



FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Working Group on the International Labour Conference

Report of the Chairperson of the Working Group, Mr. M. Khan, Government delegate of Pakistan

1. As Chairperson of the Working Group on the International Labour Conference (ILC), I am pleased to submit this paper reporting on progress in the Working Group.
2. Since its establishment in November 2005, the Working Group has held four formal meetings, and a number of informal consultations have occurred. The Working Group has had the benefit of contributions from the Employers' and Workers' groups and Government regional groups regarding their priorities for the ILC and their views as to how the delivery of these priorities can be enhanced.
3. The discussion, whilst frank, was at all times informative and constructive, resulting in a considerable level of understanding as to respective positions and consensus with regard to the fundamental functions of the Conference and objectives in addressing it.
4. The Working Group has reached agreement on a series of proposals that it recommends for introduction on a strictly trial basis for the 2007 session of the Conference. These proposals, together with a schematic plan of work that presents them as a practical schedule, are attached to this report.
5. Note was taken by the Working Group that, for these proposals to work properly, pre-Conference planning must take place. This should include the appropriate briefing of the tripartite Officers of Conference committees and detailed planning and scheduling of both committee work and the plenary. Full cooperation from all parties on timekeeping and the application of discipline, both by speakers and from the Chair, will be necessary for success.
6. The Working Group further recalled the constitutional framework of the Conference, including the need for a minimum of two Government delegates, one Employers' delegate and one Workers' delegate throughout the session.
7. The Working Group underlined the need to respect the constitutional functions of the Conference, meeting annually as stipulated in the Constitution, and stressed the importance of effective tripartism in the functioning of the Conference.

8. The Governing Body may wish to:

- (a) decide that the attached proposals be recommended to the 96th Session (2007) of the International Labour Conference for application on a trial basis within the framework of the ILO Constitution;*
- (b) decide that the mandate of the Working Group be renewed to permit it to undertake, during the 298th Session (March 2007) of the Governing Body, a review of the planning of the 2007 session of the Conference, followed by a review in November 2007 of the outcome of the practical application of the proposals during that 2007 session of the Conference, and to report on these matters to the 300th Session (November 2007) of the Governing Body;*
- (c) decide that the preliminary constituent group meetings to be held on the day before the opening Conference plenary be official preparatory Conference meetings requiring the attendance of tripartite delegations, whose credentials have been received on time; and*
- (d) request the Office to advise member States, at the earliest opportunity as well as in the letter of convocation to the 2007 session of the Conference, of the modified programme format for that session.*

Geneva, 13 November 2006.

Point for decision: Paragraph 8.

Appendix I

A potential structure for the International Labour Conference (2007)

This is initial thinking that takes account of discussion in the WP/ILC and the informal consultations.

It takes account specifically of:

- (a) the call for a clearer distinction between Technical and Political, but not so as to undermine either important element;
- (b) the call for substantive committee work to start as early as possible on the first day;
- (c) the call for enhanced visibility;
- (d) the call for greater outreach; and
- (e) the call for improved use of time.

Whilst it is a complete package capable of being introduced as a whole (with some requirement to suspend/amend Standing Orders), not all elements are dependent on each other, although obviously some are. A “mix and match” approach could be adopted with some, all or none of the elements eventually being adopted.

Package of elements for consideration

1. The Conference could start with its technical activity and build up over its duration towards a political “crescendo” in the final week. To facilitate this, the dates of the 2007 session of the Conference could be amended to commence on Wednesday, 30 May and conclude on Friday, 15 June (see attached schematic presentation).
2. The objective would be to bring ministers together with high-level Employer and Worker representatives attending the Conference as of the Monday of the last week.
3. There could be a short opening plenary sitting on the first day to take only the administrative decisions necessary to meet formal constitutional and Standing Orders requirements.
4. The report of the Chairperson of the Governing Body could be submitted in writing without a presentation.
5. The groups could hold their first meetings at committee level before the Conference commences, thus permitting all committees (including the Selection Committee) to start their substantive work at 11 a.m. on the first day of the Conference.
6. Committees could proceed with work with daily meetings, including on the middle Saturday as each individual committee may decide, finishing their work, at the latest, by Friday, 8 June. The Committee on the Application of Standards would probably, as traditional, not conclude until Saturday, 9 June.
7. In 2007 there are three technical (non-standing) committees. The Committee on Fishing will require all of the available time. It could be appropriate to consider whether both of the general discussions will need the full period of time or whether possibly one (or both) of them could start (or finish) a day or two later (or earlier) than normal. The Finance Committee will meet for two days in the first week of the Conference and the Standing Orders Committee, if required, would normally meet for a maximum of two days.

8. The process for electronically displaying amendments and subamendments on screen in all three languages (SAM) will be available for use in all three technical committees as required.
9. The plenary could reopen with the Global Report on Friday, 8 June. This would mean that the technical committees would virtually have their full scheduled time without interruption/competition.
10. The last week could be structured to incorporate major policy speeches and tripartite high-level panel discussions on an agreed Conference theme, as well as delegates' interventions.
11. Committee reports could be received and dealt with in plenary on a similar basis to that of GB committee reports in the GB, i.e. received without additional comment other than statements on major concerns regarding the conclusions/instrument or explanations on voting intentions.
12. Thursday and Friday should be the climax of the Conference. This could involve voting on instruments, a speech on the Conference theme by a high-level special guest and high-level tripartite interventions summarizing the debate.
13. In addition to the production of *Provisional Records*, all plenary sittings will be live broadcast on the Web as well as being Web-recorded for future reference.

Appendix II

Tentative plan of work 96th Session (May-June 2007) of the International Labour Conference

	T 29	W 30	Th 31	F 1	S 2	M 4	T 5	W 6	Th 7	F 8	S 9	M 11	T 12	W 13	Th 14	F 15
Group meetings	■										■					
Plenary sittings		■ ¹								■ ²		■ ⁴	■ ⁴	■ ⁴	■	■
Selection Committee		■ ¹														
Finance Committee			■	■	□				A				PI		V	
Application of Standards		■ ¹	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		A		PI	
Committee on Work in the Fishing Sector		■ ¹	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	DC	A		PI	V	
Committee on ILO Capacity		■ ¹	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		A		PI		
Committee on the Promotion of Sustainable Enterprises		■ ¹	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			A		PI	
Governing Body											■					■ ³

¹ From 11 a.m.

² Discussion of the Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration.

³ On completion of the Conference.

⁴ Extended sitting if necessary.

DC Drafting Committee.

A Adoption by the Committee of its report.

PI Adoption of the report by the Conference in plenary sitting.

V Record vote in plenary sitting.

■ Half-day sitting.

■ All-day sitting.

□ Sitting if necessary.