. The promotion of Convention No. 150 places emphasis on the involvement of social partners in labour administration reform and in the management of social security or employment institutions. The involvement of social partners in labour administration and its strengthening and modernization is also the subject of subregional agreements (for example, the Declaration of Antigua – Guatemala, 2000, and the Agreement of Santo Domingo, 2002). Requests from constituents are increasing in the broad area of labour administration; initial requests are often for the assessment of the current situation (an assessment manual was elaborated to this effect) and are followed by close collaboration with ministries of labour. Labour administration activities will be carried out in Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Senegal), the Arab States (Jordan) and Latin America (the MATAC project for Modernizing the Labour Administrations of Central America). Forthcoming activities will lay emphasis on the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154), which has a low ratification rate, and its accompanying Collective Bargaining Recommendation, 1981 (No. 163). Promotion of ILO instruments will also represent a key activity for the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV).

Enhancing the role of tripartism and social dialogue as a tool to make operational all strategic objectives

12. Tripartism and social dialogue are important, not only as objectives in themselves, but also as a means of achieving all of the ILO's strategic objectives. As such, their promotion should be the goal of all ILO sectors. Various multidisciplinary activities have been implemented and will be carried out with a view to assisting ILO tripartite constituents use social dialogue in the fields of standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, employment and social protection.
13. The establishment in 2000 of the InFocus Programme on Strengthening Social Dialogue was a significant organizational innovation designed to promote the benefits of social dialogue. The merger of the former Government, Labour Law and Labour Administration Department (GLLAD) and the InFocus Programme on Strengthening Social Dialogue in April 2002 represented a further enhancement of the capacity of the Office to promote, in an integrated manner, the related technical fields of social dialogue, labour law and labour administration.
14. Contributions by the social partners will continue to be a key feature of both the supervisory system of the International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) and the annual reports' follow-up of DECLARATION. The Committee of Experts and the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards, the main supervisory bodies which deal with examining the compatibility of national legislation with international labour standards, consistently take account of workers' and employers' observations. The InFocus Programme on Child Labour (IPEC) is intensifying its activities directly with the social partners.

15. The InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability (IFP/SKILLS) is engaged in several activities that promote tripartism in training policy and programme development. In fact, promotion of social dialogue constitutes one of the programme's key policy challenges in its work to promote greater investment in training and skills development to provide men and women with improved and equal access to decent jobs. The work includes a new Human Resources Development and Training Recommendation. This is a major undertaking, spanning four biennia. Tripartite dialogue lies at the core of this process, which is expected to culminate in the adoption of the new Recommendation by the International Labour Conference in 2004. In the 2002-03 biennium, IFP/SKILLS will collaborate with Sector 4 to promote the use of social dialogue on training as a tool for developing innovative learning and training strategies as a key element of workforce development.
16. In addition, tripartism and social dialogue are used by the Employment Policy and Advisory Services (EMP/POL) as both a procedural and substantive tool in the identification of employment policy needs. In future, EMP/POL's promotion of tripartism and social dialogue with representatives of civil society will be undertaken through the following activities:
- the implementation of the Global Employment Agenda through the formation of global or regional alliances: a case in point is the recent agreement for the creation of a task force on Technology for Employment in the Arab States between the ILO and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which foresees the full involvement of governments and the social partners in elaborating a programme of work;
 - the implementation of the Global Employment Agenda at the national level through tripartite participation in the drawing up of national agendas for employment;
 - the use of tripartite dialogue in the creation of National Action Plans for Youth Employment in five and possibly six "champion" countries under the Youth Employment Network. The countries are Hungary, Indonesia, Namibia, Senegal and Sri Lanka. In addition, Estonia has signalled its interest in becoming a champion country.
17. Activities in the Multinational Enterprise Programme (MULTI) by definition aim at promoting social dialogue and always involve the tripartite partners. The Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises Programme was adopted specifically to promote partnerships between MNEs, and national/local governments and employers' and workers' organizations to ensure that foreign direct investment brings not only economic benefits but also results in the creation of decent jobs.
18. The Social Finance Programme (SFP) aims at developing access to financial instruments to promote social equity and decent work. Financial services traditionally are designed and offered by both banking and other financial institutions. In many instances, however, more relevant services can be developed through tripartite dialogue rather than the sole financial sector's action. Hence, SFP engages in activities that involve tripartism and social dialogue on financial sector issues to broaden the spectrum of available services, in particular for workers. For example, activities conducted by SFP aim at: enhancing access to savings and credit facilities for workers through worker banks; developing joint employer-worker action on financial issues such as employee stock-ownership plans or salary deduction plans for indebted workers; protecting workers' wages in case of insolvency through wage guarantee funds; and promoting overall social equity through socially responsible investments (SRI).

19. With regard to social protection, occupational safety and health (OSH) has become a substantial part of the national social dialogue, both in developing and industrialized countries. In addition, OSH programmes, because of their nature, are increasingly being considered as an excellent means of promoting tripartism and social dialogue. The InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment (SafeWork) is collaborating closely with ACTRAV and ACT/EMP on the reinforcement of the institutional capability in the field of OSH of employers' and workers' organizations.
20. Similarly, the ILO International Migration Programme (MIGRANT) has renewed emphasis on full tripartite participation in the elaboration and implementation of labour migration policy and practice in all member States. Fully tripartite regional and subregional seminars are being organized, for example, in Pretoria, in November 2002, for Southern Africa and in Douala, in December 2002 for Central Africa, and for the Asian region in July 2003. Particular attention will be given to supporting preparations by employers' and workers' organizations for the general discussion on migrant workers during the 2004 ILC. MIGRANT has placed priority on contributing to the preparation of materials for ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, and employers' and workers' organizations.
21. One of the major achievements of tripartism and social dialogue is the production of the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work. The Code was developed in consultation with the ILO's tripartite constituents and presents social dialogue as a useful means of implementation for workplace HIV/AIDS policies and programmes. The next challenge is the effective implementation of the Code. To achieve this goal, the Code calls for the collaboration of governments and social partners at the enterprise, community, sectoral, national, regional and international levels. Therefore, tripartism is an integral part of the ILO/AIDS strategy to combat HIV/AIDS. In October 2003, the ILO will host a Tripartite Interregional Meeting on Best Practices in HIV/AIDS Workplace Policies and Programmes to share and discuss best practices and the ways and means of replicating and scaling up effective interventions based on shared experience. The meeting aims to support ILO/AIDS tripartite constituents in the implementation of country projects and programmes for the benefit of workers affected by HIV/AIDS.
22. The Turin Centre has taken measures to stimulate tripartism and social dialogue, including the creation of a Programme on Promoting Social Dialogue and a Programme for Employers' Activities, in addition to the Programme for Workers' Activities that already existed. In order to give effect to the resolution, the development of the above programmes will be further supported. In addition, the Centre will propose to its Board to make use of its Investment Fund (2002-05) to mainstream tripartism and social dialogue in the Centre's programmes that relate to the other three sectors. This will be achieved specifically by assisting the respective programme managers in designing curricula, producing new training material, providing technical and methodological inputs, targeting tri/bipartite bodies.

Enhancing the role of tripartism and social dialogue as a tool to operationalize gender and development

23. A number of DECLARATION programmes have a specific and important gender component. Gender mainstreaming by trade unions will be an essential strategy element to better involve women in trade union activities, including their greater role in trade union leadership positions. IFP/DIALOGUE will disseminate guidelines on the incorporation of gender into the design, implementation and evaluation of technical cooperation projects on social dialogue. Gender is taken into consideration when providing technical assistance and advice on the structure and functioning of national tripartite bodies (e.g. tripartite commissions for equity in employment in the Southern Cone of Latin America).

24. In various countries of Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, activities are currently being undertaken by the Social Dialogue Sector in collaboration with the area offices, multidisciplinary teams (MDTs), and the International Policy Group (INTEGRATION/IPG), to ensure the effective participation of social partners in the PRSP process, including disseminating information, organizing and facilitating training workshops and national tripartite conferences. The countries for ongoing and possible future activities include Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Peru, Sri Lanka, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam. A distinctive feature of the ILO approach has been to involve the social partners to a greater extent than had been occurring without ILO participation. This process can be expected to continue as the ILO increases its involvement in PRSPs in various countries.

Promoting the involvement of the social partners in a meaningful consultative process in labour reforms

25. Informal consultations involving the social partners have enabled significant progress in the ILO's discussions on standards-related activities, including the adoption of a new integrated approach which will be the subject of ILC discussions on occupational safety and health in 2003 and migrant workers in 2004.
26. IFP/DIALOGUE's programme deals with the promotion of efficient and effective consultative mechanisms by the exchange of international experiences, research activities, developing policy guidelines, providing technical advice and sharing best practices. The training manual for officers of permanent secretariats of tripartite councils will be translated and diffused in the official languages of the ILO. The Labour Legislation Guidelines has proven to be an extremely useful tool which has already been used by ILO constituents in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. They will soon be used by the Russian Federation and in Central Asia. Consultation on labour law reform among the social partners is of paramount importance. Consultative mechanisms on labour law have been and will be elaborated in a number of countries, such as Albania, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, the Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Viet Nam and Zambia.
27. The involvement of the social partners in the consultative process in labour reforms is also promoted through the holding of sectoral meetings organized by the Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR). For example, the joint meeting on health services, to be held in October 2002, will focus on the institutions, as well as on the capacity and effectiveness of social dialogue in this sector and will try to give practical guidance to the constituents. Another example is the joint meeting on public emergency services, to be held in January 2003, which will deal with social dialogue in a changing environment and will aim at the elaboration of guiding principles and best practices for safeguarding the health, rights and interests of workers dealing with emergency situations. The role of social dialogue in labour reforms will also be highlighted in other forthcoming sectoral meetings, in particular the ones dealing with the tobacco sector, commerce, public utilities and the chemical industries, as well as the experts' meeting for the development of a code of practice on violence and stress at work in services. The maritime meetings, which are scheduled for 2002-03 and beyond, and which will assist in preparing an ILO framework instrument to consolidate the existing body of ILO maritime Conventions and Recommendations, also offer opportunities for strengthened social dialogue in this highly globalized sector.

Carrying out in-depth studies of social dialogue with a view to enhancing the capacity of labour administrations and workers' and employers' organizations to participate in social dialogue

28. Eight national studies on social dialogue in different regions were prepared by IFP/DIALOGUE in the first half of 2001 (Barbados, the Czech Republic, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Panama, Poland and Zambia). The purpose was not only to analyse the practice of social dialogue, but also to propose directions of possible reform in consultation with government, employers' and workers' organizations. In 2002, a survey of national social dialogue institutions in the EU accession countries will be elaborated and widely disseminated to countries in transition.
29. IFP/DIALOGUE is undertaking the development of a database on social dialogue indicators, in collaboration with INTEGRATION/IPG, as part of the wider objective of the Office to develop decent work indicators. This database will provide authoritative data that will inform policy-making in the area of tripartism and social dialogue. The field structure and the constituents will be fully involved in this work.

Developing technical cooperation programmes with the social partners and governments to help strengthen their capacities, services and representation

30. The Office strives to ensure that seminars, symposia and similar meetings which are carried out by the Office, or carried out with significant Office involvement, are fully tripartite, whenever appropriate. In particular, IPEC and DECLARATION programmes are being developed with the social partners. Similarly, tripartism underlines ongoing technical cooperation projects to address HIV/AIDS in the world of work in countries such as Brazil, China, India, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Thailand, and the Caribbean subregion. This approach does not exclude capacity- and institution-building initiatives designed and carried out for each individual social partner.
31. Technical assistance in different economic sectors will be provided through advisory services, training and other capacity-building initiatives in which tripartism and social dialogue are the essential ingredients. Ongoing action is undertaken as regards the promotion of national codes of practice in forestry, the promotion of decent work in the maritime sector and the provision of training through the Portworker Development Programme (PDP). Other sectoral action just initiated or planned, in which social dialogue is playing a key role, is the pilot programme to promote decent work in the textile and clothing sector in Morocco, several initiatives to promote safety and health in mining and basic metals production, a meeting to develop technical guidelines for safety in shipbreaking, a programme to improve safety and health in agriculture through social dialogue in Costa Rica and Moldova, technical assistance to a project to promote the organization of construction workers in the informal economy in the United Republic of Tanzania, and the promotion of social dialogue in education, hotels and tourism, restructuring of financial services, postal services and public service reform in particular regions or countries. All these ongoing and planned activities were part of specific requests of sectoral meetings for follow-up action and/or are in response to urgent needs in particular economic sectors identified by the field structure.
32. IFP/DIALOGUE is coordinating a number of technical cooperation projects in different regions dealing with the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism. Through the technical cooperation programme, IFP/DIALOGUE, in cooperation with the field structures, is promoting reform of labour legislation, the establishment and strengthening of tripartite

economic and social councils or similar institutions (e.g. in the Balkan States), and sound industrial relations. For example, in Africa, social dialogue and tripartism are being implemented through technical cooperation projects like PRODIAF (Promotion of Social Dialogue in French-speaking Africa), SLAREA (Strengthening Labour Relations in East Africa), SLASA (Strengthening Labour Administration in Southern Africa) and a project to Advance Social Partnership in Promoting Labour Peace in Southern Africa (covering six southern African countries). In Asia, tripartism and social dialogue is being promoted through SAVPOT (Promoting Tripartism and Sound Industrial Relations in Asia); in Latin America through RELACENTRO (Labour Relations in Central America) and PRODIAC (Tripartism and Social Dialogue in Central America: Strengthening the Processes of Consolidating Democracy).

33. ACTRAV and ACT/EMP have their specialists in the field working on many of these projects and should be encouraged to further strengthen this collaboration.

Strengthening the tripartite structure of the ILO in the field

34. One of the key rewards of social dialogue is building mutually satisfactory relationships between the three social partners in the field. Assisted by ILO/SAAT (South Asian Multidisciplinary Advisory Team), the tripartite constituents reached consensus on establishing a National Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The NLAC, which has five members from each group, will assist the Islamic Republic of Iran in achieving greater competitiveness, improving social services, lowering the incidents of industrial problems and resolving disputes through the social dialogue processes. ILO/SAAT has also been involved in promoting the social dialogue processes in the South Asian countries. ILO workshops on promoting mediation skills as well as pre-trial hearings and conciliation in the labour courts in India and Sri Lanka have begun to pay dividends. ILO/SAAT has also been working in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan to ensure that the social dialogue processes in the dispute settlement mechanisms are also being disseminated to the tripartite constituents in those countries.
35. ILO/EMAC (Equipe Consultative Multidisciplinaire pour l'Afrique Centrale) continues to work with its tripartite constituents to strengthen the tripartite structure in the countries it covers. Apart from numerous meetings held on behalf of workers' and employers' organizations, ILO/EMAC will also hold tripartite meetings on issues such as migrant work, gender, micro-health insurance, HIV/AIDS, labour-intensive work and standards to reinforce the relationship between the social partners and to establish the institutional framework for social dialogue.
36. ILO/CEET (Central and Eastern European Multidisciplinary Advisory Team) is implementing three joint projects on the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism in the Central and Eastern European countries: a project covering both Romania and Bulgaria with a focus on promoting the Declaration, a project for Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) focusing on capacity- and institution-building, and the project in the framework of the Stability Pact Social Cohesion Initiative for south-eastern Europe which will promote tripartism and greater respect for the principles of the freedom of association and collective bargaining in south-eastern Europe. The project in the framework of the Social Cohesion Initiative will introduce region-wide cooperation on a tripartite basis. ILO/CEET also promotes social dialogue and tripartism through building expertise among the workers' and employers' organizations and government institutions in the region. The senior specialists in charge of workers' and employers' activities are in close contact with their constituents in the region and provide support through advisory missions, research and training whenever necessary. Training for workers and employers is organized in order

to empower them to play an active role in national social dialogue (to participate in the formulation and implementation of national economic and social policies in tripartite dialogue at the national level as well as in bipartite dialogue).

37. ILO/EECAT (Eastern European and Central Asian Multidisciplinary Advisory Team) indicates that in some countries in Central Asia, there is a need for basic bilateral capacity building for trade unions and employers before any meaningful social dialogue capacity building can take place. Its workplans for 2002-03 and priorities for 2004-05 reflect these needs.

Ensuring that the tripartite constituents will be consulted as appropriate in the selection of, and relationships with, other civil society organizations

38. Draft guidelines on cooperation between the ILO and non-state actors to further the Decent Work Agenda are currently being prepared by the Office. These guidelines will provide the framework for the selection of and relationships with non-state actors and the ILO.

39. *The Governing Body may wish to request the Director-General to:*

- (a) *take full account of the resolution when preparing future ILO activities and, in particular, to establish a plan of action, within the framework of available resources, whereby the work of the various sectors of the ILO, at headquarters and in the regions, is strengthened and reinforced so as to ensure that the strategic objectives are operationalized through tripartism and social dialogue during the current biennium, and in the 2004-05 biennium, in accordance with the Strategic Policy Framework for 2002-05;*
- (b) *ensure that the final implementation reports for the current and next biennium provide detailed information on how the resolution and its follow-up are being implemented throughout the ILO and its Office, including, in particular, how the work of the various sectors of the ILO, at headquarters and in the regions, contributes to ensuring that the strategic objectives are operationalized through tripartism and social dialogue; and*
- (c) *consider the possibility of proposing tripartism and social dialogue as an agenda item for a general discussion at a future ILC.*

Geneva, 4 October 2002.

Points for decision: Paragraph 4;
Paragraph 39.

Appendix

Resolution concerning tripartism and social dialogue¹

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Recalling the Constitution of the International Labour Organization,

Recalling Conventions Nos. 87, 98, 144, 150, 151 and 154, and the Recommendations accompanying them as well as Recommendation No. 113,

Underlining the founding of the International Labour Organization in 1919 as a unique tripartite structure with the objective of “universal and lasting peace”,

Reaffirming the importance of the tripartite nature of the International Labour Organization, which is the only international organization where governments and representatives of workers’ and employers’ organizations can freely and openly exchange their ideas and experiences and promote lasting mechanisms of dialogue and consensus building,

Stressing that among the strategic objectives of the International Labour Organization is the strengthening of tripartism and social dialogue,

Aware that social dialogue and tripartism have proved to be valuable and democratic means to address social concerns, build consensus, help elaborate international labour standards and examine a wide range of labour issues on which the social partners play a direct, legitimate and irreplaceable role,

Reaffirming that legitimate, independent and democratic organizations of workers and employers, engaging in dialogue and collective bargaining, bring a tradition of social peace based on free negotiations and accommodation of conflicting interests, therefore making social dialogue a central element of democratic societies,

Recalling the numerous challenges and opportunities facing the world of work in the framework of ongoing globalization and the importance of strengthening the collaboration between the social partners and governments in order to achieve appropriate solutions at national, regional and international levels and, most pertinently, in the International Labour Organization,

Recalling the essential role of the social partners in stable economic and social development, democratization and participative development and in examining and reinforcing the role of international cooperation for poverty eradication, promotion of full employment and decent work, which ensure social cohesion of countries,

Stressing that social dialogue and tripartism are modern and dynamic processes that have unique capacity and great potential to contribute to progress in many difficult and challenging situations and issues, including those related to globalization, regional integration and transition,

Emphasizing that the social partners are open to dialogue and that they work in the field with NGOs that share the same values and objectives and pursue them in a constructive manner; recognizing the potential for the International Labour Office to collaborate with civil society following appropriate consultations with the tripartite constituents,

Noting the valuable contributions of civil society institutions and organizations in assisting the Office in carrying out its work – particularly in the fields of child labour, migrant workers and workers with disabilities; and recognizing that forms of dialogue other than social dialogue are most useful when all parties respect the respective roles and responsibilities of others, particularly concerning questions of representation;

1. Invites the governments to ensure that the necessary preconditions exist for social dialogue, including respect for the fundamental principles and the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, a sound industrial relations environment, and respect for the role of the social

¹ Adopted on 18 June 2002.

partners, and invites governments as well as workers' and employers' organizations to promote and enhance tripartism and social dialogue, especially in sectors where tripartism and social dialogue are absent or hardly exist:

- (a) invites workers' organizations to continue to empower workers in sectors where representation is low in order to enable them to exercise their rights and defend their interests;
- (b) invites employers' organizations to reach out to sectors where representation levels are low in order to support the development of a business environment in which tripartism and social dialogue can flourish.

2. Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to instruct the Director-General to ensure that the International Labour Organization and its Office within existing resources of the Organization:

- (a) consolidate the tripartite nature of the Organization – governments, workers and employers – legitimately representing the aspirations of its constituents in the world of work;
- (b) continue to this end their efforts to strengthen employers' and workers' organizations to enable them better to collaborate in the work of the Office and be more effective in their countries;
- (c) enhance the role of tripartism and social dialogue in the Organization, both as one of its four strategic objectives and as a tool to make operational all strategic objectives, as well as the cross-cutting issues of gender and development;
- (d) promote the ratification and application of ILO standards specifically addressing social dialogue, as set out in the preamble above and continue to promote the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work;
- (e) promote the involvement of the social partners in a meaningful consultative process in labour reforms, including dealing with the core Conventions and other work-related legislation;
- (f) carry out in-depth studies of social dialogue in collaboration with the Organization's constituents with a view to enhancing the capacity of labour administrations and workers' and employers' organizations to participate in social dialogue;
- (g) reinforce the role and all the functions of the Social Dialogue Sector within the Office and in particular its capacity to promote social dialogue in all the strategic objectives of the Organization, and recognize the unique functions and roles of the Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities within the Office and strengthen their abilities to provide services to employers' and workers' organizations worldwide in order to enable them to maximize the outcome of the Office's work;
- (h) promote and reinforce the tripartite activities of the Organization to determine its policies and work priorities, and further develop technical cooperation programmes and other mechanisms with the social partners and governments to help strengthen their capacities, services and representation;
- (i) reiterate in headquarters and in the field the importance of strengthening the tripartite structure of the International Labour Organization and to ensure that the Office works with and for the constituents of the Organization;
- (j) ensure that the tripartite constituents will be consulted as appropriate in the selection of and relationships with other civil society organizations with which the International Labour Organization might work.